

Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth 25p

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Beat the print bosses

SUNDAY'S TUC demonstration against Murdoch will be the biggest yet. The potential power of the labour movement will be displayed.

By Andy Beadle
(SOGAT '82)

But the assault on trade unionism in the printing industry continues with growing ferocity.

The contrast between our potential power and the bosses' offensive raises the question more sharply, however, of the response of the labour movement as the print barons queue up to attack their workers.

Well known 'socialist' Robert Maxwell, after week's of hypocritical sniping at Murdoch's 'un-British' methods has sacked a thousand workers and surrounded his Scottish printing plant with barbed wire (see page 15 for background).

The unpredictable union bashing methods of Mad Max, as he's now known in Scotland, may have stampeded the unions into a deal. Details are unclear as we go to print. But any deal will undoubtedly involve job losses and open the way for Maxwell to demand further 'rationalisations' later.

Express Newspapers in the past week have forced through 2,500

redundancies.

Last week the *Daily Telegraph*, with a new plant in docklands near completion called for 'substantial' staff reductions.

The print union and TUC leadership must respond with a decisive call for action. The future of effective trade unionism in the industry is at stake.

It is not just job losses that are required. The bosses want to destroy the closed shop and to impose major changes in working practices. A return to the five day week, shorter holidays and longer hours are just a few of the past

Continued on back page

Liverpool scorns purge

THE LIVERPOOL labour movement has given its answer to the Labour right's threatened purge.

The day after the last Labour NEC meeting at which the right hoped to expel 12 Liverpool activists, the Liverpool Labour Party Temporary Co-ordinating Committee held its first meeting. As chairman, it elected by 19 votes to eight Tony Mulhearn, president of the suspended District Labour Party, and himself one of those facing possible expulsion.

The meeting also passed a resolution congratulating the seven NEC members who refused to participate in the NEC's 'kangaroo court' and called for the recall of the DLP.

The temporary body was set up by the NEC to replace the DLP that it has closed down till June. The aim was to reduce the in-

fluence of *Militant* in the Liverpool party, particularly in the run-up to the May local elections. With just one delegate from each constituency party and from most trade unions, the manifesto and selection of candidates could have been in the hands of an entirely unrepresentative right-dominated body.

Witch-hunt opposed

At the meeting, however, it was obvious that the right's plan had failed. All the constituency delegates and many of the trade unionists were opposed to the witch-hunt. It appeared that national official Joyce Gould, acting for the NEC, was looking for any excuse to abandon the meeting. But after an hour's debate and a roll call of delegates, it was clear that

the majority of unions had sent delegates, and she had to continue.

But then a vote had to be taken about whether officers should be elected. As it was the first meeting of this body, almost everyone present took it for granted that this would be done. Joyce Gould again objected, but from the chair she allowed it to be put to the vote. Only four hands were raised in opposition.

Elected were Ted Mooney from Walton CLP as treasurer, Phil Rowe, West Derby, as secretary and as vice-chairmen—Mike Carr, TGWU, and Tony Hood, Labour Group secretary.

Now the right is complaining that at the meeting nominations for officers were taken from the floor, rather than in writing from the various affiliated organisation. But this temporary body is only supposed

ed to enjoy three months' lifespan. To now circulate the organisations (and several constituencies may not meet before the local elections) for nominations to be taken in another month's time, could leave the temporary co-ordinating committee in limbo, probably until after the May election day.

Change the rules

In any case, Tony Mulhearn had been nominated in writing in ad-

vance by Broadgreen CLP.

Labour's right wing adopt the policy: if they cannot achieve their purpose within the rules, then change the rules. Dissolve local parties, change the quorum on the NEC to make expulsions easier, change the party constitution in October. The NEC meets again on 18 April to alter its quorum, and will then meet as early as possible in May, to 'try' the Liverpool 12 again.

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BLOC Liverpool Labour Party conference

Some of the organisations that have applied for delegates in the last few days include:

GMBATU — Washington, Gateshead.

NUPE — St Bartholemews, Gateshead Central, Wellington No.2,

NUR — Bedford No.1, Bristol Maintenance LDC

AUEW — Derby No.3, Manchester S. District Committee, Stoke Newington.

USDAW — London Metropolitan.

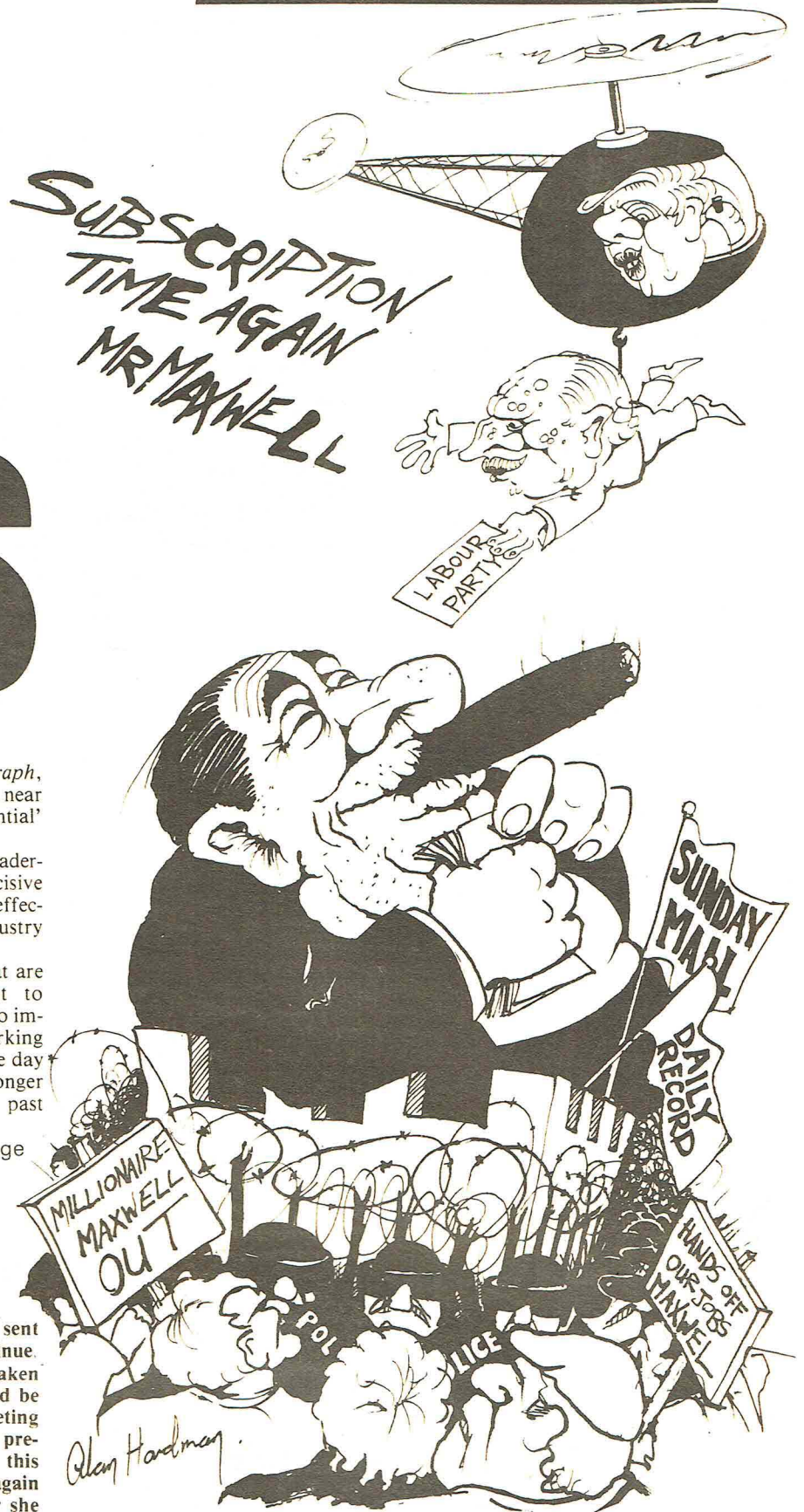
UCW — Paddington No.3

UCATT — Birmingham No.3, Leeds.

COHSE — High Royds 227.

TGWU — 6/522 Liverpool.

Waltham Forest Trades Council. Rother Valley CLP.



Strike call in S. Africa

A GENERAL strike throughout South Africa has been called for 16, 17 and 18 June, to mark the 10th anniversary of the Soweto uprising.

A delegate conference of 1,500 representatives of school students, parents and teachers last weekend also backed rent strikes and consumer boycotts.

The conference, called by the National Education Crisis Committee, also decided to call off the national boycott of schools, but resolved to organise "alternative education". "We are going to run the schools" said Lechesa Tsenoli: "We are going to organise the syllabuses".

Students

School students have played a leading role in the confrontation with the police and army in the black townships. They have faced armed police in the certain knowledge that some of them are going to get killed. It is right however, that they should not be left to bear the full force of the apartheid state repression.

The conference agreed demands around which a broader movement can be mobilised to continue the fight against apartheid and the capitalist system. They demanded the release of all political de-

tainees, the withdrawal of troops from the townships and the legalisation of the Congress of South African Students.

Thugs

The conference delegates were forced to defend themselves against attacks by thugs of the Inkatha organisation led by right-wing black tribal leader Chief Buthelezi. Inkatha's divisive actions in the Natal area include trying to reach agreement with a section of the white ruling class on some form of "self-government" for Natal. This would fall far short of the demand for one-person, one vote within a unitary state demanded by the United Democratic Front and supported by the mass of black workers.

The June general strike is now set to become the biggest confrontation so far in the struggle against Botha's racist regime. By combining the fighting spirit of the township young with the economic muscle of the workers organised in the Confederation of South African Trade Unions, a unity can be forged which will bring about a non-racial socialist South Africa.

By Pat Craven

Fight against poverty wages

NIGEL LAWSON'S so-called help for the unemployed in the budget is in fact a new attack on workers' wages.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer decided to give funds to develop the Jobstart and Restart job creation pilot schemes into a single programme covering the entire country. He claimed that "these pilot schemes are already producing results".

But according to the Manchester Low Pay Unit, Jobstart is a non-starter. The Restart scheme offers the long-term unemployed 'special counselling' at the local Job Centres and help in 'marketing themselves' to employers.

Subsidy

Jobstart itself gives £20 a week subsidy from the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) for six months if they take any job offer with pay below £80 a week.

This is what Kenneth Clarke, government employment spokesman, calls "making low paid jobs more attractive".

The schemes are just another way of trying to guarantee the bosses an endless supply of cheap labour. That is probably how the unemployed in the pilot areas have seen it. During the first three weeks only ten people had taken up

the job subsidy in the whole country. One subsidy taken up in Kirklees, Yorkshire, shows the hypocrisy of the schemes. The worker was paid £20 a week extra to take up a low-paid civil service job—it was running Jobstart!

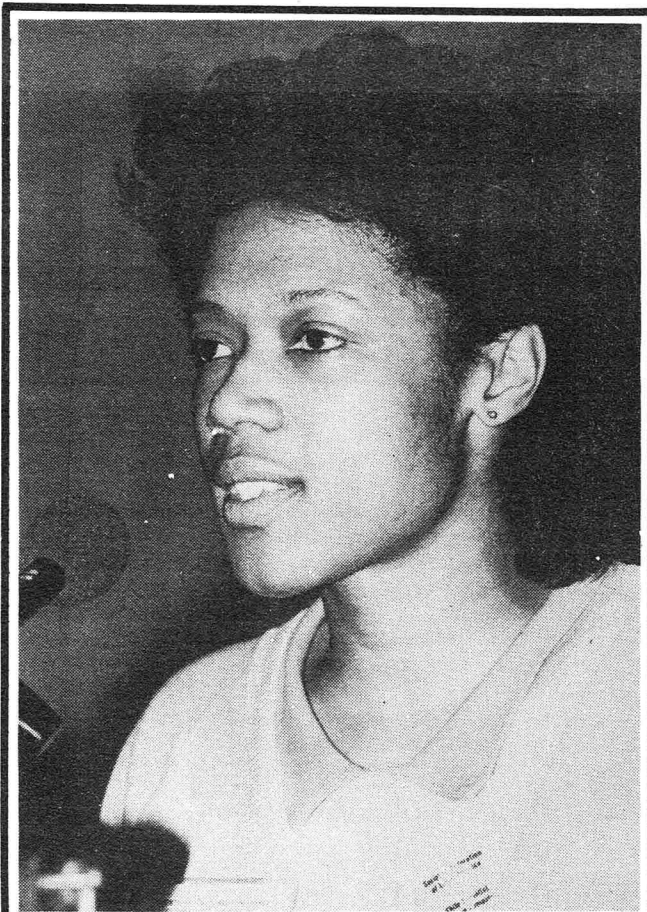
Preston

In Preston, one of the nine original pilot areas, only 12 people have taken up the schemes, although all the 4,000 long-term unemployed had letters telling them of the schemes and saying they could have their benefit withdrawn for refusing to co-operate. Already three people in Preston have had benefit suspended just for refusing to go to the Job Centre interview.

By Gail Tattersall (Withington LPYS)

Manchester demonstration

● Join the campaign against low pay called by the NW Regional Women's Committee. A demonstration is being held in Manchester on 31 May, assembling at 11am at All Saints.



Last weekend's Labour Party Young Socialists' national conference elected Linda Douglas to Labour's NEC by a big majority. She is the first black woman ever to sit on the executive and has been elected because of her record in campaigning for black youth and is a supporter of *Militant*.

Workers pay for abolition of councils

THE GLC and Metropolitan county councils are no more. The Tory government has carried out its threat to remove an 'unnecessary' tier of local government. The consequence for millions of workers will be higher rates poorer services, redundancies, and less democratic control.

Hardest hit will be bus passengers in South Yorkshire who are faced with an immediate rise of 230 per cent in their fares. The maximum will rise from 25p to 80p. Rates in Calderdale are set to rise by 37.4 per cent and in Bolton by 25 per cent. In Merseyside, according to the county council's outgoing Labour leader, Keva Coombes, the new Merseyside Residuary Body "is going to cost the ratepayers more than any other of the residuary bodies because this area has the most problems".

Only 30 per cent of the money formerly spent by the abolished councils will be taken over by the elected boroughs. The rest will be taken over by a hotch-potch of boards, quangos and government departments. In the case of the GLC, its functions will be split up between no fewer than 80 different bodies.

The GLC and the Met counties failed to live up to the claims their Labour leaders often made for them. They devoted too much of their resources to public relations rather than concrete improvements like the houses built by Liverpool City Council. But their abolition is undoubtedly a backward step, which will further expose workers and poor to a Tory government determined to make them pay for the failings of their economic system.

Chelsea fascists captured

LAST WEDNESDAY, seven Chelsea 'supporters' were arrested in a series of dawn raids. This was the culmination of operation 'Own goal' against organised football violence.

Fascist literature was found, along with an array of weapons, pointing to strong links between violence on the terraces and extreme-right groups. They have long had an orientation towards football, believing that they can gain mass support from the mainly white working class youth who support football. Publically, their leaders deny this link, but as the *Mirror* points out: "Bulldog, the paper of the Young National Front... carries back page

reports headed 'on the football front'... Under headlines like: "Racist 'louts', are alive and kicking", the paper revels in its reports of violence"...

Racism

For a time, clubs like Chelsea, West Ham United and Leeds United became synonymous with fascist activity. It was 'fashionable' to be 'NF', jeer and swear at black players. When Paul Canonville, the black Chelsea winger was picked for the first team, the club apparently received a stream of racist hate mail and one envelope even had razor blades along its edge.

The last few years have seen many more young blacks attending games, and

his employment at the Saudi Arabian Bank gives him a good insight into the problems of the 25 per cent of Fulham's constituents living on council estates.

Unfortunately, Labour candidate Nick Raynsford has done everything to distance himself from the left and *Militant*. One of his leaflets is headed: "Labour is dealing with the extremists".

His main campaigning slogan seems to be 'Nick Raynsford lives here.' The youth campaign has been handed to a non-LP member from outside the constituency, rather than to the LPYS.

However a Labour victory in Fulham will be a boost to Labour activists around the country who are itching for the chance to defeat the Tories nationally. *Militant* supporters have been out campaigning for Nick Raynsford.

By Jeremy Birch

As for the Tory candidate,

'Plot' to kill anti-fascist

GERRY GABLE, the publisher of the anti-racist magazine *Searchlight*, has revealed a plot to have him murdered. It involved a Tory MP who approached a security firm with a view to taking out a 'contract' on Gable under which the firm would abduct, interrogate and 'deal with' him.

An employee of the security firm contacted a national newspaper and the police were informed. Yet no action has been taken against any of those alleged to be involved in a conspiracy to commit murder. Scotland Yard commented that the case was "a very emphatic 'do not discuss'".

The reluctance of the police to act is complemented by a reluctance by Fleet Street to report this sensational news. Only the *Guardian* and *Mirror* reported the story on Saturday 29 March, and they have not followed it up.

Searchlight has done much to reveal the links between fascist groups and the ruling class.

Militant Rally
Sheffield City Hall
Derek Hatton Peter Taaffe
Monday 14 April Film 6.30pm
Speakers 7.30pm + 'Moaning Minnies'

May Day Greetings

We invite your organisation to place May Day greetings to the labour and trade union movement in *Militant*. *Militant* is read by thousands of labour movement activists in Britain and internationally.

Send your greetings of solidarity with the labour movement. Help build a paper that fights for socialism. The closing date for copy is 22 April.

Prices. Semi-display 3 column centimetres £6. 6 Column centimetres £12. Display 1/16th page £20. 1/8th page £30. 1/4th page £60. Cheques to *Militant* Publications, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.

Right's show trial exposed

LAST WEDNESDAY'S meeting of the Labour Party National Executive Committee to hear charges against 12 party members from Liverpool ended in confusion. Seven committee members left the meeting in a protest at the flagrant disregard of the twelve's democratic rights. The NEC was left without a quorum.

LYNN WALSH looks at the judgement of the High Court which revealed the way in which the NEC was breaching the requirements of 'natural justice' and FELICITY DOWLING, the first and in the event the only one of the twelve to appear before the NEC, describes what happened.

"I WAS presented with two sets of charges, the first alleging my 'membership' of *Militant*, the second, numbered from (A) to (Z) and (aa) to (ll), dealing with the Liverpool District Labour Party.

"The first set included allegations that I worked full-time for *Militant*, wrote an article in it, spoke at a meeting, let my name be used on a leaflet, and moved a resolution on the DLP executive which "rejected the charge that the DLP, or for that matter, the *Militant* Tendency, has ever been associated with violence or hooligan tactics".

"Before being called into the NEC we had to go through the charges and decide in the light of the judge's ruling, which we would answer.

"I and the friend I was entitled to bring along were called away to a separate waiting room. Three times we were then called to the NEC room, only to be told to go back as they were still not ready. Finally we were admitted and sat at a table surrounded on three sides by the NEC members.

"The general secretary Larry Whitty announced that they were dropping the charge relating to working

full-time for *Militant*. On the second list they were proceeding only with charges (C), (D), (J), (K), (N), (T), (U) (bb) - (hh) and (ii) - (ll). They would be relying only on written evidence and the majority report of the committee of inquiry. I challenged the use of this report in the light of the judge's ruling and asked for time to withdraw in order to sort out the papers in view of the revised list of charges. 'This is a farce' I heard a loud voice declare.

"All the paper-work filled a carrier bag. It was totally unreasonable to expect me to sort it out that quickly.

quickly.

"Fifteen minutes later, we returned to the NEC room only to be told to go away. We did not see the walk-out and did not even hear about it until half an hour after it happened. Only when Joyce Gould, a party official, came to the waiting room and told us that 'we are not going ahead today' did we know that the hearing was suspended. I had to return to the NEC room to collect my jacket. As I entered Neil Kinnock was in full flood, until forced to a stumbled halt as he saw me enter the room."

By Felicity Dowling



Tony Benn and Eric Heffer emerging from the NEC meeting after they, and five others, refused to take part when the right to examine evidence was refused to Felicity Dowling, one of the twelve on 'trial'.

Swansea television spy brings Militant support

AFTER WEEKS of snooping and spying, Michael Crick of Channel Four News "exposed" an alleged *Militant* branch meeting at Swansea last week.

Crick's so-called 'evidence' comprised a film of some dark shadows entering a house and an incomprehensible tape recording which could be anyone, anywhere, at any time. The alleged *Militant* letter, reproduced in the blacklisted *Times*, could also have been written by any imaginative journalist of Crick's calibre.

The remarks of chief prosecutor Dean Nelson will be treated with the contempt they deserve. This disaffected *Militant* supporter is finishing at Swansea university this term and hopes to get a career in journalism by ingratiating himself with Channel Four news reporters. All Nelson's accusations have been made time and time again by the right-wing witch-hunters in Swansea over the past few years, and have been consistently denied by *Militant* supporters.

This latest fairy story, for which Nelson was undoubtedly well paid, is in reality old news. The right wing may use this 'evidence' for further attacks but most workers in Swansea will be more concerned about the 18 per cent unemployment in the city, cuts in their living standards and getting rid of Thatcher rather than worrying about an alleged meeting

TGWU Cardiff witch-hunt

A BRANCH of the Transport and General Workers' Union in Cardiff (No 4/264) is now preparing for action against *Militant*.

Its members, who are largely full-time officials of the union, have passed a resolution saying that they will deny Cardiff South and Penarth Labour Party access to Transport House for meetings if it continues to allow "active *Militant* supporters to attend GMC and EC meetings".

All correspondence from this branch is sent to Wales regional secretary and arch-witch hunter George Wright. The resolution further calls

of a dozen or so people.

The publicity surrounding this national exposure certainly hasn't done *Militant* any harm in Swansea. Paper sales were doubled in the city centre on Saturday with several new Labour Party members being signed up over the weekend.

By Alec Thraves

on the Labour Party to "exclude from membership Andrew Price, Dianne Mitchell and Dave Bartlett."

Andrew Price commented: "The Cardiff South Labour Party has to my knowledge met for well over 20 years in Transport House, Cardiff. The behaviour of TGWU officials is nothing short of blackmail against the local party and a crude attempt to bulldoze them into further expulsions."

He has written to Neil Kinnock and Ron Todd to protest.

By a Militant reporter

Mansfield victory

THE RIGHT-dominated Executive of Mansfield Labour Party has been ordered (2 April) by the High Court not to go ahead the following day with expulsion proceedings against five members of the General Committee.

The five took legal action after four of them had been unconstitutionally excluded from an Executive meeting, which made it clear that they would not get a fair hearing. The court ruled in their favour on the grounds that the EC had itself breached the rules, and the EC is now barred from going ahead with the disciplinary action on the basis proposed.

ROTH VALLEY Constituency Labour Party, where Neil Kinnock's private secretary Kevin Barron is MP, has passed resolutions opposed to the witch-hunt and opposed to expulsions of five members in neighbouring Attercliffe.

'UNPRECEDENTED' was the High Court judge's comment on the procedure proposed by the right wing of Labour's National Executive Committee for the expulsion hearings on 26 March.

Far from involving minor breaches of the rules of natural justice—the legal formula for a fair hearing—the form of hearing offered to the twelve Liverpool Labour Party members was, in the court's view, 'manifestly unfair'.

This decision, which upheld nearly all the points in their application to the court, fully vindicated the twelve's description of the hearing as a 'show trial'. The judge's sweeping condemnation of the procedure also justified the decision of the seven left-wing NEC members to walk out when the right attempted to go ahead after only minor modifications.

The fundamental objection to the right wing's approach was that the twelve accused, despite promises to the contrary, had never been given even an outline, let alone been shown the details of the evidence against them.

The judge clearly found it hard to believe that it was proposed that at the hearing the general secretary would read out the charges, refer to the few scraps of documentary evidence, and report the fact that evidence had been given in confidence—without even outlining what it was.

Excluded

The court also ruled that the eight members of the inquiry team should be excluded from the hearing because most of them had clearly already made up their minds on many of the charges, and it was impossible to believe that they could take unbiased decisions on individual cases.

The judge also strongly criticised the fact that some of the charges relied on alleged 'admissions' made to the inquiry team, while (except in one case) no transcripts had been made available.

The court undoubtedly envisaged that the hearings would be postponed to take account of the judgement, but Larry Whitty immediately announced that they would carry on the next day.

The NEC was attempting, in effect, to carry on its show trial with only token changes in the procedure—to give the appearance of complying with "natural justice". The

walk-out of the seven NEC members was not a manoeuvre, but an entirely justified refusal to accept the continuation of a 'manifestly unfair' hearing.

When the first of the twelve, Felicity Dowling, went in she was told verbally that some of the charges were dropped. Although some charges based purely on 'oral evidence given in confidence' were apparently dropped, others remained which relied on sections of the Majority Report which are merely assertions based on the very same confidential evidence—and therefore equally invalidated by the court ruling!

Witnesses

The judge also said that on some issues of fact it might be necessary, to meet the requirements of a fair hearing, to call a witness. How could this have been done, without forewarning, on the 26th? Where the charges and evidence were complex, as they obviously were in the cases of the DLP officers, it would also be proper for those charged to have legal representation or advice at the hearing, the judge ruled. Again, this could not have been arranged at a day's notice.

After the NEC hearing was abandoned, Neil Kinnock made numerous TV appearances in which, without admitting what the judge in fact ruled, he misrepresented the court decision as a minor criticism of the NEC. He denounced the seven's decision to leave the hearing as an 'irresponsible manoeuvre'.

But it is the attempt to carry through a purge, to defeat one trend of opinion not through debate but through bureaucratic suppression, which is irresponsible. It is a disgrace that Labour Party members were forced to go to the courts as the only way of getting any kind of fair hearing, and that even now the majority of the NEC are refusing to comply in full with the court judgement.

Responsibility for the shambles on the NEC lies entirely with those who planned a show trial of Liverpool socialists and class fighters. Labour's ranks must step up the pressure to defeat any attempt to carry on with a purge which can only play into the hands of Labour's enemies.

By Lynn Walsh

Liverpool

(Continued from page one)

Whatever the electoral consequences for the Fulham by-election or the council elections, of a Labour Party plunged into internal warfare, the right wing believe *Militant* must be attacked. They are obsessed with the witch-hunt.

Where will the purge stop? New threats are being made to withdraw the whip from MPs Dave Nellist and Terry Fields. Unanswered rumours abound of Kinnock's supporters organising to try to get Tony Benn and Eric Hef-

fer and miners' representative Eric Clarke voted off the NEC, and replaced by witch-hunters.

To Kinnockite MP Jack Straw, "This is Neil's Falklands, he will see it through to the end". Labour's right must believe that to win popular support they have to declare war on the party membership. Liverpool Labour workers have demonstrated their outrage at being considered the 'enemy within' by their national party leadership.

Ordinary party members cannot allow the party to be torn apart, and the chances of ending Thatcher's reign jeopardised. The witch-hunt must be stopped.

LPYS Young

CONFERENCE '86

THE Labour Party Young Socialists' National Conference this Easter was a cure for all pessimism about the future of socialism. The delegates and visitors were younger than ever, but many had already been blooded in action, in strikes, school strikes and other battles.

The high number of black and Asian youth, particularly young Asian women testified to the Young Socialists' campaigning zeal. The conference was the opportunity for Labour's socialist youth to show their talents and their understanding.



LPYS members show their enthusiasm for Arthur Scargill's speech.

CONFERENCE GOT off to a rousing start. Whistles and applause filled the hall when the Hull marchers opened the rally.

These young marchers are making the same demands as the Jarrow marchers did in 1936.

After 50 years of technological advance, the bosses still can't guarantee jobs. So the proposal made to conference to organise a national march, this time to the Labour Party national conference, was accepted unanimously.

ARTHUR SCARGILL held the attention of the audience as he spoke of the historic miners' strike, the 11,000 arrested, the 7,000 injured (some so badly that they had to go on life support systems) and the 11 killed.

He reiterated his utter condemnation of police violence during the strike and his refusal to condemn miners defending their jobs.

Seconds later, laughter filled the hall as he described some of the farcical arrests and trials in

the strike. He spoke of the miner facing imprisonment for calling a policeman a "wanker" and the story of the miners who built a snowman.

Lack of support

When they were ordered to move it by the local constable, they 'forgot' to inform him that they'd built it around a concrete post. So when he tried to smash through in his Land Rover, it was the vehicle which came

off worse.

On a more serious note he criticised the lack of support from the TUC and Labour leaderships during the strike. He declared his absolute opposition to the witch-hunt, to thunderous applause. "The next person in line could be you". Instead the party should be out to get "the one in Number Ten".

What an opening to conference! The Hull marcher summed up the feeling: "It's magic to be here".

Dole and danger on Belfast front line

THE DIRE poverty of both Catholic and Protestant workers in Northern Ireland was brought out graphically at conference. Sunday's debate confirmed LPYS policy of building a non-sectarian party of labour in Northern Ireland.

Brian McDermott, fraternal speaker from the Labour and Trade Union Group Young Socialists in West Belfast said: "I personally know of no one of my age group in my street who has a job.

"Crime is rife and social conditions are appalling for youth. They end up standing

around bonfires drinking all night—and of course West Belfast is notorious for joy riders. The security forces respond to this by shooting to kill.

"There is continuous harassment. If you go past an army patrol, the first soldier will stop you and ask a lot of pointless questions. Then the next one will do the same. And the next. And the next. With 16 members of a patrol, it takes a long time to get to the end of your street!

"I don't want to live this sort of life, I want to change it. So I joined the YS.

"Capitalism is no respecter of anyone's religion. In Protestant Rathcoole there is

75 per cent unemployment amongst heads of households. The Anglo-Irish agreement won't create jobs or give us decent wages and it won't create peace. It's just increased sectarianism.

Class unity

"The Labour and Trade Union Group have got a response with their class approach and have got trade union branches in Northern Ireland to pass sympathetic motions.

"But the Labour Party leadership's policy of bipartisanship is no help at all. They have just tail-ended the Tories."

Class struggle in Portsmouth

SCHOOL STUDENTS attending the rally came away pledging to step-up the fight against the Tories in the classroom and on the streets.

More than 100 young people attended a school students' fringe meeting to hear Chris Boyle and Neil Cooper emphasise the message "What we have won, we will need to fight to keep".

The meeting unanimously passed resolution calling on School Students' Unions up and down the country to build for protests and strikes on 2 May against the Fowler social security review, on the lines of the highly successful one in Portsmouth recently.

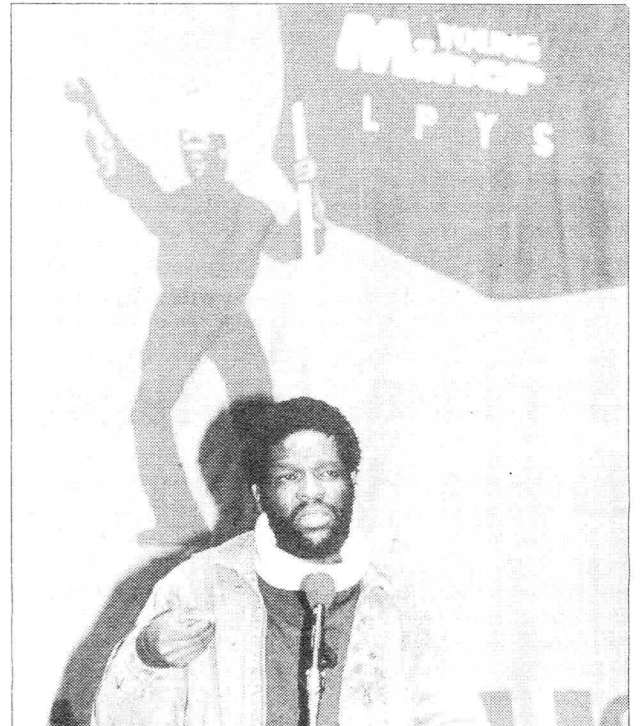
The meeting heard that the strike was called in support of striking students at Highbury Tec in Cosham and Portsmouth Poly.

Thousands were locked in their schools—but thousands of others climbed over walls and struck in support of demands including "no" to YTS conscription and a guaranteed job at 18.

Hundreds of strikers attended the strike rally with buses paid for by Poly students. School student Paul Davies called for unions to be formed in every school fighting Fowler.

There were speakers from the Poly and from striking Sun printworkers. Many school students went on to a crowded Militant readers' meeting afterwards and the campaign is still continuing with students demanding that any pupils expelled or suspended following the strike be immediately reinstated.

"Build direct links"



Moses Mayekiso.

RAPTUROUS applause greeted Moses Mayekiso, a South African trade unionist as he addressed conference.

The audience listened very attentively to him, showing the deep interest amongst young people in Britain in the inspiring struggle of black workers in South Africa.

Moses, chairman of the Alexandra Action Committee and Transvaal secretary of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union (MAWU) has been frequently arrested and tortured for his activities (see Militant 28 February, 28 March). He graphically described the struggle and what workers wanted as a final result.

He said: "The society we want in South Africa is a socialist one. As an exploited person in a factory I know that just by changing the skin colour of the government you are not going to help us.

"We have seen in Zimbabwe and Kenya, blacks suppressing our brothers and helping multinationals exploit our people and our land."

Moses said in his union there was a "workers' leadership" in control. All posts from shop stewards to general secretary were elected each year, were subject to recall by the membership and were paid a worker's wage.

The most important task for the British labour and trade union movement was to build direct links with South African trade unions, he said.

Echoing the sentiments of the magnificent LPYS banner behind him urging links with COSATU, Moses said: "We need these direct links with people like you—so the youth and not just trade unionists can keep in touch with the international movement."

, gifted and RED

Photos by Dave Sinclair and Mick Carroll
Reports by Soraya Lawrence, Neelam de Freitas and Mark Leslie



Derek Hatton at the Labour Unity rally with Frances Curran, YS representative on the NEC, chair Andy Clachers and YS NC member Tony Wedlake, who is threatened with expulsion from the Labour Party.

Hatton's challenge to Kinnock— "debate ideas in public"

THE HIGHLIGHT of conference was Saturday night's Labour Unity rally. As Derek Hatton and other speakers entered the room the audience rose to its feet as one, clapping, whistling and roaring its welcome.

The meeting had been in jeopardy as the NEC of the party had anticipated expulsions of two speakers, Derek Hatton and Cheryl Varley (so much for a fair, unbiased inquiry) and refused to let them speak. But chairman Andy Clachers told YS members: "they've not been

expelled and we've got a quorum tonight!"

Andy brought messages of support from MPs Dennis Skinner, Eric Heffer and Joan Maynard. As he introduced the speakers Andy joked: "I believe we have a Channel Four reporter, but I'm not sure which one it is".

Key role

Frances Curran was hailed by conference for her key role in the walk-out by the seven left-wingers at the NEC meeting. She pinpointed the victory. "It's been a momentous week for

Marxists".

When Derek Hatton rose, he was unable to speak for several minutes due to the deafening applause. Derek spoke of the scurrilous attacks on the Marxists within the party and challenged Neil Kinnock to a public debate with the time, venue and chair of his choice. "Then the rank and file can decide what they want".

He went on: "Intimidation has become a new word for democracy. If the right win a vote, its democracy, if they lose it's intimidation". Derek told Neil Kinnock:

"We want you to get into Number Ten almost as much as you do—but you must learn the lessons of how to get in." He gave the example of Terry Fields' campaigning victory in Liverpool Broadgreen.

Most energetic

Derek saluted the YS as representing the most energetic socialist campaigning youth organisation in Western Europe. "Kinnock and the NEC can never destroy the commitment in this hall, let's go out and do our job".

A voice for socialism

LINDA DOUGLAS of Vauxhall LPYS was easily elected as YS representative on Labour's National Executive (NEC) to succeed Frances Curran in October.

It was clear that she managed to poll 126, the overwhelming majority of the votes she stood on. It is a real step forward for the labour movement that the first black woman to serve on the party's governing body was elected as a socialist and not simply a token black woman candidate.

Another *Militant* supporter from the West Midlands came second. The other three can-



Linda Douglas

didates between them got 19% of the vote.

L Douglas 126
M Meredith 68
K Abrams 37
L Ferguson 10
D Ackroyd 3

Inspiration from Chile's workers

THE INTERNATIONAL rally is traditionally one of the most inspiring occasions of conference and this year was no exception.

The rally heard of the heroic struggle of Chilean workers and in particular the youth, against the fascist dictatorship of Pinochet.

A graphic example of the torture carried out by the regime was reported in a letter from a worker who had undergone electric shock torture.

Conference also heard of

the dockers' strike earlier this year, where the dockers were defeated. A young worker who had lost everything in the strike recounted: "Now I know I am a worker—a worker is somebody who has to struggle and fight because a worker has no alternative".

A report was also given on the work done by the Chile Socialist Defence Campaign during the year. Amongst other examples contacts have been established with dockers' groups. The rally concluded with a collection which raised £2,540.

★ Two visitors to the conference who were attracted by publicity locally were Bournemouth teenagers, Francine Parlman (15) and Debbie Bridewell (17).

Both said they hoped to go to their own YS branch next week so impressed were they by the conference.

Debbie, a nurse said: "I found it very interesting and enjoyable". Francine said: "Arthur Scargill was one of the best speakers and Cheryl Varley was excellent. She was a really good speaker—she made everything so clear".

What do you think of the conference?

ALEX LAWTON, delegate from Andover LPYS in Hampshire attending the conference for the first time, said: "It's been brilliant."

"We brought six comrades from Andover, four of us at our first conference, and we have been really enthused."

"I will definitely be going next year—I wouldn't miss that for the world".

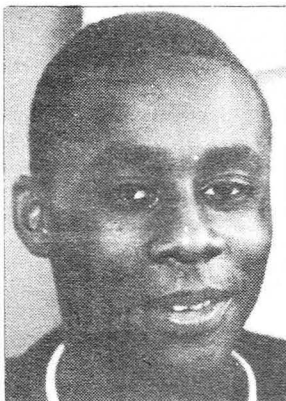
Robert Halpin (Gravesend YS):

"Pretty good. I thought I might learn something. I've learnt one thing—*Militant* isn't extreme. The best thing about conference is that *Militant* has the majority." Julie Sharkey (16) Pentlands YS (Edinburgh):

"It's great, really good. Scargill was the best speaker I've ever heard—brilliant. Nobody's just sitting back here. They're all ready to get out fighting."

Rachel Salmon (Cardiff Central YS):

"I was surprised to find so many young school students



Michael Panton

here—13 and 14 year olds—they're not going into this blindly.

The YS is full of genuine working class people, and that's what I like about it." Simon Chapman (Nottingham North YS)

"It's great that everybody is solid. You come here and it gives you inspiration. I'd have dropped out of the Labour Party if it hadn't been for the ideas of *Militant*."

Michael Panton (West London):

"I heard *Militant* being



Simon Chapman and Alison McDonald.

mentioned all over the telly and I got to know *Militant* supporters in Hounslow, where I live. It was through them that I heard about the YS which I joined about two weeks ago.

"This conference has been a real opportunity to learn more about the YS and our programme to fight for a proper decently paid job for everyone".

Alison McDonald (Mansfield YS):

"It's inspired me to carry on fighting. I was getting bogged down with the witch-hunt and the UDM in Mansfield and it's great to find unity here. Expel us or not we'll win."

Neil Macdonald (Fulham LPYS):

"It is really interesting to hear people recounting their own personal struggles. It has boosted my confidence to go away and build the YS in my area."



DESPITE THE fact that *Militant* was prevented from holding its traditional readers' meeting and that there was no formal appeal, visitors and delegates still contributed a magnificent £5,341 in the course of the weekend, showing the support of youth for the ideas of Marxism.

ads

CLASSIFIED
15p per word,
minimum 10 words.
SEMI-DISPLAY
£2 per column cen-
timetre. Three weeks for
the price of two. *Militant*
meeting ads free.

All advertisement copy should reach this office by Saturday.

BRISTOL EAST Marxist Discussion Groups Wednesday 16 April Casino Economy—Will there be a crash? Further details ring Bristol 650318.

NEWBRIDGE Marxist Discussion Group, every Monday 7pm. Newbridge Miners Institute, High St, Newbridge.

CPSA LONDON BROAD LEFT disco, 7.30pm, Saturday 5 April, Florence Nightingale Pub, nr Waterloo Station. Admission: £1 waged, 50p unwaged.

FIGHT the Tories, not the socialists—90 minutes cassette, highlights of the London anti-witch-hunt rally. Features: T Mulhearn, D Hatton, P Taaffe, T Grant, etc. £1.25 plus 25p postage from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.

A Charter for Woman Workers: So much was the success of *The Charter* that thousands of additional copies had to be produced—Get your copy now! Bulk order available from A Bannister, 55 Lunt Road, Bootle Merseyside L20 5EZ or single copies from World Socialist Books 3/13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB. Price 40p & 15p p&p.

"Militant fights back" meetings

ONLY PRINCESS Di and 'Fergie' get as much attention from the press as *Militant*. There have been 1168 articles in the papers (not including TV and radio) since November, an average of ten a day.

Since 1 January, people have had a chance to hear the truth, straight from the *Militant's* mouth. Nearly 200 meetings have attracted nearly 15,000 people; including the biggest Labour movement rallies for years!

We list some of the forthcoming meetings below. Why not organise a meeting in your area?

CARMARTHEN *Militant* Public Meeting, Monday 7 April 7pm Carmarthen Library: Speakers: Alec Thraves

WALES

Welsh Region Labour Party conference—fringe meeting, Friday 16 May.

Islwyn: Thursday 17 April, 8pm. Speakers: Derek Hatton and Peter Taaffe. Venue: Newbridge Comprehensive School.

YORKSHIRE/HUMBERSIDE

Halifax: Tuesday 15 April, 7.30pm, AUEW Club St James Street.

Doncaster: Monday 7 April. Speaker: Cheryl Varley.

Leeds NW: Monday 7 April 7.30pm. Ralph Thoresby School, Holt Park centre, Leeds 16.

Sheffield: Monday 14 April. Speakers: Derek Hatton and Peter Taaffe.

Scarborough: Thursday 10 April, 7.30pm. Eastfield Community Centre, Scarborough.

Hull: Thursday 17 April, 7.30pm, Restaurant La France, Beverley Road, Hull.

Beverley: Tuesday 22 April, 7.30pm, Moulders Arms Wilbart Road, Beverley.

EASTERN

Colchester: Sunday 6 April, 7.30pm. Speaker: Bob Edwards. Colchester Labour Club.

inqaba YA BASEBENZI

Journal of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress

OUT NOW. New edition of *Inqaba ya Basebenzi*, journal of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress. Price £1 plus 20p postage: Subscriptions £4 for four issues. Surface mail-all countries. £7.90 airmail-all countries. Orders from: Inqaba, BM Box 1719, London WC1N 3XX.

MILITANT scarves made in colours of your choice. Two colours (Red and yellow unless stated) writing lengthways. Two/three colours writing across width cost £5 each. £4 each if five or more brought. Hats in two or three colours. £2.30 each from Mick Fallon 64 Woodbrook Avenue, Mixenden, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX 8PZ.

MILITANT collecting tins—available from Fighting Fund department, 3-13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB. Cost £1 each or 75p each for order of 10 or more. Please send 25p post and packaging (50p for bulk orders).

DOVER *Militant* Discussion Group: Wednesday 9 April—Reform or Revolution? Wednesday 16 April—Is Russia Socialist? Wednesday 23 April—What is happening in the Labour Party? All meetings at 8pm. For further details (0303) 43541.

MARXIST weekend schools 1986. Northern: Leeds 7-8 June. Midlands/South West Birmingham 14-15 June. London/South: London 13-14 September.

EXCHANGE for one week. 1 May to 10 May. 3 bedroomed house in Ramsgate for flat or house in London for a couple. Contact 0303 43541.

COMRADE seeks flat/house share any area of London. Ring Debbie 767-7472 (evenings).

High interest and good sales dividends

THE ATTEMPT to drive *Militant* out of the Labour Party has created tremendous interest in the paper. Our extra sales show the potential to extend our network of sellers and readers.

In the week leading up to the Edinburgh rally over 300 extra papers were sold including 14 at Galasheils. We sold out of papers at the rally itself. We were better prepared for the rallies in Newcastle and Birmingham with bigger stocks to hand!

Sales in Merseyside, where we have had most publicity, give us a clue to the thinking of ordinary workers. They are growing, helped by the enthusiasm of our sellers. For example, after selling 18 copies outside Leo's Supermarket in Tuebrook on Saturday, our supporters went back again on Monday and Tuesday selling 15 and six.

Two supporters decided to do a spot of door to door

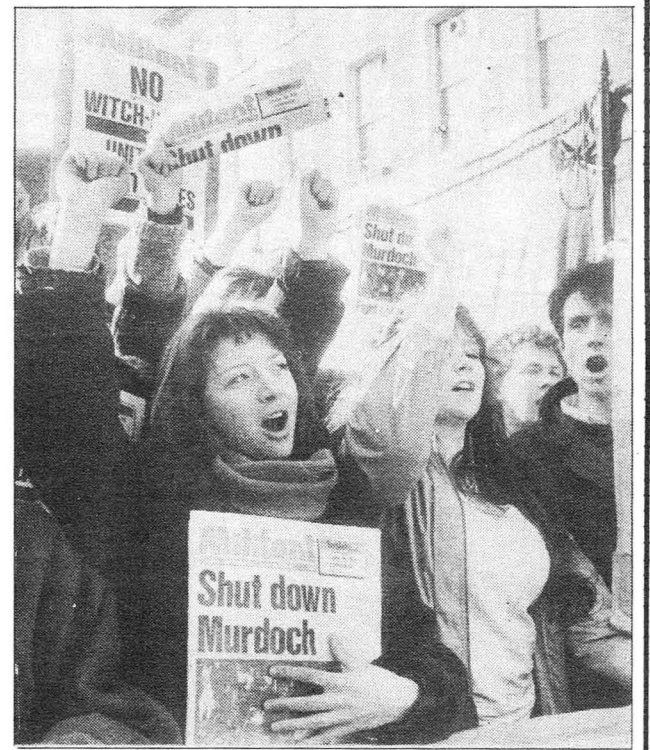
selling in Esmond Street and sold 17 *Militants* and four *What we stand for* pamphlets in half an hour. In Mossley Hill a systematic approach to building paper rounds has borne dividends on the local housing estate.

Enthusiasm

The attack on Swansea sellers on Channel 4, although wildly inaccurate on many counts, did get at least one thing right—the local witch-hunt has encouraged Welsh supporters to take the fight back to the right wing with a massive estate sales drive on the Townhills Ward estate.

This has not only boosted the sales of *Militant*. It has produced many new applicants to join Labour: something the right wing do not seem so keen on at the moment!

By Gerry Lerner



Selling *Militant* on the lobby of Walworth Road.

Workers' cash for a workers' paper

TWO LETTERS show the growing support of working people for *Militant*. Bill Wells a GMBATU member from Cambridge wrote:

"Please find enclosed a small donation (£2), towards your fighting fund. I would send more but I'm unemployed and only on half dole at the moment (£15.32 per week!)."

"I never used to support *Militant*, but it's obvious that Kinnock is going so far to the right that a determined left grouping within the party is needed to combat this slide.

"Do you have any 'fight the witch-hunt' stickers or badges I could buy and sell? Also do you have a 'Where we stand' leaflet or pamphlet I could read?"

Resolutions

"We recently passed a resolution against the witch-hunt in my GMBATU branch which will upset the leadership (with luck!). Keep up the fight!"

Graham Casey wrote on behalf of TGWU 6/643 branch at Plessey Liverpool. This branch passed numerous resolutions against the inquiry, against the suspen-

sion of Liverpool DLP and against the witch-hunt. They have given money to the Liverpool councillors' fight against disqualification and surcharge. They have now sent us a very welcome £10 for the fighting fund.

We appeal to all supporters to follow these examples and pass resolutions with donations and collections. Take the petitions to your friends, workmates and neighbours. Go round your estate, school or college.

One supporter in Liverpool collected £7.50 from the front page of his petition alone. Another petition in Leicester raised £19.42.

The readers' meetings

raise large sums. The monster rallies in Edinburgh, Newcastle and Birmingham raised over £1,000 each. The Brixton meeting last week raised over £500. Local and estate meetings are just as important.

Send in now!

£85 came in from Oxford, £42 Winsford, £25 Chester, £72 Wallasey, £62 Castleford. Collections at Scottish and Southern Labour conferences respectively raised £250 and £107.

Whatever you collect, don't hang on to it, send it in now! We need your continuing support.

FIGHTING FUND

This week: **£7,329**

Quarter ends 30 April

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London East	2171		3500
2 London South West	764		1500
3 London West	1392		2900
4 London South East	923		2200
5 Manchester/Lancs	1719		4200
6 East Midlands	1110		3050
7 Scotland East	1065		3200
8 South East	780		2400
9 Merseyside	2177		6900
10 Humberside	718		2350
11 Scotland West	1159		3850
12 Southern	923		3100
13 Eastern	893		3450
14 West Midlands	975		4500
15 Yorkshire	1227		5600
16 South West	379		2150
17 Northern	762		4550
18 Wales East	216		1450
19 Wales West	429		3150
Others	1707		5000
Total received	21489		70000

Donations

DONATIONS THIS week include a pensioner in Lambeth £15. David Mekle, Stirling £3.80, Sue Hunter, Hackney £4.50, Shaun and Janice Dakin £10; Bethnal Green school student £1, M Quinn SOGAT, Nottingham £6, S Halford £2; B Shepperson, NALGO £2. T North £2, Chris Bastow (Derby) £3 and Sheila McHead £3. A Fraser £5, M Hulin £2, A Buckley £10, R Hopkin £5, GL Vincent £50; B Navro £4.75, T Paterson £25.

By Steve Morgan

A crash course for new Militant readers

HAS YOUR area laid plans for a series of discussion groups as a 'crash course' in Marxism for new readers?

The *Introduction to Marxism* pack (£2.50), containing eight basic pamphlets forms an ideal basis for six weekly or fortnightly discussions on: *What Militant Stands For*, *The State, Is Russia Socialist*, *Northern Ireland*, *An Introduction to Marxism* and *How will socialism be achieved?*

Included are study notes which provide a brief in-

roduction to the topics together with questions and suggestions for further reading.

Fighting back

Local elections are on 8 May in most areas of the country. This year national issues, Liverpool and Lambeth will be more prominent than ever before. What is a Marxist strategy for Labour councils—how can they fight the cuts?

Suggested reading: *Liverpool Fights the Tories* (25p)—background to the

1984 campaign, *Militant International Review* No 31 (90p)—article on Liverpool, material in *Militant* in February/March 1985 on rate-capping.

Like the introduction pack, the *MIR* is an ideal basis for series of discussion groups, for example:

The History of Bolshevism—how the party that led the Russian Revolution was built. Apart from the articles in *MIR*, 29/30/31, and the accompanying C-90 cassette tape by Alan Woods (£1.25), the Marxist Study Guide on the



Russian Revolution (40p) has articles on the history of Bolshevism, and an extensive reading guide. Also articles in *Militant* nos 730 and 756 cover the 1905 revolution.

All books and pamphlets available from: World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB. Orders under £5 add 25 per cent post and packing. Over £5 add 10 per cent, over £10 post free.

A reply to David Blunkett by Tony Mulhearn

WHILE THE right wing of the Labour Party NEC has provided the main motive and the votes behind the witch-hunt, it has been former 'lefts' like Tom Sawyer, NUPE assistant general secretary, and David Blunkett, leader of Sheffield Council, who have provided cover for Neil Kinnock's left flank. David Blunkett in particular, through the pages of the paper *Tribune*, has sought to maintain his 'left' credentials, while repeating all the same distortions used by the right wing to justify their rampant McCarthyism. Here, TONY MULHEARN, president of Liverpool District Labour Party, replies to some of the more blatant of them in a recent article in *Tribune*.

Lambeth and Liverpool: practical help now is more use than promises of future legislation

NO ONE connected with the Labour Party can feel anything but shock and sympathy for the 80 councillors in Lambeth and Liverpool who faced judgement on March 5. Disentangling the Rates Act from deficit budgeting and both from party procedures and practices is an awesome task.

What seemed right a year ago can so easily be dismissed in disparaging terms with the benefit of hindsight by armchair observers, better on history than on action.

In the court case against Lambeth and Liverpool councillors, one of those sitting in judgement displayed his gross insensitivity, as well as his ignorance, by describing the actions of the

In May 1985, the National Executive Committee passed a resolution supporting those council standing firm against cuts in jobs and services but suggesting that no council should follow a particular tactic unless it was the "only way of protecting the people of their area."

At the October Conference, an NEC statement, as well as Composite Resolution 22, was carried without dissent. They committed the party to immediate lifting of disqualification not a difficult pledge as it is impossible to provide retrospective

RETROSPECTIVE

They also committed the party - as did the "Employment Rights" statement in respect of



threatened by an out-of-bench judiciary, acting on behalf of a Tory Government, then rationality could easily go out of the window.

Facing up to, and having the courage to carry through, decisions based on factual evidence, and ensuring that individuals account for themselves as representatives of the Labour movement, requires a steady nerve.

UNACCEPTABLE

Some of the facts have been spelt out clearly between September 5 and November 25 when the Liverpool District Labour Party was suspended by the NEC, not properly constituted, nor the District Labour Party

took place, despite the fact that this was the critical period during which the policies which were being issued were being taken into account.

tion to control recruitment with patronage and preferment, providing a disastrous block on all the equal opportunity commitments that we, as a democratically elected party, seek to promote.

So, acting on the evidence presented, refusing to be intimidated or dragged into counter-acting or accepting behaviour by those "in struggle" who proclaim that they did it in the name of "socialism", is not a matter of insensitivity. It is simply trying to do what is right on the evidence presented.

There is no party hearing or personal case to be answered by any of the Lambeth councillors or any part of the Liverpool District Labour Party Group. There has been a terrible mauling in the party and public mind, between different historic events, historic policies and personal actions, and between principle and manipulation.

Liverpool District Labour Party - the true facts

THE EDITOR, *Tribune*. David's call for funds to assist the surcharged councillors of Liverpool and Lambeth is obviously to be welcomed, but his attempt to justify why he is lining up with the right wing to expel socialists from the Labour Party sound like an editorial penned by one of the barons of Fleet Street or, at least, by the editor of the *Liverpool Echo*. His description of the way in which the "party's constitution and rules have been manipulated and broken" in Liverpool is breathtaking in its ignorance and inaccuracy.

I would like to answer some of the 'facts' as outlined by comrade Blunkett. He declares that between 5 September and 27 November no properly constituted normal delegate meetings of the District Labour Party took place. The fact is that between those dates, a period of some ten weeks, no less than seven meetings of delegates and members were convened, when all the major issues which Blunkett refers to were discussed.

Membership involved

These meetings involved delegates and party rank and file members as observers, who had no decision-making votes. It was precisely because of the great importance of the issues that the rank and file party membership were involved. These meetings were extended DLPs or 'aggregates' which have been a feature of party life in Liverpool for the last 30 years and have never been challenged.

He goes on to say that the executive committee met continually, having abrogated to itself (without a vote at the District Party) powers not possessed elsewhere. He makes no attempt to substantiate this piece of fiction with examples of what powers and when this took place. In fact the executive committee, in line with its responsibilities, made recommendations to party meetings and/or ensured that the decisions of the DLP were implemented.

Blunkett then makes the astonishing observation that "the same executive changed the rules for election to the executive committee and approved the 'manipulation' of delegations to the DLP itself". He makes no attempt to be specific about these pieces of slander, which are uttered with the reckless abandon of a Fleet Street hack.

The facts are that the methods



David Blunkett, Tony Mulhearn and Derek Hatton on demonstration in support of victimised councillors.

of voting for the executive committee have in Liverpool varied over the years. On some occasions the industrial delegates voted for the industrial section of the EC and the political delegates likewise. On other occasions the whole GMC voted for all the EC positions. On the last occasion I was advised by our previous full-time agent that the party rules provided for the whole GMC of the DLP to vote for all the EC positions and that was agreed at

the AGM without a challenge. As for the charge that 'manipulation' of delegations (whatever that means) was approved by the EC, that reveals Blunkett's total and profound ignorance of the internal workings of the party in Liverpool and, indeed, possibly in Sheffield. In Liverpool the method of affiliation has been determined by the trade unions. Some affiliate on a block basis, others on an individual branch basis. The

method of union affiliation is a matter for the trade unions and, far from the EC approving anything, the EC had no say in the matter. That is the way it has been since I joined the party 23 years ago and it was the case for decades before that.

He then tells your readers that aggregate meetings were sometimes called at a few hours notice by the telephone network, and "those who got to know were the ones who were able to

play a part. Wrong again David! All the delegates to the DLP received notices in good time by first class post. This was backed up by announcements in the local press and radio. It was left to the ward and CLP secretaries to inform the members who were not delegates, that they could attend this important meeting if they so wished.

He then, in a confused manner, attacks the 'nominating rights' which the trade unions had secured by negotiation. These rights were accepted by all unions at local, regional and national levels—certainly I don't recall any union objecting to them. If they were abused, and he does not seek to prove it, that is a matter between him and the unions. For my part if abuse did take place, it was never brought to the attention of the DLP. Had the DLP been aware of any abuse it would have made its position clear in no uncertain manner.

Badly misinformed

I am not suggesting that David Blunkett deliberately tells lies. So there must be a reason why he is so badly misinformed. The answer to that question is revealed in the final paragraph of his article. He has "read the majority and minority reports on the Liverpool District Labour Party!"

The majority report is a shabby document based on innuendo, malicious gossip and downright lies, and is the product of people who were so anxious to secure a guilty verdict that like many shyster lawyers they dressed up lies to look like the truth. In essence the minority report observes that certain of the procedures in Liverpool could be improved, but then states that there were no grounds for the suspension of the party and even less grounds for disciplinary action against any of its members. Before Comrade Blunkett goes into print again with a poisoned pen he would be well advised to check the facts with comrades who know what the facts are.

Tony Mulhearn
Liverpool District
Labour Party President

Photo: Dave Sinclair.



LPYS contingent on march to Wapping.

Printers can win

NEW REALISM is on the rampage amongst the leaders of the print unions. Stemming from the defeat at Warrington they lacked the understanding of that dispute to formulate policies necessary to defend the members from the employers' attacks. Murdoch is attacking at the front while the other press barons are hitting us from behind. The

result of this present onslaught will be felt throughout the entire industry. There is a fear of extending the strike to the rest of Fleet Street and then to the print workers employed in the rest of the industry. The uncertainty about the response and where else it would lead paralyses the trade union tops. This issue will have to be faced if our in-

fluence in the industry is not to be destroyed. The left in the print industry must now challenge the present leaders, especially in terms of policies. The BLOC conference provides the ideal opportunity for the left to come together and thrash out the programme needed to defend the industry.

By Peter Jarvis

Build t

For a fight

THE JOINT conference of the Broad Left Organising Committee and the Liverpool District Labour Party marks a new development in the fight to build the left in the trade union movement. Never before has the trade union left in Britain attempted a cross-union campaign on such a scale and orientated towards the Labour Party.

The issues at stake are crucial to the working class. The future of the Labour Party and the nature of the next Labour government are at stake in the present fight against expulsions and witch-hunts. The present attacks on the left of the party differ from previous attacks in that the initiative for them comes from within certain trade unions rather than the party itself. The role of the trade union Broad Lefts in defeating these attacks is therefore crucial.

AFTER NEARLY seven years of Tory war on our living standards and democratic rights, trade unionists are rightly looking forward to the early election of a Labour government which will reverse all the public expenditure cuts and scrap all the anti-trade union legislation. Unfortunately, the indications from the Labour Party leadership over the past couple of years is that they do not intend to reverse, or even attempt to reverse, much of the economic attacks of the Tories. They have recently taken the logic of their position to its con-

Liverpool DLP - 'end t

WHILE THE Liverpool Labour councillors are being victimised by the Audit Commission for their defiance of Tory cuts, it is a scandal that these same councillors are subject to attack by the Labour and trade union leadership.

Other councils around the country—including many Labour-controlled—have simply passed on Tory cuts by higher rents, cuts in services and fewer jobs, but Liverpool stood firm. They defended jobs and created new ones; they have the best slum-clearance and house-building programme nationally, and they defied the Tories to spend money on new nursery schools. For these reasons the majority of Labour's rank and file look with admiration on Liverpool City Council.

Instead of lauding their magnificent achievements, the Labour leadership are determined to purge the Liverpool Party for having embarrassed them in their fight with the Tories. When

Liverpool was in struggle for more government cash, the leadership demanded cuts—not defiance—from Liverpool.

Yet Liverpool District Labour Party had carried out conference policy to the letter in 1984 and 1985, in refusing to pass on Tory cuts, even if it meant being forced along the road of budget "illegality". Moreover, the DLP, through its very large representation and the involvement of hundreds of rank and file members, was the most democratic and active in the country.

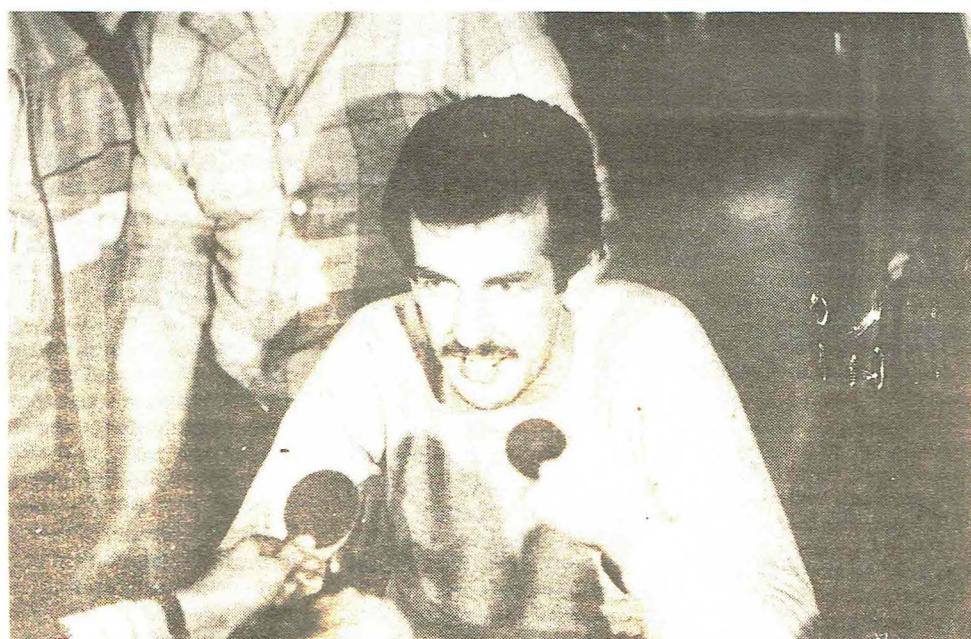
No DLP policy and no decisions were adopted over the heads or against the wishes of the rank and file of the Liverpool labour movement.

All kinds of lying allegations have since been made against the DLP by a tiny minority in the city and although they are not backed by any evidence whatsoever—hence the mysterious "confidentiality" of the charges—the right

wing of the NEC are using them as a pretext to purge the DLP. Since the decision of the NEC to investigate it, the DLP has been suspended and the 250 strong body replaced by a 'Temporary Co-ordinating Committee' of a few dozen.

The ranks of the Labour Party must protest against this blatant attempt by the NEC to impede and interfere in the local democracy of a District Labour Party. If the NEC right wing are allowed to get away with their wholesale witch-hunt in Liverpool they will be prepared to do the same in any part of the country.

As many delegates as possible should attend the Sheffield conference from trade union and Labour Party bodies. It is essential that the grass roots of the trade unions and Labour Party make their voice heard to defend Liverpool, defend the democracy of local parties and the rights of party members, and fight back against the slide to the right in the party leadership.



GMB convenor Ian Lowes, now threatened with expulsion from the Labour Party, announces the unanimous 'yes' vote for strike action in support of Liverpool council last year. This decision at a mass meeting of 1,100 typifies the traditions of involving the widest membership possible in Branch 5 activities.

G&M branch 5 fights right's threat

LOCAL GENERAL Municipal and Boilermakers' Union activists have been a central force in building the campaign to defend jobs and services in Liverpool. They are now under attack from their own leadership as part of the national witch-hunt against Liverpool council and Militant.

Liverpool Branch Five, the main target, has a long and

proud history of fighting for jobs and services, particularly under the Liberal/Tory controlled council. During this period it was the only branch never to lose a job but in fact increase its staffing levels.

Expulsion

The branch, and in particular Ian Lowes, the convenor, now facing expulsion from the Labour Party, was instrumen-

tal in forming the GMB Senior Representatives' Committee and the City Joint Shop Stewards' Committee. Both have played a role throughout the past few years in organising the fightback authority workers.

"We would proudly record second to none democratic participation membership" said a committee member: members are amongst

the left

fighting trade union leadership

clusion by launching warfare on the left of the party to make sure that if and when they are elected to power the pressure on them to implement socialist policies will be minimal. These threats must be defeated. The trade unions are the key to success. The joint conference will bring together probably the largest gathering of rank and file trade unionists. With their counterparts in the Labour Party they will thrash out a strategy of how to defeat the witch-hunt in the Labour Party and make sure that the party fights the next election

committed to socialist policies, and then carries them out. The Broad Left Organising Committee is an umbrella organisation for 20 or so trade union broad lefts. Its aim is to transform the trade union movement into a campaigning movement committed to fighting for its members' interests. BLOC believes that the right-wing leaderships of the trade unions have been too timid in their opposition to the Tory government and that by a mass mobilisation of the members in opposition to the Tories' attacks, the government

would be defeated. BLOC is campaigning to equip the trade unions with radical fighting leaderships. Trade union broad lefts can play a key role in ensuring a successful conference. Broad lefts should use publicity material, circulating supporters and activists to ensure maximum trade union presence. Get your trade union organisation to send delegates to the conference.

By George Williamson
(Organising Secretary,
Broad Left
Organising Committee)

BLOC

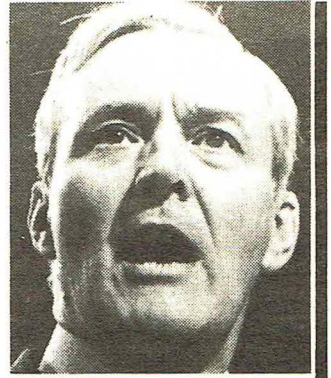
Liverpool Labour Party

Conference

Sheffield City Hall
Saturday 19 April

Speakers include:
Tony Benn, Arthur Scargill
Derek Hatton

Apply for credentials to:
BLOC, PO Box 464,
London E5 8PT.
Enclose £3 per delegate



the witch-hunt'



Members of Liverpool Labour Party and Militant supporters lobby Labour's NEC meeting last week.

active. Rarely does the branch attendance fall below 70 and attendances of over 100 are common at the monthly branch meetings".

Despite this record an inquiry has taken place into various branch structures. Without notice to the branch, without consultation and without even the pretext of seeking agreement, the regional committee has decided to dismember Branch Five and two other branches.

Gains in pay and conditions for members of the branch in the static security force, and the parks and cemeteries sections have been made only by the united strength of the whole branch.

Static security workers, once amongst the lowest paid and downtrodden, sometimes working 100 hours a week have recently won a 35-hour week

agreement with an average wage of £160.

Whatever the pretext upon which the attack is made, the real reason is clear. One member said:

"We made no friends of the national and regional leadership with our refusal to accept the Stonefrost report sell-out last November, despite the demands of John Edmonds the General Secretary".

The branch's members will not accept any reorganisation without consultation and agreement: "We will be pleased to consider any proposals to improve the service our members receive and to strengthen our organisation. But we give notice; we've never accepted the imposition of unfavourable works practices or anything else from management and we'll not accept that from the union either."

Miners' pledge to save pits

TORY PUPPET MacGregor has axed 31,000 pit jobs since the end of the miners' strike. Now activists in the NUM have set up a national broad left to fight against pit closures.

Its aim is to become an open democratic body which campaigns for:

- One union for the industry and smashing the scab Union of Democratic Miners.
- Five-yearly election of all full-time officials. Miners' representatives on miners' wages.
- Reinstatement of all victimised miners.
- Release of all jailed miners.
- NUM annual conference to consist of delegates elected from each pit or unit.

Recognising that threatened pits cannot be left in isolation the founding broad left conference called for a full scale campaign against pit closures. The mood which clearly exists for a fightback must be turned into an organised force.

Following the tremendous victory at Darfield Main colliery, which won a reprieve against closure, miners at Kinsly Drift in South Yorkshire have decided to stand firm against the NCB's plans to close this pit which is only six years old.

The broad left will campaign for members of the Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC) movement to become associate members of the union. WAPC members will be invited to play a full role in building the broad left with full voting rights.

Local broad lefts will be set up in areas where none yet exist and a further conference will be organised in September.

The area and national leaders of the NUM can contribute to the growth of the broad left by throwing their weight behind it. Negotiations by themselves will not halt the pit-closure programme. Only the organised might of the membership can defend our interests.

By Chris Herriot
(Sacked miner)

ALISTAIR GRAHAM, ultra-right wing General Secretary of the CPSA has jumped overboard from the ship of the trade union movement and joined the sharks in the surrounding sea as he was always destined to do.

Two years ago the *Daily Mail* said: "The most bitter sneer levelled against Alistair Graham is that he was left wing when it suited his ends, but has now turned right wing for his own advancement. He accepts there's an element of truth in this..."

Just as Sidney Weighell, ex-General Secretary of the NUR, was forced out of office by the pressure of the rank and file, so Graham has fled a trade union which has become too hostile to his ludicrously outdated ideas of "co-operation" with the Tories.

As the *Financial Times* pointed out, the special pay conference of the CPSA on 21 January was one of the last indignities which prompted Graham's final decision. But that was only the final part of a long process which began as soon as Graham had been elected as General Secretary in 1981. For a man who preaches 'compromise' and 'co-existence' with the Tories, ie. class betrayal, he practised outright warfare with the Broad Left.

He believed that CPSA could negotiate with the Tories and avoid struggle. Yet he could not fulfil a single union conference policy on pay or conditions through these negotiations. On new technology, those sections of CPSA prepared to use their industrial muscle got the best deals. The national union has not fared so well.

Graham toadied to the Tories and arrogantly abused his own membership. Like the general who shoots his own troops Graham ended his career with no army.

Graham was proud about Militant supporters a genuine first members he would live with continued refusal to in struggle, whether they be printers at Warrington or computer operators at Newcastle Central Office, made ordinary CPSA members increasingly distrust him. His incredible statement on the steps of Congress House to excuse his betrayal of the NGA that "...they have not been transported to Australia yet..." shocked many CPSA members. Marxist historians of the CPSA

will date the beginnings of Graham's end from his visit to Newcastle Central Office when his views were mercilessly destroyed at a meeting of 1600 clerks, typists and other workers. They reaffirmed their confidence in the Militant supporters who led the branch. Graham's confidence was visibly shaken.

Only weeks later, the Department of National Savings branch in Glasgow elected a Broad Left leadership, 10 of whom were Militant supporters. They were elected by the very system Graham was urging Newcastle Central Office to use—the secret ballot.

By then, even by CPSA standards, the whole union was in political turmoil. The Communist Party inspired split-off, Broad Left '84, were losing branch after branch to the Broad Left at annual general meetings. The right wing had split into two opposing factions and one of the most effective members of the Broad Left, secretary of DHSS Newcastle Centre Office, Doreen Purvis, had been co-opted onto the NEC.

Graham did not relish another CPSA Annual Conference. The 1984 conference order paper had 400 motions of censure of the general secretary. At 1985 conference Graham was ignominiously defeated in his attempts to force through an undemocratic merger with its sister Civil Service union the SCPS. He was defeated on a whole string of other policy questions including the Newcastle and Washington shiftworkers dispute, elections of full time officials and the NUM dispute.

The CPSA Broad Left, which has grown in size and influence since the Communist Party walk-out, can win a majority for the left in the NEC elections.

If the left win then the general secretaryship is there for the taking. Only the effort and sweat of the Broad Left can make this a reality.

The Broad Left candidate, John McCready can win the support of CPSA members on the platform of regular elections for general secretary who is subject to recall at any time and only accepts the wage of a skilled worker.

The Broad Left can become a mass organisation wielding enormous influence. Nothing can prevent it—save complacency. We must ensure this does not happen.

By Bill Boyle

France

Prospects for the French left



L'Avance Socialiste—French Marxist paper. Order from: World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.

ON 16 MARCH the French Socialist government was brought down. A new period of right-wing government lies ahead—a period of instability and intense class struggles, which could possibly culminate in a new revolutionary crisis like that of 1968.

In the years ahead, the experiences of the working class during five years of left government will throw their shadow over developments in all the workers' organisations—the Socialist Party (PS), the Communist Party (PC) and the trade unions. The lessons of these five years will need to be well learned by the rank and file in order to avoid even more serious defeats in the future.

In Britain, labour activists must study the lessons of the French Socialist government, to prepare for the likely events following the re-election of a Labour government.

Following their 1981 election victory, the PS leadership (then in coalition with the PC) enjoyed great prestige in the ranks of the party and the working class. This support grew in the initial period as significant reforms were carried out.

But these reforms stopped short of attacking the power of the capitalist class. As a result, the Socialist government was left managing the capitalist economy—just at a time when the system was sliding into crisis, demanding ruthless cuts in workers' living standards.

Five years of Socialist government have ensured that the PS leaders will not again encounter the same unquestioning trust and support as in 1981. Increasingly clear demands will be made on them to struggle on a workers' programme.

Already in October 1981, Finance Minister Delors was calling for a "pause" in the reform programme. The leaders' policy of stimulating capitalist growth by means of increasing living standards was running into the sand.

The U-turn of June 1982, imposing a wage freeze, a series of austerity measures and cuts in social spending came as a terrible shock to the party rank and file.

But one after another the leaders of the various political tendencies in the PS fell into line with the new policies. Jean-Pierre Chevènement, leader of the left-wing CERES tendency,

By Philippe Roland

declared that party members should "not deceive themselves as to the options which are open to us. Socialism is not on the order of the day".

Electorate support began to fall away. Given the lack of organised opposition to the policies of the leadership, party activists (and particularly the workers among them) became increasingly demoralised. Their number went down to about one third of the 1982 figure.

The Young Socialist organisation (MJS)—crushed by the party leadership in 1975 and reconstituted on an undemocratic basis—was weak to begin with, and now virtually collapsed.

In the Paris region, for example, out of a population of 10 million, the MJS does not have more than 150 activists, of which 90 per cent are students. An all-Paris MJS meeting "for young workers" in 1983 underlined the sorry state of the French YS. Not a single person turned up, not even the speaker!

Throughout 1982 and 1983 the economic situation got worse. The first austerity programme was followed by another in 1983.

Threatened with massive redundancies, workers in many sectors—steel, shipbuilding, the car industry, mining—moved into struggle. But they were cruelly defeated, betrayed by the leaders of the PC and CGT (Communist-led trade union federation) who, despite occasional pleas and grumblings, supported the austerity programme in practice.

The strike movement ebbed away. The number of strikes fell to its lowest level since 1975.

In July 1983 Fabius (son of a millionaire) was appointed Prime Minister, marking a further shift to the right in government policy. In his opening speech to parliament, Fabius flattered the right-wing deputies, and invited some of them to work "by my side" in the working out of government policy!

As a result of internal crisis, the PC resigned from the government. Support for



Workers in Renault saw 20,000 jobs in the nationalised company disappear under the Socialists.



Thatcher and Mitterrand. She commended the French Socialist government for finally turning to monetarism.

the PS was falling even further. But the only response of the party leaders around Fabius was to move still more to the right.

Move right

Initially, encouraged by the applause of big business (only too happy to see the government dig its own grave), Fabius proposed that the PS should not present its own lists in the elections, but should instead form a "Republican Front" with sections of the right! This suggestion provoked uproar in the party and on the *Comité Directeur* (130-strong leading body).

Fabius was forced to retreat. He then proposed, in his usual veiled and deceptive language, that if the PS should reach 30 per cent in the elections, it should look

to forming a government with part of the Right. This question dominated the 1985 party congress in Toulouse.

The PS right wing were all set to have a field day at the congress. They wanted the *Declaration de Principes* (the equivalent of Clause 4 in the British Labour Party) thoroughly revised. Party secretary Jospin was ready to concede. Fabius felt sure of gaining support for a coalition.

But the right wing were in for a shock. **The congress overwhelmingly defended the socialist principles enshrined in the Declaration, and rejected all talk of coalition with increasingly reactionary capitalist parties.**

This congress left party members with a mood of suspicion and wariness in relation to the leaders. One party secretary in the Paris

region, a lifelong supporter of Mitterrand, said: "Left is Left, and Right is Right. There's no way we can mix them up. In any case, if they (the leaders) try it, the party will explode".

Questioning

This watchful, critical mood was reinforced during the election campaign. Incident after incident added to the discontent in party ranks: the brutal police raid against the SKF factory mounted by Interior Minister Joxe; Fabius's concessions to the racist policies of the Right; the Greenpeace affair; the Beirut hostages crisis, throwing light on the massive support given to the Iraqi dictatorship; the protection given to Haitian dictator Duvalier; the arbitrary decision to denationalise the

"Europe 1" radio network; the granting of a new TV channel to private business sharks, including a certain 'socialist', the infamous Robert Maxwell—and then the election defeat itself.

All this has prepared the ground for a shift to the left in the coming period.

Five years of Socialist government have ensured that the PS leaders will not again encounter the same unquestioning trust and support as in 1981. Increasingly clear demands will be made on them to struggle on a workers' programme. Out and out right-wingers who cannot pass this test will face mounting opposition from the ranks.

As in the wake of the Russian revolution, as in the 1930s, strong left-wing currents are likely to develop in the PS under these conditions. The ideas of Marxism—wiped out during the post-war period, distorted and discredited by Stalinism and by ultra-left sectarians—can make serious headway.

Marxism alone will clearly explain the central lesson of the Socialist government: by failing to break with the capitalist system, it ended up doing its bidding. A programme of massive mobilisation and struggle is needed to end this system, to nationalise the monopolies which dominate the economy, to bring them under workers' control and management, and establish a democratic plan of production to meet the needs of working people.

US strikers ground TWA

"ALL TOGETHER 6,000 of us with an average of 14 years' service to TWA are on strike.

"Our union, IFFA has offered TWA a salary reduction of 15 per cent. We don't like the idea of giving that much and we're not sure it's really necessary. But we've agreed to do it because the men and women we work with are giving 15 per cent.

"TWA are rejecting our 15 per cent offer. They've said time and time again that they want fewer of us to work for more time for far less money. We can't do it, even if it means striking. We have to lay it all on the line" (from strike leaflet).

TWA are demanding a 22 per cent wage cut and a further 22 per cent cut in living standards through a combination of attacks on hours,

overtime pay, fares, etc. Union negotiators have said that the extra two hours a week air time demanded would translate into an extra 20 hours away from home. 6,800 flight attendants, members of IFFA, walked out on 6 March. As of 11 March only 40-50 have crossed picket lines. The union have also had strong

By Steve Poole

support from the IAM (the union representing 10,000 technicians, maintenance and ground crew members).

Untrained

TWA are operating only 20 per cent of flights with non-union labour, trained in only 18 days on eight different kinds of aircraft. Normally the training course would be five weeks! On a TV phone-in one passenger complained that one of these attendants did not know the difference between the oxygen supply and the fire extinguisher!

TWA's financier-owner, Carl Kahn, talks of the IFFA disparagingly as a union of women earning pin-money, who do not need a breadwinner's wage.



Flight attendants want no more concessions.

Because of the strike TWA have already lost two or three times what they were attempting to save by the clawback. They have now cut prices by 30 per cent in an effort to keep customers.

Pickets are out at major airports. The two-million strong Teamsters' Union has pledged support and in Bri-

tain the TGWU have instructed their employers employed by TWA in the UK not to train as cabin crew or to work as cabin crew stand-ins during the strike.

Messages of support to: IFFA, 630 Third Avenue (5th Floor), New York, NY 10017, USA.

...dole figures soar

THIS MONTH the US jobless rate has soared from 6.6 per cent to 7.2 per cent in the largest rise for almost six years. The unemployment rate for Hispanics is now 12.3 per cent.

Manufacturing employment fell particularly in Illinois, where lay-offs have sent that state's unemployment to 9.5 per cent. The slumping oil industry in Texas has pushed unemployment there to 8.4 per cent.

Since these figures were announced on 7 March General Motors have decided to halt production temporarily at four assembly plants in what car industry analysts describe as the first round of cuts needed to bring car supplies into line with sales demand. GM will be laying off 10,600 workers at their four plants.

Pinochet sells off schools



IN CHILE, 828 secondary schools, representing 350,000 students and 20,000 teachers are to be sold to the private sector in line with the Pinochet junta's commitment to "adjust itself to the IMF's impositions to reduce public spending".

The regime's attitude to education was further revealed by its award of a medal for "educational and cultural achievements" to Paraguay's Education Minister. Paraguay, now the only other military regime in South America has one of the highest illiteracy rates of the continent.

..and dollar heads for crash landing

BRITISH commentators may not have noticed it (for the pound sterling has troubles of its own) but the dollar is limping in to crash land.

At the moment the dollar has fallen by over a third against the Deutschmark and the yen in over a year. It has slumped to a record low of 175 yen, from 256 in March 1985.

How has the dollar "walked on water" for so long and why is it drowning now?

By Mick Brooks

Normally the level of a currency is held to reflect the state of the national economy compared with the other capitalist powers. A low level of investment will hold back the productivity of labour and cause goods to be dearer and uncompetitive on the world market.

Dearer goods will mean more imports than exports—a balance of payments deficit. Speculators in foreign exchange will show their contempt for the deficit by selling the national currency short—a devaluation.

Hot money

The system is supposed to be self-adjusting. Devaluation means that you can buy less foreign goods with the same amount of currency. Imports cost more but your own exports suddenly become cheaper, so more is exported and less imported, and the imbalance rights itself. Beautiful, but beautiful nonsense.

Since the Second World War Britain has generally been caught in a tide of devaluations or government deflations.

Deflation is intended to do the same job as devaluation

in response to foreign competition. Deflation, or 'stop-go', means the government deliberately slowing down the economy by making people poorer, so they cannot afford so many imports. Of course, as soon as the economy picks up again, the imports flood in because of the built-in weakness of the British economy.

The paradox of the past few years has been that the weakness and decline of US capitalism has coincided with a 'super dollar'. From a low point of \$2.45 to the pound in 1980 the dollar soared to \$1.15 by February last year. Yet the US share in the world export of goods fell from 17 per cent to 12.6 per cent during the same period and two million jobs were lost in American manufacturing industry.

Why didn't the dollar go down? Cheap imports flooded in, wiping out whole industries, and provoking squeals for tariffs on shoes, textiles, steel and cars.

The dollar's flight of fancy reflected not the harmonious adjustment of trade flows, but the convulsive movement of hot money in

search of the highest rate of interest. For the world of foreign exchange now makes world money the plaything of immensely rich people and institutions.

From 1979-84 while trade in goods went up 17 per cent, international money transactions doubled. While world exports amounted to \$7 billion a day, world foreign exchange movements reached \$150 billion a day! No longer a means to an end, to trade, money has become supreme lord. Speculation in money is an end in itself—and an enormously profitable one at that.

The money men targeted the dollar because the USA in the early 1980s offered the highest interest rates. Stateside interest rates soared to pay for the monster government deficit, which stood last year at \$200 billion.

Boom undermined

Reagan's boom in arms spending has brought a rosy flush to the whole world economy over the past few years—at least compared with what it would otherwise be—but it's all been paid for on the 'never-never'.

Higher borrowing has required the highest interest rates, which has sucked money into the US from all over the world. The capital inflow has created the 'super dollar'.

The contradiction is that the stratospheric height of the dollar, by making US goods uncompetitive has undermined the Reagan boom which produced it.



Reagan meets West German Chancellor Kohl. The Dollar has declined against the Deutschmark.

Ronald Reagan has just discovered there's no such thing as a free MX missile. The administration's best hope now is to work for a

'soft landing' for the dollar otherwise international capitalism as a whole could suffer a damaging jolt.

Hungary's young workers warn Stalinist regime

POLICE BATON-charged hundreds of youth in Budapest on 17 March in the worst political violence in Hungary for many years.

The youth had broken away from the official demonstration on the anniversary of the 1848 war of independence. Clashes broke out when the police tried to stop them and to confiscate underground literature.

The violence is a symptom of growing discontent among working people, with the youth as ever in the forefront.

Hungary was, for a time, the most successful of the Stalinist states of Eastern

Europe. Now it is stagnating, with agricultural output actually declining by 3 per cent in 1985, and inflation at 7 per cent eating up wage rises.

The regime is calling for cuts today in return for jam tomorrow, but its promises are cutting no ice with workers. Even at the official trade union congress held recently, 42 delegates voted against government policy—a sign of the groundswell of struggle building up for genuine workers' democracy.

New York socialist backs Liverpool battle

Dear Editors,

In my recent visit to England I stayed longer in Liverpool than I had intended, fascinated by the battle going on there.

I enclose a donation for the *Militant* because the tendency must be supported.

There is no other tendency in England which is able and willing to represent and fight for the needs of the people of England, and Liverpool is a prime example of that fact. I attended every meeting which was held locally.

The Labour Party hall was packed with people of every age from young to old. The speeches on the floor were made by the retired, union members and others, including Militants and all were strong in defence of the city's govern-

ment and elicited strong applause from the audience when they sat down. The two lone critics who spoke up, sat down in silence from the floor. I cannot believe that Neil Kinnock's right wing can take over Liverpool.

Sometimes one must take one step backward to move two steps forward the next time around. You can't kill ideas and that's what the movement is rich in.

It was a fascinating visit for me. With my best wishes and support,
Betty Traun
New York

Community bullying

Dear Comrades,

While I was selling *Militant* outside Notting Hill Gate tube station recently, I was approached by two men who informed me that they were plain clothes police officers.

I smiled and offered them a copy of the paper, which they didn't appreciate. Moments later they pinned me up against a wall and searched me in a particular-

ly unsociable manner.

I was told that I couldn't sell 'dirty commie rags' and that if they saw me selling *Militant* again I would be arrested.

I continue to sell *Militant* at Notting Hill but do not look forward to more examples of community policing.

Yours fraternally
Billy Saunders
Westminster North LPYS

Letters

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

What Labour said in 1984

Dear Comrades,

At a time when the right wing are disgracefully trying to persecute those councillors who had the guts to stand up against government spending cuts, it is worth reminding ourselves exactly what Labour Party policy for the 1985/6 budgets was when it was circulated from Walworth Road on 25 July 1984.

The NEC statement of policy then stated that budgets should be constructed "in accordance with local wishes, to protect services and jobs and to acknowledge the growing needs of those communities most hit by Conservative (policies)... even if the resulting budget is out of line with government policy."

And the NEC were not unaware of the possible consequences of such action. It

stated quite explicitly that: "Non-compliance could lead to some councils being unable to fix a rate. For others it could mean running out of money for essential services."

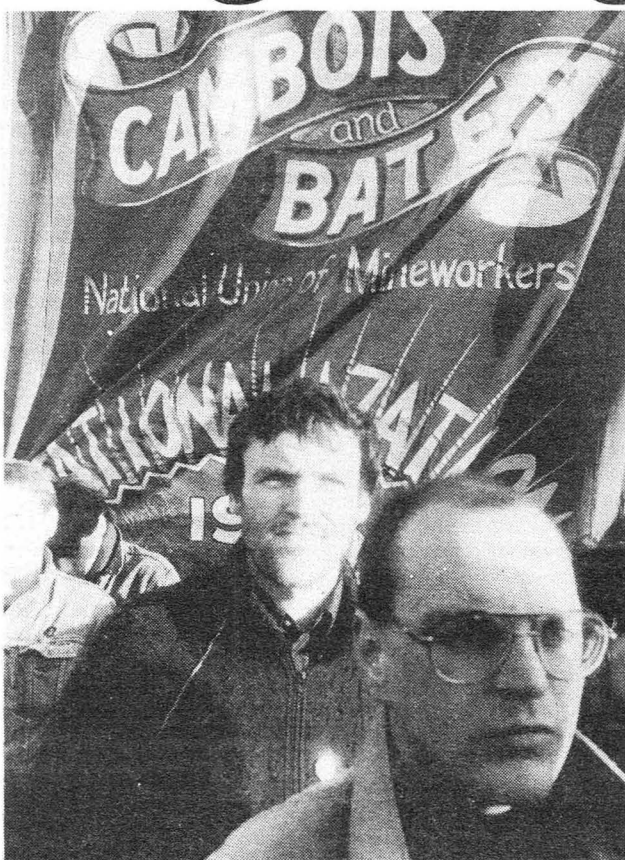
In his covering letter then General Secretary Jim Mortimer further emphasised that "the issue at stake is one of democracy and freedom. The NEC therefore fully supports those councils forced into confrontation due to these Government policies."

Contrast that with the likes of John Cunningham who now grovel before the capitalist press trying to pretend that these things were never said—or that if they were said they were never meant to be taken seriously!

Yours fraternally,
Ian Hunter
Sacrison Labour Party

Disgusting prisons

Photo: Dave Sinclair



Hundreds of miners were imprisoned after the strike for fighting for their jobs. Many Yorkshire miners ended up in Armley prison.

Dear Comrades,

The conditions inside Armley Prison, Leeds, for the majority of prisoners are cramped and dirty, with three men sharing a cell measuring 12 ft by 8 ft, for 23 hours a day.

Food is insufficient and usually cold. Toilet and washing facilities are laughably inadequate, skin disorders are rife.

The so-called 'sick-parade' would also be laughable if it were not so serious. Prisoners have only one opportunity to report sick during the day, before breakfast. Prisoners reporting sick usually have to wait at least eight hours before seeing a 'doctor' who will hand out the inevitable 'aspirin water', whatever the ailment.

I have seen a whole line of men treated this way, whose complaints ranged from blinding migraine and violent stomach ache (which later led to a burst appendix) to athletes' foot.

Young prisoners are sharing cells with adults, even

though they are supposed to be kept separate.

Bullying, fighting and intimidation among prisoners is commonplace. The prison officers and in-mates clearly hate each other. The staff treat in-mates with open contempt and as a result the atmosphere is always close to boiling over.

The work, and that is increasingly rare because of lack of staff to supervise, is monotonous, soul destroying labour with no value for the prisoner.

It is obvious that the prison system needs looking at with serious view to change. The Tory government preaches law and order, yet has not the system to enforce or accommodate it.

Armley prison is disgusting. Too much goes on that should not. The remarkable thing is that so many people know this, yet nothing is done.

Yours fraternally
Doncaster
Militant supporter

Lucky Jim's priority list

Photo: Militant



Jim Callaghan's solution for homelessness—build a theatre.

Dear Comrades,

This year for the first time in 40 years, Cardiff City Council, now Tory controlled, are building no new council houses despite the fact that the number on the waiting list has now soared over 5,000.

What has former Prime Minister Jim Callaghan, MP for Cardiff South and Perth, declared as the three targets he would set for the future in Cardiff?

Firstly, that we build a new County Hall, secondly, that Cardiff host the 1994 Commonwealth Games and thirdly, that a theatre and opera house be built in Cardiff's docklands—Great stuff, Jim!

Yours fraternally
Chris Peace
Cardiff

Expulsions

Dear Comrades,

I am a member of the Co-op Party and the Labour Party. I joined the Co-op in 1941.

My family have been loyal members of the Co-op for 84 years.

Now because I support the *Militant* and give a donation to the paper, some prejudiced and intolerant people want to expel me from the Co-op Party.

This at a time when sections of the Co-op are declining. This is not the way to attract new members, or get young people to join the Co-operative movement.

I shall continue to support the *Militant*. We must not let the witch-hunts succeed.

Yours fraternally
Peggie Burke
Edinburgh



Morning Star-gazers

THE LINE of the Communist Party took yet another turn for the worse recently. In Kensington and Chelsea CP candidates in the local elections are cynically exploiting gullible trendies in the area by informing voters of their star signs. According to one CP spokesperson: "I'm not a believer in horoscopes, but there's a good deal of interest among voters in the ward."

NOLS attacks weaken Labour in Wales

WELSH LABOUR Student (WLS) candidate, Simon Kezic has been narrowly defeated in the election for the National Union of Students (NUS) Wales President. After the first ballot was a tie, 33-33, the second resulted in a 35-32 victory for a Liberal student.

Setback

The result undoubtedly represented a setback for the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS), just three weeks before the NUS UK executive elections, where Vicky Phillips, the NOLS candidate faces a

strong challenge from Labour Party member Andy White.

Nevertheless the conference was a major success for WLS with five of its candidates elected to the NUS Wales executive, and a Labour Student majority maintained on the Steering Committee.

The successes are a testament to the work done by WLS over the course of the last few years, in particular in the leadership of the South East Wales Students' Association (SEWSA).

Last October there was a strike of 20,000 students against cuts and the Fowler

Green paper with a rally of 1,000. There was a mass mobilisation for the NUS demo in Sheffield in November. In January over 600 students occupied Cardiff City Hall against the Fowler proposals. Campaigns have received support from 12 unions.

Labour majority

The achievements of Labour Students in SEWSA were shown when seven out of eight Labour candidates were elected unopposed and the eighth elected unanimously to ensure a Labour majority in the

leadership of SEWSA for another year.

These achievements, however, have come in the face of a systematic and nationally co-ordinated campaign to undermine the work of WLS, by the Kinnockite NOLS leadership.

This culminated in moves to convene a rigged WLS conference in order to impose a witch-hunting 'Democratic Left' leadership on the Welsh region, which will be wholly unrepresentative of the rank and file of Labour Students in Wales.

The attacks on WLS, were the major factors in the defeat of the Labour

presidential candidate for NUS Wales by a Liberal.

Challenge impaired

Labour's challenge for the presidency was also seriously impaired by the actions of two Labour Party members, Richard Marshall and Richard Dunwoodie, both of whom have stood against Labour candidates in the past.

Marshall, retiring NUS Wales president openly canvassed against Labour candidate Simon Kezic, and played a leading role in organising the Liberals' cam-

paign. Dunwoodie, a former NOLS member on the NUS further education national committee, actively discouraged delegates from voting for Kezic because of his support for *Militant*'s ideas.

The Democratic Left leadership of NOLS, and their supporters in Wales have cost NUS Wales a Labour presidency, and thus the possibility of losing a Labour majority on the NUS UK executive.

By Pete Farrow
(WLS rep on the NOLS NC in personal capacity)



The picket line outside the hospital in October 1984.

Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)

Strikers demand union recognition

Background to privatisation

IN OCTOBER 1984, OCS, a cleaning firm which previously only had experience of military hospitals, was awarded the £700,000 cleaning contract at Cambridge's prestige hospital, Addenbrooke's.

Cleaning domestics, disgusted at the pay offered by OCS and appalled at the conditions under which they were expected to work have been on strike ever since.

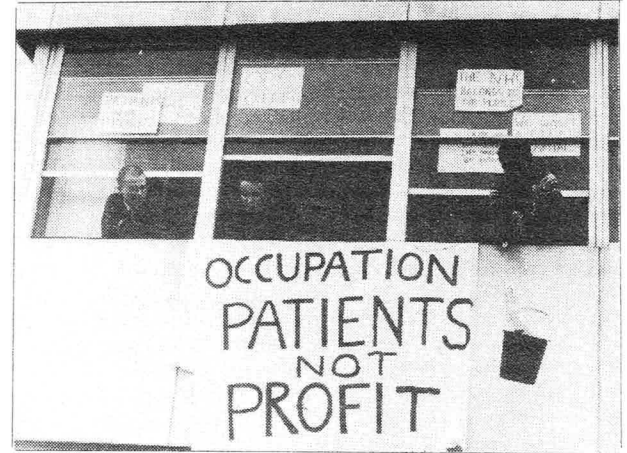
The contract was awarded by the District Health Authority (DHA). Members of this body are appointed by central government. A minority are nominated by the local council and trade unions.

Representatives of health trade unions are not allowed to be members of the DHA. The DHA therefore retains an inbuilt Tory ma-

ajority and members usually have no experience of the health service. It thus makes an ideal vehicle for pushing through the Tories' privatisation measures.

A recently-leaked Department of Health and Social Security document shows that the DHAs are under even more government pressure to favour private firms in competition for cleaning tenders. It will be more difficult to cancel the contracts of firms giving inadequate service and impossible to pay private contractors over and above the tender price if this is found necessary to maintain standards. Furthermore DHAs will be forbidden to ask contractors about wage levels and union recognition.

Graham Heneghan, an Addenbrooke's striker, and Robin Pye of Cambridge LPYS explain the issues surrounding the long-running Addenbrooke's hospital strike which was recently abandoned by the union leaderships



Leadership fails

THE 1983 TUC Congress promised a national campaign against privatisation. The Addenbrooke's strikers have seen little evidence of this national campaign.

While bus drivers, Post Office workers and binmen responded magnificently to the women's call not to cross picket lines, COHSE and NUPE full-timers followed a policy of negotiating better conditions with OCS while counting on 'public opinion' to throw OCS out.

It is now clear that the union leadership totally under-estimated the ruthlessness of the bosses' Tory champions. Despite the fact that the case against OCS is overwhelming the DHA have not budged.

The only 'concession' that the leadership have won for the Addenbrooke's strikers is the possibility of jobs in other hospitals. This was unacceptable to the striking domestics whose determination and militancy had grown through the course of the strike.

Caught between the determination of the strikers and the intransigence of management the union leaderships began to use devious methods to end the strike without compromising their anti-privatisation rhetoric.

Sabotage

● September 1985. Addenbrooke's strikers in Doncaster to address a public meeting found leaflets for the meeting confiscated by union officials on the pretext that the strike was over. Similar rumours were reported by other trade unionists in the Cambridge area.

● October 1985. NUPE withheld £2,000 unanimously voted through by South Eastern Divisional Conference for a minibus for the strikers to assist with picketing and campaigning.

● November 1985. £500 of NUPE strike pay mysteriously 'held up' in the system.

● December 1985. Porters on strike in sympathy with

the domestics told by management that their unions had agreed they should go back to work or face the sack.

● December 1985. 'Compromise' deal put to strikers by union officials. Unanimously rejected.

● January 1986. Strike pay of remaining striking porter stopped.

● February 1986. Appeals from Cambridge Labour Party and Cambridge Trades Council that NUPE buy strikers the minibus ignored.

This pattern has been followed at other hospitals where similar disputes have been going on. Addenbrooke's is the first dispute where the strikers have resisted all pressures and refused to accept the leadership's 'deal'.

Unofficial

So the leadership of COHSE and NUPE were forced to take the step of declaring the strike unofficial. COHSE NEC member Chris Brace commented on 20 February: 'It's bloody disgusting. There's meant to be a campaign against privatisation. What campaign? The NEC has lost the bottle for it'.

The refusal of NUPE and COHSE leaderships to fight privatisation has been exposed.

Cambridge Labour Party and local trade unions have protested against the decision to make the strike unofficial. The local labour movement and especially the LPYS have responded to the decision by redoubling their support for the strikers. Messages of support are coming in from all over the country.

The Addenbrooke's strikers appeal to all NUPE and COHSE branches to send resolutions to their NECs condemning the leadership's position and asking them to reverse it. Speakers will be available on request.

All donations, messages of support and copies of resolutions please to: COHSE/NUPE, 44a Newnham Road, Cambridge.

Dirt on private cleaners

CAMBRIDGE DHA has remained almost immune to the barrage of complaints about falling standards in cleanliness.

Sylvia Burton was a cleaning supervisor at Addenbrooke's before she came out on strike and knows a thing or two about cleaning hospitals.

She points out: "One person cannot do in 10½ hours what three did in 24½ hours". This simple calculation was irrelevant to the DHA. It didn't matter to them that OCS were only to put in a low tender price by slashing staffing levels.

Every DHA is monitored by a Community Health Council (CHC) which is supposed to protect patients' interests. The CHC in Cambridge have vigorously condemned cleaning standards in Addenbrooke's since the contract was awarded to OCS.

Their chairman commented: "You make savings if you get a better service for the same money, or the same service for less money. There is no saving in reducing standards to the levels we have seen here".

Blood and bones

However, the DHA has no obligation to take any notice of the CHC and the Regional Health Authority even attempted to ban the CHC from Addenbrooke's at one stage for allegedly disrupting cleaning work at the hospital.

In March 1985 the DHA's own monitoring figures on cleaning standards in Addenbrooke's appeared and proved extremely embarrassing. Levels of cleanliness were found to be substantially below what was required. In



(Above) On the Addenbrooke's picket line and (below) Neil Kinnock meets Addenbrooke's striker Tessa Howes who presented him with a dossier on the dispute—with no result.

the case of the operating theatres—by as much as 70 per cent.

Still OCS were not removed from Addenbrooke's. Last month, blood and bone chips on the operating theatre floor again held up operations. OCS's only answer was to reprimand their over-worked workforce.

In May 1985 a staff nurse report slammed OCS, saying that cleaning standards were so low as to be dangerous. Low staffing levels and a high turnover in the workforce due to the low pay offered by OCS making it difficult to train cleaners were blamed for this.

One nurse directly attributed two deaths in the hospital to cross-infection produced by dirt OCS left. A doctor and local represen-

tative of the British Medical Association said: "The DHA has sat and watched the grime thicken instead of terminating this unfortunate contract".

Many of the nurses at Addenbrooke's are student nurses. They have been persuaded to cover for OCS's deficient cleaning to avoid jeopardising their patients. Not to stand up and take action against the effects of privatisation will harm patients even more.

As this government's attitude to the health service becomes clearer (through such measures as selling off nurses' homes) so more and more hospital workers will follow the road of the Addenbrooke's strikers.

Finally, there have been constant complaints in the local press about OCS.

There are numerous stories of patients becoming infected in the hospital and relatives ending up on their hands and knees scrubbing filthy ward floors. One visitor had to fetch his car tool-kit to remove the blocked-up u-bend of a ward sink gummed up by strands from OCS cleaners' mops.

Yet the DHA have remained deaf to all these complaints and continue to be the willing tool in Mrs Thatcher's plans to create profits for her business supporters and force down wages.

OCS has been able to make 'savings' through employing staff for shorter hours. This means that they don't have to comply with rates of pay, sick pay and holiday pay laid down by the Whitley Council agreement. The result was that wage packets were halved overnight.

This came on top of what were already dismally low rates of pay for hospital cleaners. Instead of rewarding hospital domestics for the extra responsibilities and expertise that are necessary for working in a hospital, this has been used as an excuse to weaken the domestics' industrial muscle. The result is that hospital cleaners are paid 36 per cent less than other types of cleaning staff.

Industrial Reports

Glasgow resists Telecom victimisation

FRIDAY 14 March saw the biggest meeting ever held by the Glasgow branch of the NCU. Called during working hours, was in response to management threats of victimisation.

By Ian Cuthbert
(Assistant Secretary, Glasgow branch NCU, personal capacity)

The branch, in common with all eight West of Scotland District branches, had been operating an overtime ban in defence of jobs. Management had warned that workers who refused overtime at the weekend would be sent home the following Monday without pay.

By a 14 to 1 majority members voted for the branch committee strike

recommendation. All the best traditions of trade unionism came to the fore with the members recognising that a threat to one was a threat to all.

On Monday the strike was 99 per cent solid—with picket lines of over twenty not uncommon throughout the city. Obviously shaken by this, management withdrew the immediate threat of suspensions and decided at long last to enter meaningful negotiations.

A meeting was called by the branch on Tuesday morning, again during working hours, resulting in an even bigger turnout than the Friday meeting. In fact, we came within a hair's breadth of being thrown out of the city hall for having too many people there!

The strike was suspended and the committee em-

powered to re-impose it at the faintest whiff of victimisation. The overtime ban was re-affirmed. The other eight branches in the West of Scotland met at around the same time and similar propositions were passed.

The threats of victimisation came as a result of the bosses' desperation in the face of an almost total overtime ban throughout the District. What began as a protest action at management going over the heads of the union and finding volunteers for redundancy escalated during the course of so-called negotiations.

Warnings

Other serious points of concern arose which all NCU members nationally would do well to note: firstly, it became apparent

that management intended implementing retirement at 60 for all members. This is in direct breach of national agreements which provide for retention to 65 subject to well established criteria. It is in fact the beginning of compulsory redundancies; secondly, there is BT's attitude locally to work done on contract basis. Within the so-called Job Security Agreement there is the provision that where surpluses of staff exist then consideration must be given to BT workers taking on work normally done by contractors.

In a perverse twist of logic management have attempted to interpret this to mean that work traditionally done by BT staff could be put out to contract if they could find someone who would do it more cheaply.

The reality of this is that

all types of work would be taken from BT's own staff and given to contractors. The result would be either management drive down our wages to the level of the non-union contracting firms or we get made redundant; thirdly the employers' attitude to overtime. They stated that it was in their interests to substitute higher and higher overtime for jobs.

Job security

All these points individually, along with many others, would be devastating. They would achieve BT's aim of slimming down the industry to a network-only business with the provision of local services being done by smaller firms.

For years now the left in

the union has warned that the Job Security Agreement was little more than a cheap redundancy scheme and that BT would ditch it when it no longer suited their purpose.

The situation now, at least in the West of Scotland, is even worse than that. They have taken the agreement and twisted it so that every paragraph is a means of declaring surpluses.

The fight in the West of Scotland is not unique. Many other disputes are going on or are imminent throughout the country. The time is long overdue for the Executive to give leadership and call for national action.

The forthcoming ballots for Executive places could well be the last opportunity for the left majority to give the leadership that was promised when they took control of the union.



AFTER THREE years on strike, the number of Hindle strikers has dwindled to six. But their spirit and determination remains undimmed.

The 'Dirty Half Dozen', still meet every Friday in the AUEW offices to carry on their defiance.

"We're still fighting, but when is the TUC going to wake up to the fact that this government is trying to knock us off one by one, and that the only response has got to be a united fight... a general strike to get 'em out?"

"With all these sackings and new laws it's impossible to stick to the old ways. They're saying it's virtually illegal to go on strike now, that you can have a union so long as management run it!"

"What are the TUC and our union leaders doing about it? Are they fighting? Are they hell, they're using the Tory laws as an excuse not to fight!"

All the strikers were agreed that the next Labour government must start by

By Keith Narey
(Honorary Hindle's picket)

scrapping the anti-union laws that the Tories had introduced... "Then maybe we'd get our jobs back... Aye that'd sicken Hindle right off..."

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to have known and worked with all the Hindles' strikers and their wives, over the past few years, and to know that the fighting spirit that they have shown is present in other layers of our class.

If this spirit and courage were shown by the leaders of our movement then Thatcher wouldn't have survived her first term. Supporters of *Militant* can feel proud of the support that we have given to the Hindle pickets, but above all proud of these magnificent fighters for our class.

Glasgow NALGO reject scabs charter and say give support

OVER A year ago Glasgow District Housing Department staff went on a one-week strike over a dispute with the Labour administration and the Housing Directorate over the removal of protective screens from the area offices.

A secret ballot was conducted with 52 per cent of staff voting in favour of industrial action which proved to be the catalyst towards a successful negotiated outcome. However, the matter did not end there.

Twelve members of staff chose to ignore the official strike and crossed picket lines. Glasgow District NALGO disciplined them and an extraordinary meeting resolved to expel them.

The 12 scabs appealed. The NALGO National Executive exonerated them

completely! The local branch were NOT given details of the reasoning behind this preposterous decision despite a written request.

Senior Housing Department steward Richie Carroll has already called this a "scabs charter". A resolution to the Scottish conference of NALGO calling for rule changed to prevent any reoccurrence of the NEC's intransigence was rejected.

NALGO members are urged to push resolutions deploring the actions of the NEC and expressing solidarity and support for the actions of Glasgow District NALGO.

By G Anderson
(Glasgow District NALGO and Glasgow Shawlands Labour Party personal capacity)



Silentnight letter

AS A Silentnight striker for over nine months we are at last seeing a lot of success. We are leafletting shops up and down the country asking customers not to buy Silentnight goods and it is having a very good effect.

It hits the sales of the shops and some management are refusing to stock Silentnight goods. We have not got the scabs on short-time which in the 14 years I have been there it has never been known.

They are shutting their factory down for a full week at Easter, again never been known. We still need more help.

If you think you can help and you have a shop in your area please write for more information or leaflets.

PS. Help us let SCABS know wot it's like to have no money and force a dictatorial management to at least TALK. Thank you.

By C Ashton

Dangers of Post Office split

THE UNION of Communication Workers, representing Post Office workers must mount an urgent and massive campaign to defeat management's re-organisation plans, writes a member of the UCW.

Last year union leaders

acted with management and persuaded the uniform grades to accept proposals attacking conditions and organisation of workers by increasingly using part-time and casual labour.

Now they want to split the PO into four businesses: Na-

tional Girobank, Letters, Parcels and Counter Services. Such a move greases the tracks for privatisation.

Negotiations will be decentralised. Unity amongst workers will be weakened.

The questions many members are asking is

whether Alan Tuffin, UCW General Secretary and his witch-hunting deputy Tony Clarke are up to the job of fighting for their members' interests. What is needed is a re-invigorated Broad Left which can mount a national challenge to the present leadership.

A-One Bootle

THE ELEVEN strikers at A-One Feeds factory in Bootle who have been on strike since 10 January now feel they are gaining the upper hand in their struggle against victimisation and for trade union recognition.

The only lorries which are entering the plant are the company's own. The scabs from North Yorkshire are not only working in the horrendous conditions they are living amongst them as well now.

Director Simpson (salary £1,800 per week) can no longer afford to pay their board and lodging so they are confined to barracks, 24 hours a day, allowed home every other weekend at their own expense!

Meanwhile self-styled 'Victorian' employer Andrew Simpson can't understand the strikers: "We gave them a company-paid barbeque every year, you think they'd appreciate that after all they are scousers!"

The picketing is hitting home: "These people are out to steal my empire" moans a worried Simpson.

The pickets have only been emboldened by these remarks. As one put it: "We'll walk back through those gates when we've won, and not before".

By Kevin Conway



A-One picket.

Photo: Dave Sinclair

Industrial Reports

More Maxwell barbs

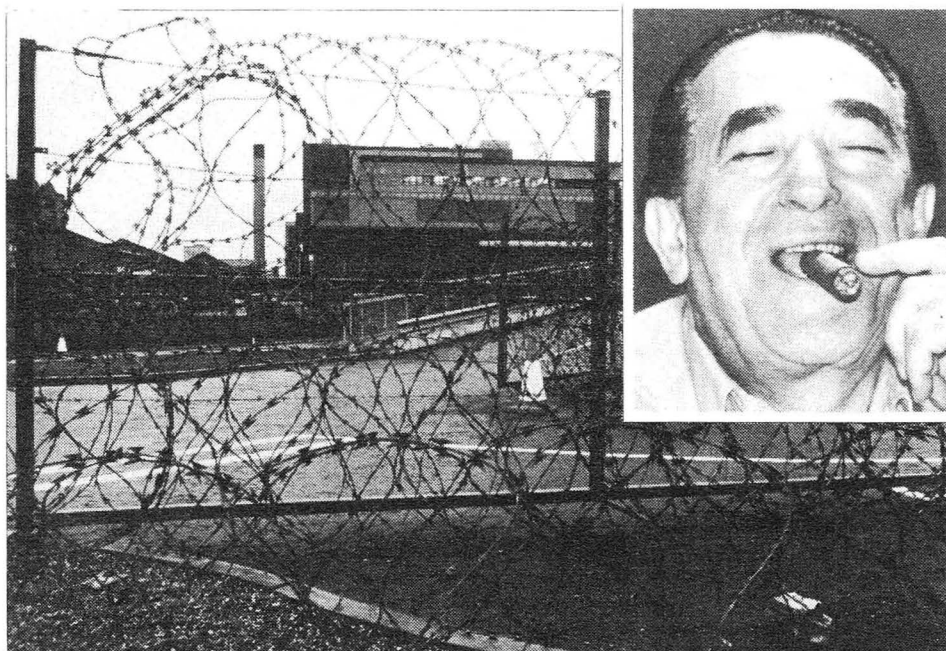
LAST WEEK Robert Maxwell sacked his whole Scottish workforce on the *Daily Record/Sunday Mail*.

The journalists were striking in opposition to redundancy plans and the breakdown of 'talks', the printers and the rest were refusing to cross their picket lines. SOGAT members gave a magnificent seven to one vote to support the journalists.

New companies are being used by Maxwell to rehire a selected number of the journalists and the printers he has sacked (at least three times now). A mass meeting of the workforce is being held today, probably to announce details of a deal.

A worrying aspect of the dispute has been the way it has been diverted into a nationalist direction as a result of Labour's failure to openly condemn Maxwell.

Many politicians are getting in on the act. Woy Jenkins, the local MP, the SNP, and even the Tories. But there is severe disappointment at the less than



Murdoch's barbed wire at Wapping. Both he and Maxwell have been ordered to remove it from their Scottish plants.

forthright condemnation of Mr Maxwell by Mr Neil Kinnock.

The nationalist stance of some of the propaganda of the campaign around the plant—"Save Scotland's voice", "preserve the *Record's* Scottish flavour" and the lack of determined

support by Neil Kinnock have combined to produce a dangerous situation.

As one NUJ picket put it: "My local MP (Labour) tells me that strenuous efforts are being made behind the scenes to get negotiations going and in the mean time they have been told to keep

quiet about Maxwell. Well why should I vote Labour next time? I don't want a Labour prime minister who's in Robert Maxwell's pocket. I think I'll vote SNP".

By Ronnie Stevenson

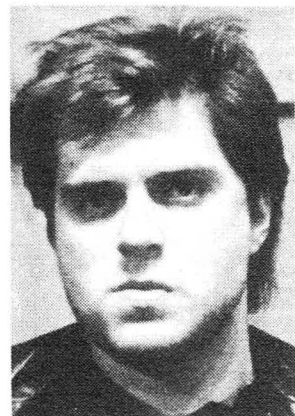
No Sun in Penge

ALONG WITH 12 print workers, we took to Penge High Street, South London to distribute print union literature outside the newsagents.

Spirits were kept high by the tea provided by the newsagent and also the support given to us by shoppers. Some people even half apologised when they came out from the shop with the *Sun* folded inwards.

Through conversations with the public one would have imagined the area is comprised of a majority of sacked printworkers, their families or friends of print workers. Several people mentioned they worked in the wholesale distribution and were playing their part. Some 3,000 leaflets later, the majority of papers left on the shelf were the *Sun*.

By Helen Bulaitis, (Beckenham CLP)



Ray Johnson

there will be no surrender".

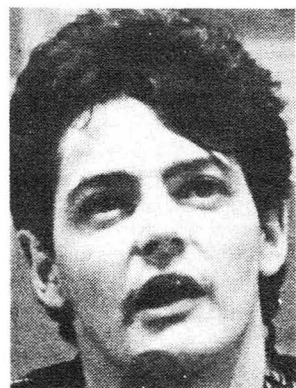
Jim Mason, showing the unions' determination to fight unjust union laws said: "I'm not going to let what my father, and grandfather fought for be taken from us. We can win with your help. We need your bodies and your money".

By Anne McKay

Young printers at Young Socialists

TWO YOUNG printworkers, sacked by Murdoch told LPYS conference, to tumultuous applause, that the "young people of Fleet Street will take no more."

In rousing speeches, Jim Mason, a deputy SOGAT FOC at the *Sun* and Ray Johnson, a *Times* editorial assistant chapel FOC, showed the determination of printers to beat Murdoch.



Jim Mason

Ray Johnson said: "Last Friday we celebrated our best victory. We wrested control of the strike from the national leadership and gave it to the local leaders."

"Nine weeks we gave Brenda Dean. She said she wanted to win public support, but I don't think public sympathy wins disputes—ask the nurses. Our leadership did not have the nerve to call people to come to Wapping for mass pickets. Well, we do. We want you there."

"No working class people have got any excuse to sit indoors while our union is being hijacked and our jobs threatened. Let us stand shoulder to shoulder on the line. Let's tell Murdoch that the young people of Fleet Street will take no more."

"We said at the very beginning of this dispute that there would be no surrender. I promise you, comrades,

Women's TUC growth

"A MEMBER of my delegation puts in 100 zips an hour, 800 a day, 4,000 a week. She gets 10 minutes unpaid teabreak and 30 minutes unpaid lunchbreak. Even this job is now under threat and could go."

NUTGW delegate

THIS CONTRIBUTION alone, at the recent TUC Women's Conference, shows the appalling attacks that have taken place on women workers in the past few years. But women are fighting back and playing an active role in the labour movement; this conference was the largest ever, with almost twice as many present than four years ago.

The SOGAT delegate received a standing ovation when she called for full support for the print workers.

The other two major debates were on low pay and privatisation. One Equity member showed the scale of

the low pay problem.

She had visited the Haymarket Theatre in Leicester (where the conference was held) and talked to a woman who worked there from 9am to 4pm, six days a week—and took home just £69.

Throughout the low pay debate the spectre of privatisation continually appeared, illustrating the threat it poses to pay, conditions and quality of service.

Privatisation had meant 3,000 cleaners' jobs going in the civil service alone. As one woman said: "They call it competition. But how can you compete with a firm that

Steel 'survival' means suicide

THE STRIKE at the Imperial, Calders and the giant Clydesdale steelworks in Lanarkshire has reached its sixth week.

It becomes more solid as the mood of the 2,000 men grows in confidence daily. Their strike record belies the impression portrayed that steelworkers are battered and silent victims of BSC cuts.

On Friday 28 March as the gates of Gartcosh steelworks were closed for the last time, the BSC sent letters to all its Scottish Tubes Division employees threatening that unless they returned to work by the following Tuesday they would lose all severance pay and would face dismissal.

Industrial action was the only choice after being presented with an ultimatum to accept a "survival plan" nicknamed "suicide plan" by the men: a document of 32 pages and 65 different clauses which included 460 job losses. £20 to £70 per week wage cut and severe limitations on trade union rights to negotiate production lines and new work practices.

The redundancies were reduced to 412 when the union pointed out the impossibility of running the works with these numbers missing.

The BSC letters were sent to the workers to sap morale and confuse the workforce by threatening withdrawal of severance pay and £150 implementation bonus, and ludicrously saying that billions of pounds worth of orders would be lost. However, the men remember that there were 300 redundancies in December because of lack of orders.

Negotiations at national level have produced no advance. The defiant mood of the workers was summed up by Willie Dale: "National agreements have been broken up when it suits them and if we are as bad as they make us out to be they'd try and shut us down."

Archie Lilley, branch secretary of Clydesdale ISTC outlined to *Militant* the demands of the men: "No job losses, no wage cuts and the so-called 'survival plan' should be up for negotiation on changes in workshop practices."

"The survival plan is unique in terms of the BSC. This is the first plan to include wage cuts, selection of redundancies and the removal of trade union rights. If the Tubes Division loses this one the rest of the corporation rely on getting it next."

"This is the thin edge of a steel wedge. Our message to the union at national level is loud and clear: 'We are not going back until we have won our case'. Our confidence is growing and the number of pickets at the gates increases, 400 per day."

The steelworkers have organised a major rally on Saturday 12 April at Bellshill industrial estate at 10am. Given that £2,000 per week is being collected on the streets, there should be a great response from the people of Lanarkshire.

Messages of support and donations should be sent to: Harry Carlin, c/o Clydesdale Strike Committee, Clydesdale Social Club, Moss End, Bellshill, Lanarkshire.

By Steve McPhee (Motherwell North Labour Party)

Low wage banking

WHILE THE profits of the major clearing banks and dividends to their shareholders have gone up and up since 1980 clerks' wages have fallen in value, reports Andy Walsh of the *Finance Workers Broad Left*.

Five per cent is what we have been offered for 1986.

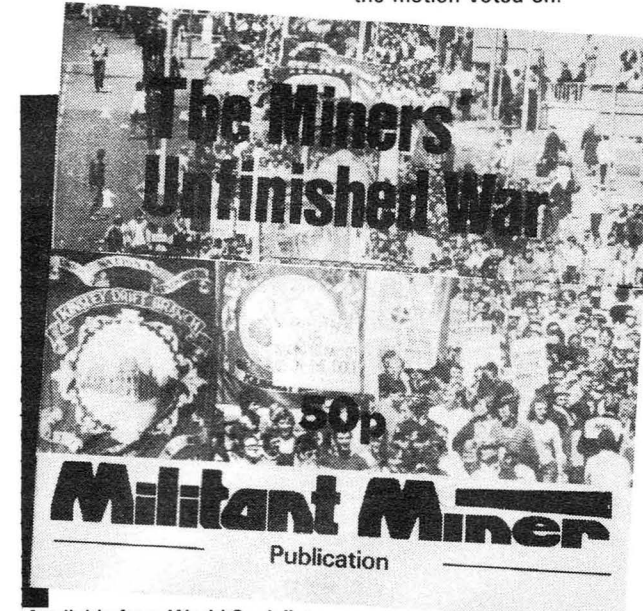
BIFU is balloting its 85,000 members in English

Clearing Banks on their £20 per week claim.

BIFU members should vote with their feet on this issue and obtain a flat-rate increase for all staff.

Correction

The article on the Derbyshire miners' vote for industrial action in issue 790 was incorrectly headlined. Strike action was specifically excluded in the motion voted on.



Available from World Socialist Books 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB. Price 50p plus 20p p&p.

Left tax loss

THE LEFT in the Inland Revenue Staffs Federation suffered a setback in the recent national executive committee elections. All Broad Left supporters were removed from the national executive committee, in the elections, held by secret ballot.

Left led branches must campaign to win their members support for socialist policies and candidates who can be trusted to enact these policies when elected. Support must now be built for regional rallies and BLOC as a show of strength to the right wing before the annual conference in May.

IRSF London Broad Left Rally 22 April 6pm, Cock Tavern, Phoenix Rd, London NW1

By Helen Gasking (USDW delegate)

Militant

★SOGAT★NGA★AUEW★NUJ★

National Rally and demonstration
 Sunday 6 April
 Assemble Trafalgar Square 2.00pm
 Followed by march to Wapping

Militant sellers to meet to collect papers
 by 1.30pm. Trafalgar Square.

N. Ireland warning to workers

THE CLASHES between Protestants and the security forces in Portadown and in other towns in Northern Ireland have underlined the dangers building up for the working class as a result of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

150 plastic bullets were fired at Protestant marchers by police, and also against the Catholic residents of the Garvaghy estate in Portadown, who were trying to protect their community from Protestant sectarianism.

At least 50 people were injured in these events. One Protestant marcher was put into intensive care with head injuries.

Confrontation

Portadown was the scene of a confrontation last year between the RUC and Loyalist demonstrators, demanding the right to march through Catholic areas. So it was selected again for the Apprentice Boys parade on 31 March.

The Loyalists planned to make the re-routing of the parade away from Catholic areas a focus for confrontation over the agreement. In the event the parade was banned altogether.

But one hour after the ban was announced (at one in the morning) Paisley led several thousand in defiance through Portadown, and no attempt was made to stop them entering Garvaghy estate. Catholics living there were awoken by the sound of windows being broken. Some of them were chased through the streets, and bar-

By a Militant reporter

ricades were erected for defence. These were then attacked by the RUC.

But later that day a ring of steel was placed around the town by the police. Marchers travelling from elsewhere were prevented from coming in. But some marchers were again allowed to ignore the ban, demonstrating through the town centre during a day of skirmishes with the police.

That night rioting spread to parts of Belfast. Shots were fired into Catholic areas. In Lisburn also Catholic homes were attacked.

It is clear that if the government tries to uphold the agreement, using the police and army a serious escalation in sectarianism is inevitable. The Protestant marches around 12 July could see more clashes over re-routing.

The 1986 Workers' Committee which called the 3 March one day stoppage is meeting soon to discuss further action. In a statement after the Portadown events it warned that the province was near to civil war.

Workers in Britain and Ireland must be made aware of these ominous warnings. While the Anglo-Irish Agreement between the two Tory

governments has nothing to offer the Catholic workers, to Protestant workers it can only inflame the fears of forcible inclusion into a united Ireland, which on the basis of capitalism, has nothing to attract them. The recent events have given just a small indication of how hard they would resist. Only workers' unity and a socialist struggle could win the confidence of all workers.

Protect workers

The labour movement must act now to avoid the dead end of sectarianism. Immediate action is needed to protect workers from attacks. Yet the only initiative offered by the Northern Committee of the ICTU against the threat of another Loyalist strike/lockout is to



Loyalist clash with police in Portadown.

Photo: John Arthur (Reflex)

approach the Chief Constable for better protection for workers trying to get work.

The Labour and Trade Union Group, however, has launched a campaign for a socialist alternative to the agreement, and for an emergency rank and file trade union conference. So far, 11 union organisations have backed their call.

The crucial Belfast Trades' Council has discussed the current situation over three meetings without taking a position. But now the EC under LTUG pressure has agreed to call a special meeting which could give a lead to the whole labour movement. Labour must act now before violence and sectarianism bites still deeper in Northern Ireland.

Beat the print bosses

Continued from page 1
 gains which will go. The bosses want print workers to pay for the introduction of new technology.

That is why an immediate stoppage of Fleet Street must be organised. The strikers can stop Murdoch or other papers benefiting by spearheading mass action at Wapping and in the rest of the country.

Flying pickets can organise blacking of all scab papers and their distribution. Speakers and leaflets can explain the issues to other workers. Such a campaign would be the springboard to a national print strike.

But this assault upon a previously powerful and well organised group of workers is not an ordinary industrial dispute it is an attack on the whole trade union movement.

The print workers have always been to the fore in the struggle to improve conditions. Back in 1959 the print bosses resisted the unions' demands for the 40-hour week on behalf of the whole of British industry.

After an eight week strike the unions won a 42-hour

week and by 1962 it was down to 40 hours. The rest of manufacturing industry soon followed. Their strength has set the pace on working conditions, holidays and wages for many other workers.

That is why a one day general strike must be organised in support of the print unions. A warning shot must be fired.

Appeal

The bosses in every industry must be shown that their plans to smash trade union power will not go unchallenged. It the TUC will not organise it then the print unions must appeal over their heads to the left leaderships and the rank and file of other unions.

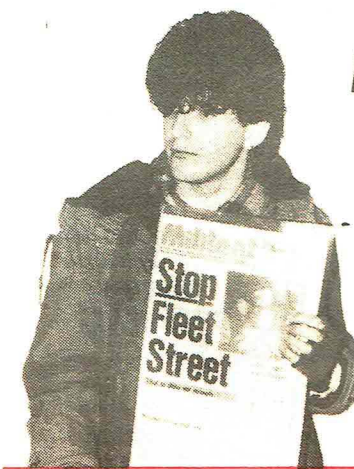
And Labour must support such a strategy wholeheartedly. It is absurd that Labour Party member Maxwell's antics are ignored by the Labour leaders and a Labour prospective parliamentary candidate scabs at Wapping, whilst the witch-hunt against socialists in Liverpool provides endless ammunition for Labour's enemies.

EVERY DAY a Labour Parliamentary candidate crosses the picket line, to work on the Sun. Malcolm Withers is the candidate for Stevenage, where attempts have been made to expel 10 Militant supporters from the Labour Party.

Printers and other workers should write to Stevenage LP to express their outrage at this scabbing by a Labour candidate.

The secretary, 121B, Bedwell Crescent, Stevenage, Herts.

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