

# Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

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**BLOC**  
Liverpool Labour Party  
conference

Saturday 19 April  
Sheffield City Hall

See back  
page for  
details

After  
Fulham

# Now kick out Thatcher



## Build the left

WITH JUST over a week to go to the joint conference of the Broad Left Organising Committee and the Liverpool Labour Party, applications for delegates are pouring in.

Some of the hundreds of organisations who have asked for credentials are listed below:

National Communication Union (National Broad Left); UCATT London Transport builders; UCATT Mexborough; USDAW Capital Holdings; USDAW Littlewoods Crosby Mail Order; GMBATU Birmingham Parks and Cemetery; Ealing-Acton LPYS; Southampton LPYS; Coventry South-East CLP.

Holset Engineering Shop Stewards Committee; AUEW Skipton; NUM Cosa Branch 50, Doncaster; NUM Allerton Silkstone (West Yorks); TGWU Vehicle building and Automotive Trade Group Region 1; Stevenage Trades Council; Harlow Trades Council; Royal Edinburgh Hospital JSSC.

Glasgow GMBATU branch 40 (Cleansing Dept.); NUSMWH&DE Nottingham; TGWU 1/1347 (Brighton); NGA Sunderland; ASLEF Knottingly (W. Yorks); NUPE Housing branch, Manchester; UCATT Rotherham 1st branch; AUEW Isle of Wight Ryde 74 branch; NUPE APT&C branch Social Services.

This conference promises to be the largest gathering of rank and file trade union and Labour Party delegates this year. Help build the left in the unions and voice your opposition to the witch-hunt in the Labour Party.

Send your application forms to: Broad Left Organising Committee, P.O. Box 464, London E5 8PT. A special train has been booked from London, leaving St. Pancras at 7.45am.

Three weeks to  
reach £70,000

ONLY THREE weeks left to reach our target of £70,000 for this quarter (see page six for details). Are YOU using our petition against the witch-hunt to get signatures AND cash? Ask everyone who signs for fivers and tenners—at least ask £1 for every paper!

Keep the cash flooding in—make this another record quarter.

THE LABOUR movement now has a great opportunity to end nearly seven years of Tory rule.

After the Fulham by-election, Labour must use the 8 May elections as a platform to demand a general election. We must fight for a Labour government on a socialist programme.

Tory policies are only paying dividends for the rich. The profits of industrial and commercial companies, apart from oil, went up 21 per cent in 1985. The bosses did not invest in creating jobs. They rewarded themselves with a 27 per cent rise in dividends.

This is what all the battles have been about. This is why Murdoch has surrounded Wapping with barbed wire and the Tories imposed a near police state on the mining areas. This is why the NHS, education and local authority services are being bled dry.

The Tories are giving more wealth and power to those who already have it, the top shareholders in the top 150 to 200 companies who control 80 per cent of the British economy.

The rich are being subsidised by the millions who have

lost their jobs, by the school leavers on the dole and by the low paid.

At least half the Tory MPs have company directorships. They have given their friends massive tax cuts. The average worker pays more tax than in 1979, thanks to indirect taxes like VAT. Only those well above average income pay less, and the gap between richest and poorest is widening daily.

Women and young workers fall further behind while men only increase wages at the cost of longer hours of work. *Militant* consistently fights for a labour movement campaign for a guaranteed job, £120 minimum wage at the age of 18 and three quarters adult rate at 16. We demand a 35 hour week to create jobs.

The Tories have hit the unemployed and poor with £11 billion cuts in benefits in their seven years in power. Fowler threatens even more cuts if the dole queues do not shrink rapidly. Education and other vital services are threatened in new public spending plans. Why educate people when you can't give them jobs? That is the Tory philosophy.

Continued on back page



# Protestant backlash threat to NI workers

**EVENTS IN Northern Ireland over the past week emphasise the dangers to the working class in the light of the Anglo-Irish deal. They have been pushed closer towards the sectarian abyss as the Loyalist backlash escalates.**

The last month has seen over 120 attacks by loyalists on the homes of RUC officers and their families. One policeman has been shot. Several homes have been sprayed with gunfire, attacked with petrol bombs, bottles and bricks and gutted. Dozens have been vacated. Police patrols have also come under gun and bomb attacks, especially in Protestant areas of Belfast.

## Homes attacked

Dozens of Catholic homes have also come under attack. Shots have been fired and several Catholic churches burned.

The British press has attempted to paint a picture of the non-sectarian, impartial and professional nature of the RUC under attack. But it has always been a sectarian loyalist force.

The role of the police during the 3 March loyalist stoppage was to turn a blind eye to sectarian intimidation. The attacks by Loyalist paramilitaries on RUC men have developed because they do not consider the force Loyalist or sectarian enough.

The attacks are part of a campaign to wear down the morale of the RUC, 85 per cent of whom are Protestant. Many reports have already been leaked about discontent within its ranks. Political discussion has taken place within the barracks opposing the Anglo-Irish deal. Policemen out of uniform have taken part in Loyalist demonstrations against the agreement. On duty their fathers, brothers and sons march with Orange or Apprentice Boys banners.

At a recent police federation meeting, attended by 400 delegates, the speakers, recorded on a secret tape, attacked the government and in line with the slogan "Ulster says no", one demanded, to tremendous applause that: "the RUC must say 'no' now".

Sunday's *Weekend World* interviewed one officer who explained that the government could not use the force to implement its Anglo-Irish policy, and if it persisted this would ultimately lead to a mutiny. The reliability of the RUC is an obvious cause for concern to the government.

They commissioned a special investigation and found that there was no sign of mutiny over the Anglo-Irish agreement at this stage. Nevertheless as the situation deteriorates and the pressure from loyalist paramilitaries grows, the government will find it increasingly difficult to use the RUC as a reliable tool against Loyalist resistance to the deal.

A similar report on the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) was more pessimistic. Reports of "worrying instances" included one case where several patrols refused to return to base. The reason was that the Northern Ireland Secretary, Tom King, had made an unexpected visit and the men refused to return while he remained on the premises.

## Unreliable force

There have been other reports about the UDR being disarmed and confined to barracks on the day of the Loyalist stoppage, 3 March, and the Easter Monday Apprentice Boys march. Certainly UDR men were not visible on the streets on these days. The increased number of British troops also illustrates how the government views the situation. They recognise the unreliability of the local forces and see the need to build up their own.

The longer the Tories attempt to enforce the agreement the more serious the situation becomes. The Apprentice Boys have already organised another march through Portadown for the May bank holiday weekend.

Last week the Ulster Co-ordinating Committee was set up to represent the Unionist parties, the Ulster clubs, the 1986 workers' committee and the UDA and UDF. They discussed the question of an all-out stoppage, a Unilateral Declaration of Independence and civil war.

## Campaign for a socialist alternative

The labour and trade union movement must act immediately to avert catastrophe. There can be no Tory or capitalist solutions. Capitalist Northern Ireland remains unstable and unacceptable to Catholic workers because it represents a legacy of poverty, repression and sectarianism. A capitalist united Ireland could never be acceptable to Protestants. They fear a poverty and priest-ridden state, with them a discriminated minority. If they were forced they would resist, provoking a bloody civil war.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) must advance a clear socialist alternative to the agreement. The Labour and Trade Union Group has launched a campaign for a socialist alternative and has called on the Northern Ireland Committee of ICTU conference later this month to hold an emergency debate on the current situation.

The ranks of the movement in Britain must follow. Bi-partisanship with the Tories and the Nationalists must be broken and the demand for workers' unity and a socialist solution advanced.

By a Militant reporter



RUC arrest Orangeman attempting to defy ban on marches in Catholic areas. Photo: John Arthur (Reflex)

# On Thatcher's right flank

LAST WEEK the Federation of Conservative Students (FCS) held its annual conference at Scarborough. The right wing leaders were jubilant that the official party inquiry into FCS to curb extremism had failed.

After last year's conference ten year expulsions had been promised for three delegates and the closure of the Irish and Scottish sections.

The conference this year voted to urge the government to support the "legitimate armed struggles" of the Contras in Nicaragua, the Unita guerillas in Angola and the anti-government rebels in Kampuchea. It also condemned the Anglo-Irish agreement and urged support for the Unionists. One faction went so far as to give videos of Orange marches as prizes in a raffle.

The right wing won all nine national committee posts by a 2-1 majority. This will have done little to allay the concern of the Tory party at the image produced by the extreme right wing antics of the FCS: songs glorifying the Yorkshire Ripper and calls for an end to the law against incest.

In its proposed Tory manifesto for the next general elections the FCS calls for the privatisation of British Steel, the National Coal Board, the electricity industry, the railways and the Post Office.

Tory leaders accuse the left of intimidation and preventing democratic rights, but this is just what FCS favours. This is revealed in an extract from an internal document entitled "...Guide to Disrupting NUS



FCS Rambo-style poster.

conference": "Always be provocative. Remember you are not here to persuade the closed-minded Leftists, you are here to wind them up... and disrupt the conference eg. 'you red fascist scum'." The final comment from Mark MacGregor, chairman "We're not opposed to apathy...the whole notion of student representation is farcical. There's no more common bond between students than between people with red hair."

"We take the position that most of our members aren't very intelligent." And these are future leaders of the Tory Party?

# Slippery slope for oil prices

**OIL PRICES recently sank below \$10 a barrel—the lowest level in real terms for fifteen years.**

The cut in oil bills is said to dampen inflation worldwide and make oil importers better off. But this is achieved at the expense of the petroleum exporting countries and the health of every country is bound up with the fate of every other economy. It is no good for Western banks if the exporters that

owe them so much money go bust.

Mexico owes around \$96 billion to the big banks and earns 70c in every dollar from the export of oil. Suddenly foreign exchange earnings have halved. Half these earnings now go just to pay interest on the debt. This can not go on.

The grim reaper has also appeared before the poor, densely populated countries that make up most of OPEC's output. The table below shows the picture as

clinically as the chart at the bottom of a dying man's hospital bed.

Last year the OPEC countries were able to import two and a half times as much as in 1973. At \$10 a barrel they will only be able to afford 39 per cent of the 1973 figure in 1986.

The oil glut has been made worse by Britain and Norway pumping out North Sea oil like there's no tomorrow. There seems to have been a little US behind-the-scenes arm-twisting to keep things that way, for the cut in oil revenues is crippling Libya, Iran and the USSR's export earnings.

If they will not listen to the cries of the hungry, the Reagan administration always has a ready ear for the woes of Texas oil millionaires. At \$10 a barrel Texaco would lose 90 per

cent of its income. Already the price is silencing rigs and drilling equipment manufacturers from Aberdeen to Houston.

And, like the debtor nations, the oil business can bring the big banks to their knees. Houston First City Bank is already so strapped for cash it is offering a free Porsche to anyone prepared (stupid enough?) to deposit \$1 million with them.

Vice-President Bush, himself a former oilman, has said: "It is essential that we (do) not just have a continued free fall like a parachutist jumping out without a parachute."

It can be very invigorating to free fall. But it is a bit late then to start thinking about going back and collecting a parachute.

By Mick Brooks

## Tribune statement made without full consent

THE PARLIAMENTARY *Tribune* Group issued a statement condemning the seven lefts who walked out of the National Executive Committee's kangaroo court, without referring it to a group meeting or even all the officers.

*Tribune* has denounced the Executive and officers of Liverpool District Labour for bringing too much power to themselves, that full meetings were merely rubber stamps. But this is just how *Tribune* operates.

The group's secretary Chris Smith, is himself under criticism within his own constituency party. According to the outgoing party secretary's annual report:

"We have an MP who has twice recently said he will refuse to do as the party wishes."

Lack of democratic accountability within the local party and the disillusioning effect of the national leadership's witch-hunting activities have taken their toll in Islington. "Two inordinate General Committee meetings and two inordinate Executive Committee meetings in the last three months".

None of those behind the witch-hunt have complained of inordinate meetings in Liverpool. In fact the complaint is that the meetings are too big!

By Jeremy Birch

### OPEC'S LOSS OF EARNINGS IN \$ BILLIONS

	1985 quota earnings	Earnings at \$12 a barrel
Venezuela	11.3	6.8
Nigeria	11.7	6.05
Indonesia	8.5	4.45
Algeria	6.9	3.4
Libya	9.2	4.75
Kuwait	7.8	4.2
Saudia Arabia	37.3	20
Iraq	9.6	5.25
Iran	14.8	8.4
Others	13.5	7.35
Total OPEC	130.6	70.65



# Labour councillors battle on

## Liverpool

**LIVERPOOL Labour councillors have appealed against the High Court decision finding 48 Labour councillors guilty of "wilful misconduct" in delaying the setting of a rate.**

The appeal will cost thousands of pounds and already many individuals have sent in donations.

One old age pensioner from Tunbridge Wells sent in a personal donation of £1,000 with a letter giving her support for their stand. Collections are continuing in local authority work places and the Liverpool branch of

NALGO have agreed to donate £1,000. These are excellent examples but fundraising has to be stepped up.

Ron Todd of the TGWU has denied press reports that his union will refuse to support the Liverpool Labour councillors. The Labour and trade union movement must give its full support politically and financially to these councillors who have been victimised for carrying out Labour Party policy.

Send your donations for the legal appeal to Cllr. Tony Hood, Chairman's Room 42, Municipal Buildings, Dale Street, Liverpool L69 2DH. Cheques payable to Liverpool Fighting Fund.

## Lambeth

THIRTY ONE Lambeth Labour councillors have been surcharged and disqualified from office for five years. They face possible bankruptcy and jail. A 24 hour strike and occupation was called on Thursday 3 April by the Lambeth Joint Trade Unions and pickets were set up at various council depots. Hackney Council workers occupied their Town Hall in sympathy.

At its last full meeting, the council elected a new, black, mayor, Kingsley Smith, one of the three Labour councillors who remain in office.

Until the May local elections, the mayor will have executive powers. In this way, they hope to render impotent the wishes of the Tory and Liberal councillors to reverse Lambeth council's policy of defending jobs and services and the equal opportunities scheme. As Tiverta Sparks of the Joint Trade Unions Committee says; "Lambeth council is under the control of the workers, the unions and the local community until the May elections."

## Personal sacrifice

Labour movement activists should salute those councillors whose homes,

personal property, livelihoods and individual freedoms have been put on the line. Provided a massive campaign is launched, Labour is guaranteed a great victory with an even bigger majority in the May elections. According to an opinion poll, 44 per cent said they would vote Labour and 52 per cent said it was unfair to ban Labour councillors.

This widespread sympathy for the council must be used to take the campaign for jobs and services to every council worker, trade unionist and Labour supporter in the borough.

By Mark Newman (Norwood Labour Party)

## Stop the purge

### Not fraternal in Fulham

Labour is set to win the Fulham by-election but some Labour officials have been beside themselves in their hatred of *Militant* supporters and young socialists who have come to help in the canvassing.

One helper, Ian Pollock, along with others was prevented from canvassing or leafletting.

He began selling *Militant* in the street. He was then verbally abused by a group of officials and one of them attacked him.

"In full view of an ITN camera and a Capital Radio reporter I was called a fascist, a bastard, and told to 'fuck off', said Pollock.

He was told he would be reported to his constituency party and that he would be expelled. Eventually one official resorted to buying all his remaining papers.

All this to prevent the public buying *Militant*.

## Sawyer wants to curb YS

LEADING MEMBERS of the Labour Party Young Socialists have reacted with anger at the suggestion they could face new restrictions from Labour's NEC.

According to *Tribune*, Tom Sawyer, chairman of the NEC youth sub-committee, has suggested that the age limit of the LPYS be reduced from 25 to 21, and that the YS be integrated with CLPs, trade union youth sections and the National Organisation of Labour Students.

John Hird, LPYS National Committee member and former chairman, pointed out that the LPYS have always advocated closer ties with other sections of the party and especially the trade unions, but these particular proposals seem designed to stifle the political autonomy of the LPYS, to push for its own policies in the party and among youth.

The political nature of Tom Sawyer's attack can be seen by his comment that the YS is "too often seen to be campaigning on *Militant's* programme and not that of the party itself."

"His proposal to reduce the maximum age for the YS, shows his true intentions—not to build it, but to severely curtail it; to make it politically tame election fodder," Hird said.

By Ben Eastop

## Press claims Labour MP leaves mountain of debts

ALLEGATIONS HAVE been made in the press that prominent right winger on Labour's executive, Gwyneth Dunwoody, has run up debts amounting to thousands of pounds over a number of years.

The Tory press are always keen to exploit the personal circumstances of individuals in the Labour Party to discredit the party. But Dunwoody's alleged financial waywardness from a seemingly highly extravagant lifestyle is a gift to Labour's enemies.

According to the *Daily Mail* Dunwoody owes £2,000 to the House of Commons restaurant and continues to put her bills 'on tick'. Until

recently she owed Crewe County council £1,100 in rates for her home in the Crewe and Nantwich constituency which she represents.

Legal officers for the City of London Corporation, the *Mail* says, are taking action to repossess Dunwoody's £600 a month flat in the Barbican, because of rent arrears.

## Resigned

It is said that in 1974 she resigned from the British Film Producers' Association owing them £4,000. At today's prices that would be £10,000 or more.

The *Guardian* also alleges

that Dunwoody owes £816.21 to graphic designer John Price for leaflets he produced for the Labour MP's computer services firm. Price is said to be writing to the Chief Whip to get the bill paid.

Dunwoody and others on the right claim that *Militant* is bringing the party into disrepute. But to many Labour supporters it is the high living of Labour leaders which is disreputable for a socialist party. It seems that it is those with the most to hide—and the most to protect—who scream loudest against the Marxists.

## Liberals slur Militant on schools

OBVIOUSLY concerned at their waning popularity, leading figures in the SDP/Liberal Alliance have resorted to fairy-tale allegations against *Militant* supporters in Liverpool in a desperate bid to win votes from Labour supporters.

The allegations, which have been given widespread coverage in all the major papers—centre around a pamphlet supposedly distributed amongst school governors sympathetic to *Militant*.

The pamphlet is supposed

to contain details on how to disrupt governors' meetings, undermine the head's authority, demoralise staff, and 'infiltrate' staff rooms, parent teacher associations, and staff unions.

The catalogue reads more like an excerpt from *Citizen Smith* than the programme of a Marxist tendency. A brief glance through previous copies of the *Militant* or the records of the paper's supporters involved in the education policy of Liverpool City Council would clearly show that this

caricature of 'Left-wing' tactics is entirely alien to *Militant's* programme.

Supporters of the paper on Liverpool Council, such as Felicity Dowling, vice-chairman of the education committee, have pioneered advances in community education in Liverpool, positively improving relations and involvement between heads, teaching staff and pupils. This is in stark contrast to the wreckage left by the previous Liberal administration, headed by Sir Trevor Jones who, ironically, is the chief author of these allegations.

This fabricated document is an insult to those committed supporters of *Militant* involved in education, including heads, staff, and pupils.

By Dave Sirockin (Secretary, School Students Union)

## Inspiration

THE PERFECT refutation to those who say that Marxism is alien to the Labour Party was given by Brian Jones, an ordinary party member from Poole in Dorset who was recruited by Walworth Road to steward this year's LPYS conference in Bournemouth.

On Sunday morning following her big speech at the Labour unity rally,

Cheryl Varley was approached by Brian who shook her hand and said: "I've been in the Labour Party for 31 years, and I've heard all the top speakers. But that speech you made last night inspired me more than anything I've ever heard in my life."

"I was very anti-*Militant* before last night, but I think now if you are the future of the Labour Party then we are safe in your hands."

## Right manoeuvres against new Liverpool committee

SUPPORTERS OF the witch-hunt of Liverpool DLP have now launched an attack on the newly formed Temporary Coordinating Committee, because the right wing failed to get the majority of officers' positions they had hoped for.

union. These spurious allegations are only a continuation of the attempt to raise organisational issues to muddy the waters, whilst the right wing Labour Party leadership expel socialists from the Labour Party.

## Local elections

The TCC now give priority to the local elections on 8 May. These elections are the most important fought in Liverpool. A number of enormous difficulties have faced the Party: the NEC inquiry, disbandment of the DLP, the High Court action and the surcharge of councillors.

No other Labour Party in the country has faced so many attacks, but despite all of these, Labour is going all out not only to win the 17 seats they are defending, but also to win the Liberal marginals.

A number of mass canvasses have been organised every weekend from 12 April until 3/4 May. Activists who want to assist in these marginal wards please contact the secretary of the TCC, Phil Rowe at 24 Hardman Street, Liverpool 1. Telephone 051 709-4360.

By Josie Aitman

## No notices claim

She further claimed that two of the most important unions in the city, ASTMS and USDAW failed to get notices of the meeting. Yet two members of ASTMS were present, officially representing their trade

## Black Caucus to stand independent candidate

BLACK CAUCUS supporters are to stand an 'Independent' candidate against the Labour Party in Liverpool's Granby ward in the forthcoming elections on 8 May. According to the *Liverpool Daily Post*: "They revealed plans for a poll-booth battle after black activist Liz Drysdale was rejected as a possible official Labour Party candidate"

their own candidate anyway. Moreover, a black *Militant* supporter was nominated as the possible candidate for the Granby ward in October of last year and was rejected largely on the insistence of Black Caucus supporters in that Labour Party branch.


We believe that this is a largely Liberal-inspired initiative to split the Labour vote in that area.

The Black Caucus hope that a Liberal controlled council, despite the disaster this would mean for the black community, would dismiss Sam Bond and appoint one of their own supporters as race relations advisor.

## Nominations

In February they distributed 'nomination forms' within the Granby area for the residents to suggest a likely candidate. Obviously they did not get the response which they hoped for and decided to appoint

By Colin De Freitas



**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.



# Militant

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## Liverpool's example

THE COUNCIL elections on 8 May provide the chance to humiliate the Tories. Sweeping Labour gains can pave the way for a general election victory. The anti-Tory mood being found on the doorsteps by Labour canvassers is a justified reaction to the devastating cuts inflicted on councils by Thatcher's government.

Rate-capping has imposed a financial straitjacket on 18 councils; county councils have been forced to put up the rates by as much as 36 per cent because of cuts in the rate support grant; the Tories have even legislated to stop councils publicising their case against the government.

Labour councillors in Liverpool and Lambeth, who have fought and defied these Tory attacks, have been surcharged and disqualified, victims of the battery of new laws introduced by this government.

Liverpool City Council in particular has demonstrated in new homes, nurseries and jobs that Labour councillors can fight back against the Tory attempts to make them cut back.

In the majority of other areas, however, voters will be

expressing a vote against the Tories rather than a vote of confidence in their local Labour councillors. The majority of them, as illustrated in the reports below from Sheffield and Newcastle, have restricted their fight against the Tories to words and gestures, and been prepared to implement cuts demanded by the government.

The electoral gains which will be made this year will be far short of the potential which Labour could have achieved if every Labour council, with the full backing of the national leadership, had embarked on the policies of Liverpool. They alone took seriously the pledge by 17 Labour councils last year to defy the Tory restrictions. Despite their disagreement with the tactic of refusing to set a rate, Liverpool councillors joined in this campaign, to present a united front to the government.

Only they and Lambeth stood by their pledges. They were left to stand alone by the 'left' leaders such as Livingstone and Blunkett, the party's national executive committee and many trade union officials. These people not only gave no backing to a council which was carrying out party policy by defending services and jobs, but joined in the barrage of abuse and lies in the Tory press by denouncing the Liverpool councillors and initiating the inquiry into the Liverpool District Labour Party. As a result, 12 party members, including three of the councillors facing surcharge and disqualification, now face expulsion from the Labour Party.

Yet despite all the vilification of the press, the Tories and Liberals and the desertion of the Labour leaders, the Liverpool City Council grew in popularity, as the benefits of its policies reached wider layers of this impoverished city and the message was taken to the doorsteps and the workplaces that here was a council actually carrying out the reforms it promised.

Support for Labour, measured in local elections and opinion polls, was steadily rising. In 1983, Liverpool swung towards Labour when the rest of the country was moving the opposite way. The old myth that bold measures in the interests of working class people would alienate the voters was shattered. At one point a poll gave Labour 55 per cent of the votes. Support like that nationally would give Labour a landslide win.

Only after they had been left isolated by other councils and the national Labour and trade union leaders were the Liverpool council forced to make concessions as a tactical step to gain time to rebuild the campaign.

Local councils on their own can never solve the underlying problems facing workers and their families. But all Labour controlled councils acting together to confront and defy a Tory government, prepared to break laws which force them to cut back services and sack workers, backed to the hilt by the leaders of the party and the unions, can bring the Tories to their knees.

Just like Liverpool City Council, the next Labour government will face a concerted campaign from all enemies of the labour movement in the boardrooms of big business and the banks. Only a Liverpool-style policy to mobilise the ranks of the movement and challenge those who stand in their way can make it possible for a Labour government to carry through its programme of measures to improve the lives of working people and transform society.

Liverpool City Council has pioneered a new course for other Labour councillors and for the whole movement. The campaign around the elections on 8 May can be an important milestone on the road to the building of a mass socialist Labour Party and the transformation of society in the interests of working people.

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# Labour's 'realism' leads to cuts

**BOTH RIGHT and ex-left Labour leaders like Sheffield's David Blunkett have adopted the ideas of 'new realism' in place of any serious campaign against the Tories' attack on local government.**

After the debacle of the anti-rate capping campaign, and the failure to back Liverpool's fight, both the soft left and the right have no alternative but to cave into Tory pressure and make cuts.

## Sheffield rents and rates go up

AFTER THE announcement of Sheffield City Council's budget, there has been angry talk in the pubs and clubs, and on the buses about the 'increases'.

South Yorkshire workers have already been stung by bus fare increases of as much as 300%. A worker previously paying £2 a week to travel to work, will now be paying £10.

Yet the council budget adds a rate increase of just under 20%, which averages an extra £1.52 per week, and a rent increase of 75p. Along with increased charges for council services, all this will mean an 8 or 9% cut in living standards.

The only Labour councillor who voted against the budget was *Militant* supporter Paul Green, who is fighting expulsion from the Labour Party. "By voting for a cuts budget the Labour Group has not only broken past Labour Party policy, it has also broken its promises to the working class of Sheffield," commented Paul.

The direct works department is also under attack. Rumours are rife about voluntary redundancies being sought from among the 3,000 workers. No new houses have been started in the direct works department for two years. This year cuts in capital spending will mean less modernisations too. Last year there were only 40 council house starts in Sheffield over all.

At a recent public meeting, council leader David Blunkett made an outrageous attack on the council workforce, accusing them of



David Blunkett.

shirking: "We're not running a holiday camp," he warned, "out of 33,000 some are working their guts out and some could work a bit harder." At the same meeting in reply to criticism from some young people that he had not stood up to the government, Blunkett poured scorn on the idea of bringing the government down and urged the audience to wait until after the next general election.

This from the same leader who 14 months ago stood defiantly against the government's rate-capping, by refusing to set a rate. Ex-left Blunkett is now presiding over serious cuts in services and heavy rent and rate increases. At the same time he is pursuing a witch-hunt against Liverpool councillors who were prepared to go through with the policy of defiance against Thatcher. Workers in Sheffield and elsewhere will judge those who aspire to leadership in the labour movement by their record in action.

By Alan Hartley  
(Expelled member  
Attercliffe LP)



Increased charges by Newcastle council will mean more hardship for many families who rely on council services.

## Newcastle slashes jobs

THE LABOUR controlled Newcastle City Council has just passed a budget consisting of cuts amounting to £12m. These include a reduction of 370 jobs, no new house building and the closure of homes for children and the elderly.

Amongst the right wing council leadership there is much self-congratulation about the efficient management of the city's finances and the existing level of services. This will not be much consolation to those who will suffer as a result of the cuts.

One old lady in her nineties will be forced to leave the home where she has lived for 30 years because of closures.

Some of these cuts could have been avoided. The government has provided some ex-

tra money to the city. Initially the rate increase had been agreed at 4.9 per cent, to cover for inflation. Instead of securing jobs and services the Labour Group then decided an increase of only 2.2 per cent. Hypocritically they argued that local people could not take a large increase, but this had not prevented a rate increase of 23% last year!

The fact that there was very little opposition from the Tory Group is evidence that Labour is effectively carrying out their dirty work for them.

It is ironic that Labour's right attacks Liverpool over mass meetings of up to 700 party members held to keep everyone informed. Yet in Newcastle when a group of 100 Labour and trade union members gathered outside the council's budget meeting we were refused access to the area around the council chamber to lobby councillors. Eventually after prolonged negotiation just six of us were graciously allowed into the building to hand out our leaflets.

The really positive aspect of the last few months, however, has been the way that local authority workers in Newcastle have worked more closely together. This will have to continue now to protect jobs and services, even against our Labour council.

By Jeanie Molyneux  
(Newcastle NALGO, personal capacity)

## Council's flat sale stopped

IN A victory for tenants of the Spencerbeck estate, in Cleveland, Langbaugh council has backed down from taking eviction proceedings against them.

Langbaugh, a Labour council, wanted to evict tenants in this estate to make way for private developers. However, tenants and the local labour movement successfully campaigned against eviction. The final straw for the Labour Group was a letter from the NEC pointing out that they were not following Labour Party policy on housing and warning them to change course.

However the labour movement locally will still have to be vigilant as the Labour Group have reaffirmed their policy of using the private sector to redevelop and, if necessary, sell off council houses.

## Militant Rally Sheffield City Hall

Peter Derek  
Taaffe Hatton  
Monday 14 April Film 6.30pm  
Speakers 7.30pm +  
'Moaning Minnies'



# Pirate firm guards nuclear bunker

**THE QUIET** town of Carmarthen has been the scene of determined demonstrations and quite serious brutality, at the construction site for a nuclear bunker. Over 4,000 demonstrated there on Easter Saturday.

The local council which is building the bunker has claimed that it is not for use in the event of nuclear war. Initially it was suggested that it was merely a basement for the council chairman's new parlour—with ten foot thick concrete walls, decontamination room and escape hatch!

Construction was held up for two months last year, because the council had not even gone through the procedures to vote itself planning permission.

## Two petitions

Local feelings are running high. Two petitions have been presented to the council, one in favour of the bunker with 184 signatures and one against with 7856!

But the council has employed private security guards from the notorious firm Pritchards to protect the site. This company with extensive interests in South Africa, has been involved in

By a Lampeter Student

the privatising of local government services, like Wandsworth's street cleaning.

In an horrific incident involving security guards, one demonstrator had a finger torn off as she was pulled from a fence. In February demonstrators including members of Lampeter College Labour Club were kicked and punched and thrown into the road despite passing traffic.

Carmarthen Council has now taken out an injunction against 17 named protestors barring them from actions at the site.

These disgraceful methods used against Labour Party members, students and CND supporters, could next be used against any section of workers. They must be opposed by the labour movement in Wales.



Guards from Pritchards drag away demonstrators.

## LPYS campaign against racism

**THE RACISM** debate at LPYS conference began with Razina from Bradford West describing a recent attack on two Asian youth in Bradford by 15-20 fascists. One of the Asians received a stab wound.

She spoke of the role the YS had played in campaigning against such attacks and warned that the "right" in the shape of people like Honeyford were trying to make racism respectable.

Paul Young from Balham told conference why he was opposed to having Black Sections in the Labour Party. They would be potentially divisive; they would not make the Labour Party any more attractive to blacks, who were cynical about the Party because of its past failures to solve any of the problems that face them.

The way to build the confidence of the black communities in the Labour Par-

ty was by fighting to get it committed to a radical socialist programme, not simply by making organisational changes.

There was uproar in the conference when Kingsley Abrams, a Black Sections supporter, claimed that *Militant* supporters condemned black youth involved in the inner city riots, and were opposed to blacks organising self-defence.

## Involved

Linda Douglas from the National Committee answered these claims when she summed up the debate.

She told conference that she and other *Militant* supporters had officially spoken on behalf of the Groce Family Support Group and Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign. They were asked to do this because they had become involved in these events from the very start.

**"THE CONFERENCE** shows that black and white youth are united in struggle.

**"As Derek Hatton** said "It is our future". I see it as my duty to set an example to my friends who are complacent about politics.

**"I disagree with Black Sections** because they are causing a bigger rift between black and white youth and don't offer any concrete policies for winning black youth.

**"Fowler and Thatcher** have systematically attacked young people, that is why I want to fight. I agree with the policies of *Militant* and their programme for changing society."

Anthony Taylor (Vauxhall LPYS) spoke to Hashida Dave (Streatham LPYS)

## Women need socialism

**WOMEN ARE** spearheading the fight for socialism. Linda Douglas, NEC delegate elect told the LPYS conference she joined the LPYS because of her personal experience of racism and poverty.

"Whenever I went for an interview I would desperately look around for another black face to see if I had a chance to get a job.

"And when finally I did get a job as a hairdresser it made me sick to see people walking out of the shop with hairdos that cost twice my weekly wage packet".

Janice Glennon, Stevenage LPYS, told conference of a recent court case in her town of a young mother accused of stealing baby food. When asked how she would plead, she said 'I plead poverty'.

"It is those women who are the most exploited in society who can be won to the LPYS on a Marxist programme".

## LPYS members picket Bournemouth warehouse



LPYS members showed their working class solidarity in practice at conference by picketing the local newspaper distribution warehouse in Bournemouth. Photo: Gerard Livett

**Beverley Ekpo (Liverpool)** "I've known about the YS for a while but this is the first event I've been to and I'm determined to join now.

"A lot of young people in Toxteth see their only possible future as knocking about in Granby, nothing has ever really been put into the area, people have been unemployed for decades.

"There's understandably scepticism towards the labour movement in Liverpool 8 and it won't be easy to win people to the ideas of the YS, but that's what I intend to try and do."



Beverley Ekpo.

## Plymouth students isolate fascist

**ON 7 MARCH** an anti-apartheid meeting in Plymouth was seriously disrupted by half a dozen youth in combat gear. Police present say that if they had not been there violence and damage would have been far worse.

Associating with these thugs was Mark Spong, a first year student at Plymouth Poly. He left Rhodesia just before it became Zimbabwe.

Spong stood twice for the NF in local elections in Wimbledon and Hayes. As a TGWU shop steward until his credentials were taken away in 1981 he was active in NFTU a fascist organisation trying to infiltrate the unions.

As news of Spong's involvement came out, two spontaneous walk outs occurred on 10 March. In a politics seminar all other students left when Spong refused to leave when he was asked to. About half the students walked out of

another sociology lecture.

A students' meeting on 11 March decided to walk out of all lectures attended by Spong and call for rearrangements of seminars to exclude the fascist. Students were afraid of going on NF hit lists if they opposed Spong's views.

Students want to agree some form of common policy, at the very least for rearrangement of seminars as happened in the previous week.

Some students, especially those who have suffered fascist and racist attacks, called for total segregation in lectures and banning Spong from all union buildings and activities.

The local Tory rag is antagonistic to us, one editorial told students to 'grow up'. But the local people are sympathetic. They can see the 'achievements' of fascism everywhere in Plymouth, which was flattened by a Nazi blitz in 1942.

## Out of the mouths of babes...

**Tricia Jockins (Huyton)** spoke to a *Militant* reporter at YS conference.

"I work as a nursery nurse for Liverpool City Council and I think what they've done to improve nursery facilities should be shouted from every roof top.

"I was trying to join my YS for a year, but my membership was constantly opposed by right wingers. At first I was told the YS was full up, but of course the real reason I was kept out was because I support *Militant*.

"In fact a Knowsley councillor actually went up to my

parents in a pub and told them I'd never be able to join the Labour Party in Knowsley South.

"I actually managed to join about two months ago because the same councillor failed to turn up to his ward meeting to oppose my membership.

"People like this who spend all their time attacking socialists are digging their own graves, because they fail to put forward any ideas of their own. They'll never be able to undermine the support for socialist ideas. Even youngsters can't help but be

affected by the enormous publicity Liverpool City Council has attracted.

"At assembly in an infant school in Liverpool, the headmistress asked the audience: 'Could anyone tell me the name of the Archbishop of Liverpool?' One of the toddlers eagerly replied, 'Derek Hatton miss.'

"On another occasion a teacher in Fazakerly Special School asked juniors to name the political parties. One immediately shouted out, 'Labour Miss', 'Yes,' said the teacher, 'who else?'



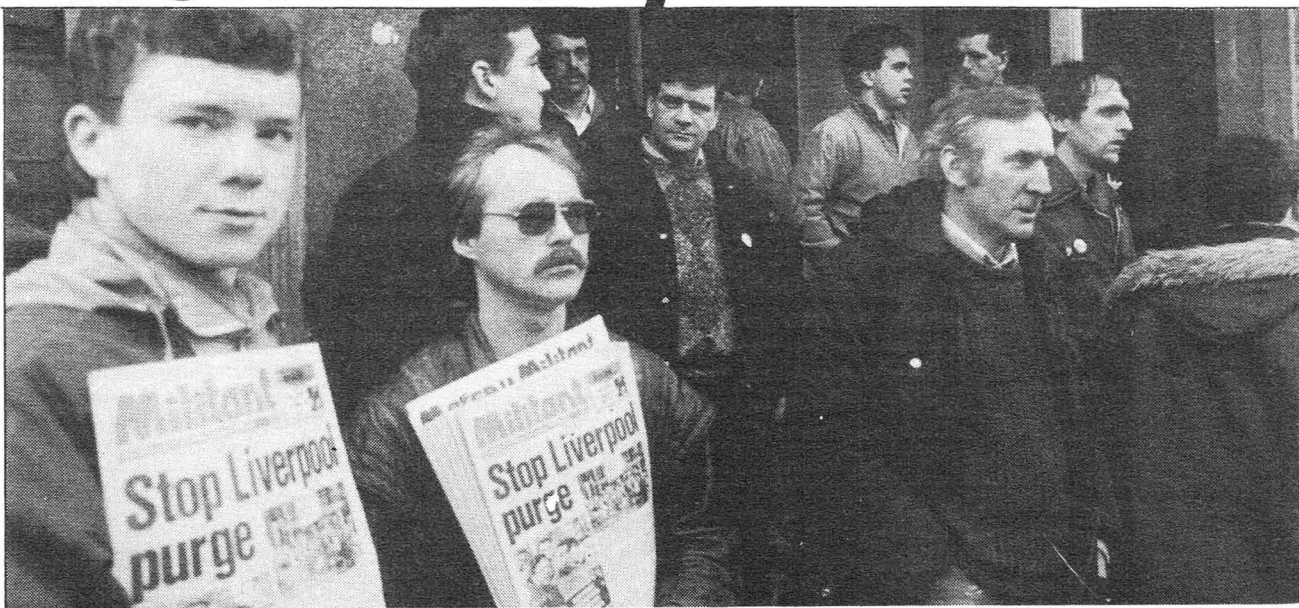
Tricia Jockins.

Silence filled the room, after a while a little boy, looking very unsure of himself volunteered, 'Mrs Thatcher.'

"Even the toddlers in Liverpool know that the Tories have no future!"



# A reward for your effort



Militant gives workers the truth—don't keep it to yourself, sell it!

**FACTORY SALES** may sometimes seem pretty thankless, but keep at it and you are sure to get results.

A seller in Nottingham sold outside the Pork Farms factory all last winter come rain or snow. The workers were so impressed by his dedication in coming out in the freezing cold that they had a whip-round and bought him a pair of gloves!

An even more useful reward for his efforts was that one of his regular sales now takes six copies of the paper and sells them inside the factory.

As well as covering workplaces, supporters should also try to cover union meetings. At Cotgrave pit in the Not-

tingham coalfield 21 papers are sold—in addition 11 were sold at lodge meetings, eight were sold at Newstead lodge and six at Gedling.

Readers may remember a report several weeks ago of the sale of 30 papers per week in a bus depot in Mansfield. A Labour Party workplace branch has now been established by the Militant readers at the depot. One more example of the way that Marxism builds the Labour Party.

Sellers will now be involved in the local elections in many parts of the country and sales can be increased in the streets and round the estates during this period.

The publicity we have received will mean tremendous opportunities to sell the paper and draw people into political activity for the first time.

## Get on target for May Day

**ALAN TAYLOR** from the Wirral has written explaining how the petition against the witch-hunt is being used in that area.

The petition is now being used on all street sales, estate canvasses, regular paper rounds, LP ward meetings, workplaces and union branches.

"Very few people refuse to sign it and the majority make a fighting fund contribution if asked. In fact, some apologise for not being able to give more. Colin Todhunter, who is unemployed, gave £1.75 and Stevie, also unemployed, from the 'North Star' gave £1.

"One new seller sold three papers on his first canvass and raised £1.85. Another comrade raised £12.15 from 36 signatures".

This example can be repeated. In the next four weeks we could meet our target just from donations from the petition, such is the opposition to the witch-hunt. Have you signed the petition yet? Have you asked your mates? Keep the petition with you at all times.

### Resources

The huge collection at the LPYS conference showed which ideas the delegates and visitors supported. We appeal to all readers unable to attend the conference to donate to our fighting fund this week.

Comrades from Yorkshire raised cash from a more unusual source at the conference in Bournemouth. A millionaire, Peter Whitehead, turned up at their hotel in a Rolls Royce. He said he owned various factories, which the comrades assured him would in

FIGHTING  
FUND

This week  
£2120

Quarter ends  
30 April

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London East	2401	60%	3500
2 London South West	811	54%	1500
3 London South East	1119	75%	2200
4 London West	1397	63%	2900
5 Manchester/Lancs	1780	42%	4200
6 South East	905	41%	2400
7 East Midlands	1144	27%	3050
8 Merseyside	2461	63%	6900
9 Southern	1077	26%	3100
10 Scotland East	1077	27%	3200
11 Scotland West	1301	39%	3850
12 Humberside	737	32%	2350
13 Eastern	972	28%	3450
14 Yorkshire	1398	31%	5600
15 West Midlands	987	22%	4500
16 Northern	885	19%	4550
17 South West	379	14%	2150
18 Wales East	216	10%	1450
19 Wales West	483	15%	3150
Others	2083	52%	5000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>23609</b>		<b>70000</b>

the future be donated to society as a whole. But, in the meantime he donated £30 for a Militant and a Yorkshire Militant badge.

We know most of our readers will never be millionaires, but we appeal to all of you to continue to support our funds. It is from the pockets of workers, unemployed, students and young people that resources are built.

With only three weeks to the end of the quarter every area should be making absolutely sure that their target is reached. Every area should organise a massive end of quarter social—a disco or party.

Organise it around May Day. We could raise thousands of pounds in the course of a weekend if things are planned now.

### Success with women's charter

**AT THE Southern Region Labour Party conference, 18 copies of the Charter for women workers were sold.**

Delegates wanted to know more about the ideas. One delegate said that she had better buy a charter as her husband would never forgive her as its written by women from his area.

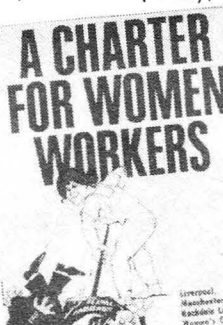
A South African trade unionist visitor bought the charter after a very short discussion.

This was my first conference and I'd never sold the charter before. Next year more than double will be sold and I hope many more working class women will go as delegates and visitors.

I hope there will be provi-

sion for children as there was no creche at Southern Region LP conference. Women will no longer take a back seat in the struggle taking place in "the soft south".

By Ruby Haddon  
(South Thanet CLP,  
Women's Officer,  
personal capacity)



**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 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB. Price 40p & 15p p&p.

## ads

### CLASSIFIED

15p per word, minimum 10 words.

### SEMI-DISPLAY

£2 per column centimetre. Three weeks for the price of two. Militant meeting ads free.

All advertisement copy should reach this office by Saturday.

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

**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.

**NEW SALEP** broadsheet. Workers and youth direct links campaign 1986. Articles on BTR dispute, SANUM, and the present situation in South Africa. Price 20p plus 15p post and package from SALEP, 28 Martello Road, London E8 3PE.

**POSTER** commemorating 50th anniversary of Spanish Revolution out soon! £1 each + 25p P&P. Available from fighting fund department. Order yours now!

**BRISTOL Militant** Public Meeting. "What we stand for". Wednesday 23 April, 7.30pm. at the Earl Russell Inn, 143 Lawrence Hill, Bristol. Speaker: Robin Clapp.

**MILITANT** collecting tins—available from Fighting Fund department, 3-13 Hepscoth 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).

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

**DOVER Militant** Discussion Group. 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.

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

**GARSTON** Labour Party public meeting: "Labour Party socialism on trial—let the people judge" Tuesday 15 April 7.30pm Woolton Labour Club, Childwall Valley Road. Speakers include Derek Hatton, Ian Lowes, Eddie Loyden MP, Paul Astbury, Heather Adams, Graham Casey and Rob Owens.

**THE** annual report of the Zimbabwe Trade Union Defence Campaign is available now. Price 25p (plus 20p p&p). From ZTUUC, 28 Martello Street, London E8 3PE.

**BLOC** conference coach from Merseyside. St Johns Lane, Liverpool 9am. Saturday 19 April. Price £4. Contact 24 Pilch Lane Liverpool L14 7QB, 051 228-6926.

**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 fights back" meetings

**NORTHERN**  
Sunderland Monday 21 April

**EAST MIDLANDS**

Melton Mowbray Thursday 17 April

Sutton in Ashfield Monday 21 April

Gedling Thursday 24 April 7.30pm Windsor Castle, Carlton Hill, Carlton, Nottingham. Speaker Roger Bannister, secretary Broadgreen Labour Party and threatened with expulsion from the Labour Party.

Long Eaton Tuesday 6 May

Peterborough Wednesday 23 April 7.30pm.

**SOUTHERN**

Portsmouth Monday 19 May Speaker Peter Taaffe

Newport, IOW Calverts Hotel Newport Wednesday 16 April 7.30pm. Speaker Vic Dale.

**LONDON**

Dagenham Monday 14 April 7.30pm AUEW Hall, Dagenham Essex. Speakers Brian Ingham, Bill French

Acton Wednesday 23 April Trade Union Club

Thamesmead Everlode House (behind the Barge Pole pub) Harrow Manor Way, London SE28. Tuesday 15 April 7.45pm.

Erith Venue: Erith Town Hall, Tuesday 22 April 7.45pm.

**WALES**

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

Islwyn: Thursday 17 April 7.30pm. Speakers: Derek Hatton and Peter Taaffe. Venue: Newbridge Comprehensive school.

**YORKSHIRE/HUMBERSIDE**

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

West Hull Wednesday 23 April 7.30pm. Trades and Labour Club, Beverley Road, Hull.

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

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

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

**SCOTLAND**

Hamilton Wednesday 16 April 7.30pm Belle Cottage.

### New publication

**James Connolly and the Easter Rising Marxist Study Guide**  
Articles by: Lenin, Trotsky, Grant and Hadden. Introduction by Dermot Connolly. Single copies 30p plus 20p postage. 5 for £2.00 post inclusive. 20 or more post free. Order from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

### DONATIONS INCLUDE:

V Patterson £140, NUT conference £206, C Longhurst Tunbridge Wells £6, J Kavanagh Blackburn £1, O Davies Leicester Poly £1, Strathclyde NALGO and APEX expenses £14.50, Tom Pren-

stice, Orchestral expenses £100, B Howgate, Birkenshaw £2, W Hunter Newmans £2, Southern Region LP conference £87, B Plews Hull EETPU £2.50, J Taylor Hull NUPE £1.





## Food for thought

AN INTERVIEW with Princess Diana in *Women's Own*, not so long ago, quoted her as saying: "Lobster? Can we afford it?" Great sense of humour eh?

Not so funny when you think that for most of us these days it's a case of: "Meat and two veg? Can we afford it?" A study carried out in the North of England showed that 15 per cent of unemployed people "never or hardly ever" ate fresh fruit or vegetables and 40 per cent missed out meals due to lack of money.

This situation is bound to get worse with the lengthening dole queues and the government's attacks on social security. It is estimated that the DHSS calculates in its benefits an allowance for food of £10.25 per adult per week. For 16-18 year olds it is £5 and for 11-15 year olds £4. For children under 11 it is just £2.75!

What chance do working class people have of a healthy balanced diet when the Tories obviously think a young child can be fed for under £3 a week? You couldn't feed a dog for that!

## Additives cause allergies

A TYPICAL Christmas hamper presented to the Minister of Agriculture last year by the Food Additives Campaign Team contained 170 additives which they claim are unnecessary. The Christmas pudding for instance contained caramel, artificial flavouring and glucose syrup.

The group have estimated that 82,000 people in Britain suffer from allergies caused by food additives. These they claim "allow food processors to create the illusion that we are eating good food, whereas in truth the British diet is more and more made up of saturated fat, processed starch and sugars, and additives".

### Inaccuracies

Particular concern is being expressed about Aspartame, an artificial sweetener used in 125 products. It was approved in America only after the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) found serious inaccuracies in the test data of the company producing it. Yet British approval was based on the same data.

Now a US Senator has alleged that the FDA tried to have a grand jury investigation into possible criminal charges against the firm "for concealing material facts and making false statements", but that this was blocked by a lawyer in the Chicago US Attorney's office.

# Eating can damage your health

**THE FOOD industry is big business. Every aspect of production, farming and distribution is controlled by a handful of giant monopolies.**

By Helen Gasking

Since the main concern of the big food companies is to make profits, food must last longer, look nicer, and have instant appeal. But for those of us on low incomes, the food we buy often is not real food at all but a cocktail of chemicals and additives that can often produce side effects and sometimes damage our health quite seriously.

In today's hi-tech food industry a manufacturer needn't have much to do with real food at all. All that is needed is a large range of sugars, fats and refined starches that can be held together with additives. This simple formula can produce anything from cakes to fish fingers!

Why bother to put egg in your custard when you can use E102 Tartrazine or E110 Sunset Yellow (!). Why use real cheese in 'cheesy corn puffs' when you can use artificial 'cheese flavour' and a 'flavour enhancer'.

### Hyperactivity

There are 3,500 food additives currently in use—only 277 of which have been approved by the government. And out of those 277 less than half have been approved by the EEC. Most common additives can lead to health problems—such as asthma, hayfever, stomach upsets and rashes. Some can cause insomnia and hyperactivity in children. A number are even suspected of causing or contributing to cancer.

According to the London Food Commission, an average packet of crisps contains three additives that are banned from food intended for young children. Yet there are no warnings of this on the wrappers.

But it is not just eating additives that can be harmful—working with them can be even more hazardous. The official view of occupational problems caused by additives is that there aren't any. Yet workers exposed to additives in food factories have a far higher level of contact with them than most consumers and can suffer from allergies, such as dermatitis, to an even greater extent. If the government does lift the ban on irradiation, the dangers faced by food workers will increase dramatically.

Irradiation is the treating of food with doses of radiation in order to 'preserve' it longer. The process inhibits sprouting and ripening in fruits and vegetables and reduces the bacteria that causes food to spoil. There may be advantages in such a process but at the moment these are outweighed by the concerns for the health and

safety of both consumers and workers. Fruit that has been irradiated may look fresh on the stall—but that won't mean it is. It could in fact be quite old and have lost its vitamin value.

Irradiation can also destroy the organisms that cause spoiled meat to give off a warning smell. And while irradiation can kill salmonella, it also kills off the organisms that fight botulism.

The problems facing workers in the process are even more worrying. We already know that there are no safe levels of exposure to radiation and that the smallest amount can increase the risk of cancer. The danger to food workers is that quite large amounts of radiation are used and any accident or malfunction with equipment could mean serious risks for these workers. Even routine operations will expose some workers to doses similar to those in nuclear fuel handling.

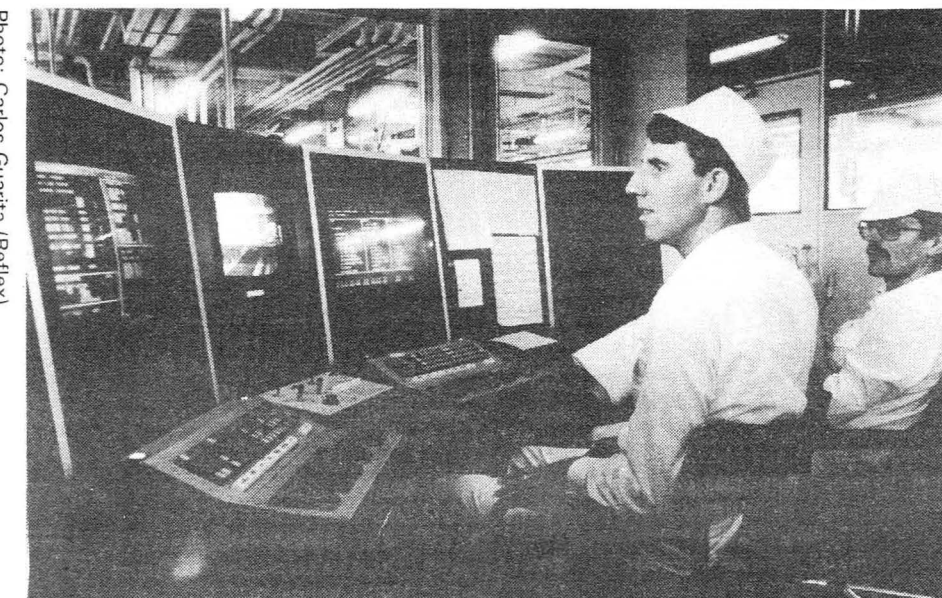
The major problem for workers in the food industry (271,000 in London alone) and also consumers is the total domination of the industry by the huge monopolies. What chance do we have of eating safe and nutritious food produced in safe and healthy conditions when the whole industry, right through to distribution, is controlled by a few giant companies whose only aim is making money.

In London, five retail companies control over 70 per cent of the capital's grocery market. And firms like Kellogg's, Cadbury, Rowntree, etc, all leading brand names today, have dominated their markets since 1933.

### Official secrets

It is companies like this who control the Food Advisory Committee (FAC) and it is this body that advises the government on aspects of safety etc in food manufacturing. The information on which they base their advice is classified "commercially sensitive" and is covered by the Official Secrets Act! Is it any wonder then that successive governments have allowed the continued use of additives that are known or suspected of causing harm?

It is not in the interests of big business to provide us with informative advice on nutrition, vitamins, healthy eating etc. Neither is it in



Hi-tech 'food' production of ice cream at Lyonsmaid (above) and fudge at Cadbury's (below)

their interests to provide us with food at affordable prices. The food industry spends £313 million each year on advertising, yet the Health Education Council spends just £250,000 each year on promoting healthy eating. Therefore the majority of information we receive about foodstuffs comes to us, directly or indirectly, from manufacturing themselves.

Yet food is a social necessity. From free school

milk for the under-fives (currently under threat) to meals on wheels services for OAPs, it is obvious that food should be a social service, provided free of charge and under democratic control of consumers and workers in the industry. Instead of scrapping the right to free school meals it should be extended to cover all pupils and students in education.

Properly funded, community-based meals services should be provided free

of charge for all pensioners.

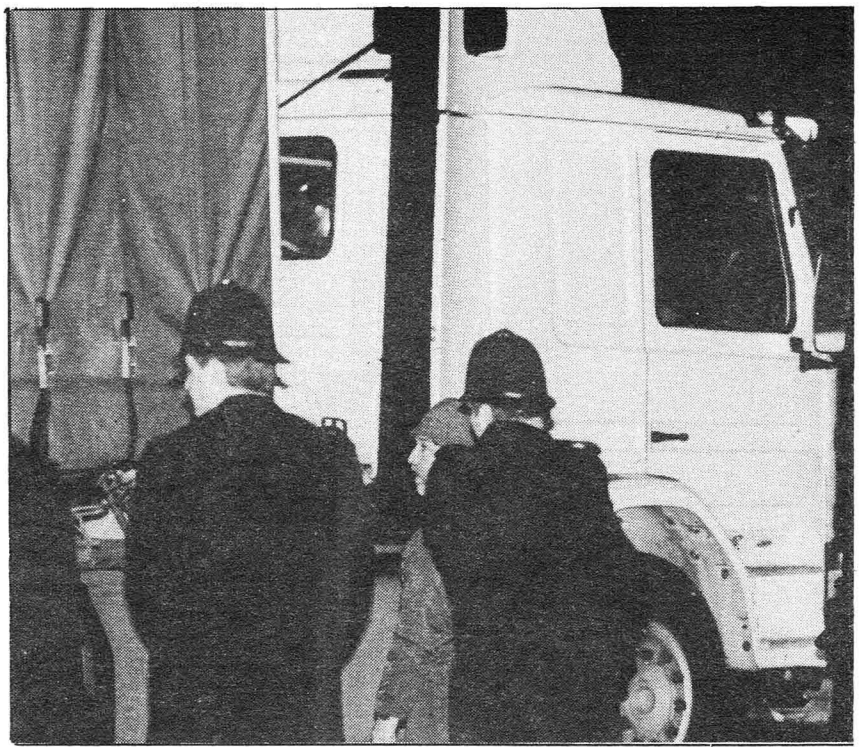
Big business is making profits out of hunger. An eighth of the world's children are malnourished. In Britain alone, dietary diseases cost the NHS over £1,000 million a year. It seems that capitalism is not content with merely starving a sizeable chunk of the world's population to death; it also seems hell-bent on poisoning the other half who are lucky enough to have something to eat.

Photo: Carlos Guerra (Reflex)





Andrew Wiard (Report)



Women take part in a recent march of residents to the plant to tell Murdoch what they think of him (above left).

A scab lorry leaves Fortress Murdoch (above centre).

Guarding Murdoch's millions. Community policing in Wapping these days (above right).

Converted flats in Wapping's Riverside Estate. Tenants were thrown out of these homes to make way for the rich (left).

The council housing that remains suffers from overcrowding and damp (below left).

Ben Eastop



# The siege of

**IT IS not only striking print workers who face the harassment and intimidation of the police outside Fortress Murdoch at Wapping.**

Local residents have become virtual prisoners in their own homes—and now have to put up with living next door to a giant newspaper factory with its constant noise, and having 38 ton lorries hurtling past just feet from their door. But it is the problem with the police that is causing most anger among Wapping residents

**John Considine**, a young Labour Party supporter who lives right opposite Fortress Wapping said: "They have always hated the local people. This has just made things even worse".

**Sarah Fox** sixteen year-old school student, of nearby Cable Street, said: "Police have always had a bad attitude to youth in the area. A lot of them are definitely racist. But now Wapping has become a no-go area.

## Taking away our liberty

"The press talk about the pickets tactics, but they are not half as bad as the police tactics.

"They have taken away the liberty of the residents to come and go as they please.

"It is more like you imagine a police state to be."

Sarah said it is not only the stop-and-question tactics of the police

that annoys local residents: "Policemen and policewomen use the street outside people's front doors as a toilet! It is disgusting."

Sarah now regularly goes down to the picket line to show her support for the sacked printers and is just one of many people on the estates surrounding the plant who has made friends with the pickets.

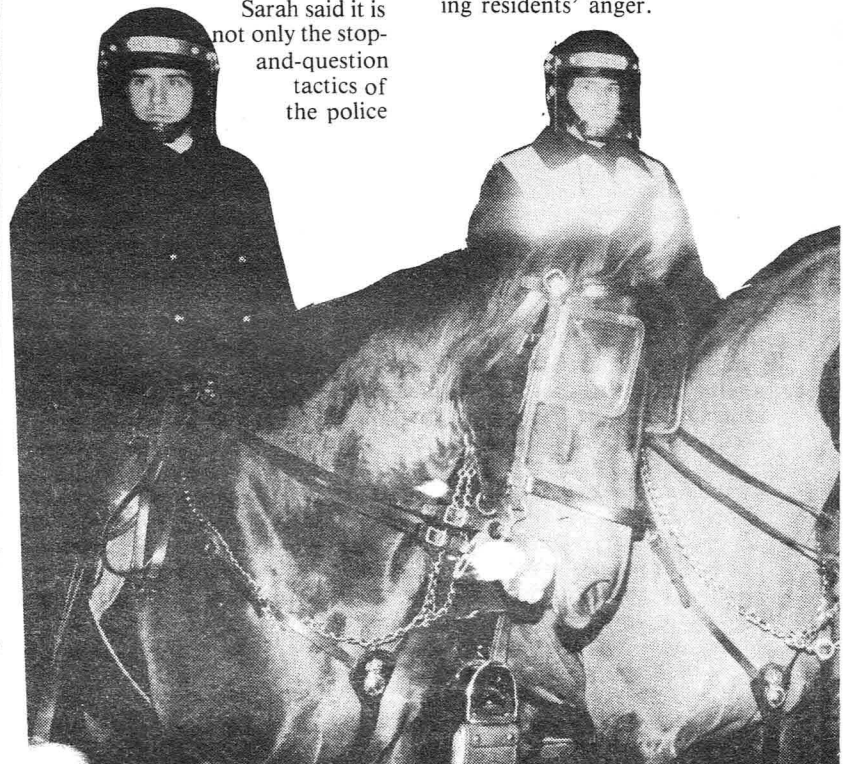
**John Considine**, who lives on the St Georges Estate, the nearest to the plant, said: "It is not only local people who are stopped going about their business. Even taxi drivers are finding it hard sometimes to get here."

And **Russell Lane**, who lives on another tower block in St Georges predicted: "It is becoming a real irritant. If it goes on a lot longer it could reach some real confrontation between local people and the police."

Several marches have been held by local residents' groups in support of the printers, one by the Wapping Tenants Association attracting many hundreds of marchers.

Hostility to Murdoch is linked by the outrage Docklanders feel at the way their community has been hijacked from them. The unelected London Dockland Development Corporation allows Murdoch to flout the planning regulations and urges developers to build luxury homes while local families endure nightmare conditions.

Slogans such as "Jobs not Snobs" decorate the walls around the News International plant showing residents' anger.







Bill Truman

# Wapping

Libby Crowley, of the Royal Mint Estate Tenants Association, said: "The London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) are supposed to be concerned about local people but they have absolutely no concern whatsoever otherwise there would have been far more consultation."

"It is all at the expense of local people. The deprivation in housing around here is absolutely appalling. I have told the local council that I consider the St Mary's ward, just north of Commercial Road, some of the worst housing in the country. There is dampness, overcrowding and general lack of basic amenities. It's terrible."

"The GLC declared it a housing action area around here but now they have gone I don't suppose anything will be done. Yet there are people living in those sort of housing conditions when luxury houses are being built all around them."

## "I doubled back and stood on the picket"

Libby spearheaded a struggle for years demanding adequate pedestrian crossings across The Highway—with the advent of Fortress Murdoch they have miraculously appeared. Only they are controlled from within the plant.

She remembers her first run-in with the police early on in the dispute as she tried to visit her brother down Wapping Lane: "I got stopped by three coppers who asked me where I was going. They were not polite. Eventually I got past them only to be stopped around the corner by another two. I lost my temper and told them to ask their mates where I was going. "Two of them still followed me

so out of sheer cussedness I double-backed and stood on the picket line. I now regularly go on it."

Derek Gadd, of the South Quay Residents Association, said he had met with the local chief superintendent at Leman Street police station in charge of policing at the plant. He had been told by the police that their only concern was getting the lorries out.

Mr Gadd said: "The plant was built to take lorries out through Virginia Road and onto the Highway. But the picketing means taking them out through the Wapping Estate out through Glamis Road or sometimes Sir Thomas More Street."

"These lorries are extremely noisy and they come out at anytime between 9pm and 3 in the morning depending on the effectiveness of the picket. The police tow away cars to make way for them."

"If there had been a more accountable planning authority then objections to the lorries coming out would have been more vociferous

at least and more objection to a number of other things such as all the barbed wire.

## Aliens in their own homeland

"Local people do not like this Fortress confronting them each day. People don't want to live with their kids exposed to this kind of 'industrial relations'."

"Local tenants have no control over our environment. Murdoch has decided to fight a pitched battle with the print unions and he is doing it on our doorsteps."

"This does not bring genuine employment to the area which suffers 30 per cent joblessness. Nor will any of the other schemes. By the 1990s 50 per cent of national newspapers will be printed here."

"Yet only 20 per cent of local people, can afford the kind of prices being asked for new homes in the area. People are becoming aliens in their own homeland."

## What a civil liberty!

**POLICE ACTION** around Wapping in stopping people from going about their business is "wrong in principle and probably unlawful" the National Council for Civil Liberties have said.

The NCCL were deluged with complaints against the police when they went to Wapping to inquire about the present situation.

A report out last week detailed 55 cases—the maximum they could process—including four people who claim they were arrested for failing to provide the information asked of them by police.

Most were local residents, but some were tradespeople or pub and club owners and even doctors were caught up in the police hysteria. Most reported incidents were at weekends—but by no means all.

One woman spent one-and-a-half hours trying to get to her home before eventually giving up and returning to a friend's home in Essex with her eight year old child.

A 14 year old girl was told by police to take a different route home which meant crossing wasteland—where the danger of being attacked is greater—a thought that horrified the girl and outraged her mother.

Many people report being followed home by police checking

if their story of returning to their own homes is true.

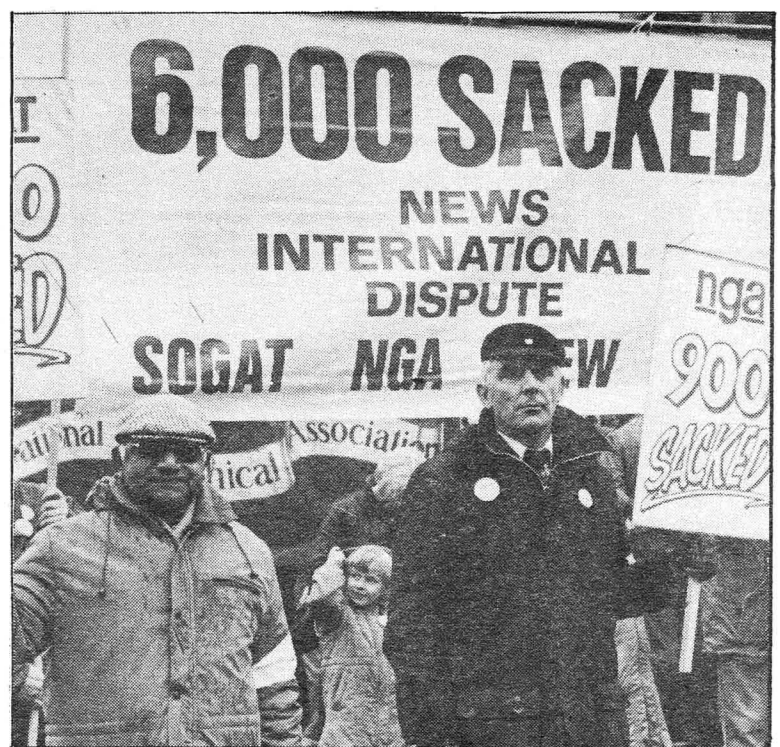
One man, desperate for a takeaway meal, even went to the length of first of all 'phoning up Leman Street police to beg them to radio ahead to their roadblocks to let him through.

The police are using a little-known 147 year old clause from the Metropolitan Police Act which states that constables can stop people if there is a likelihood of an obstruction or a breach of the peace in the immediate area.

Sarah Spencer, of the NCCL said: "When you actually look at what is happening in Wapping there appears in almost every case to be no disorder in the vicinity—and of course, the road blocks have been up to a mile away from the plant."

"They are stretching the law to the absolute limit and beyond. If there was a football match at Chelsea it would be unreasonable to set up road blocks a mile away because there might be trouble at the ground, yet that in effect is what is happening at Wapping."

Ms Spencer said that many people had complained of the police's unhelpful and hostile attitude. In almost every case no explanation of why people were being stopped was attempted.



## 20,000 march for printers

**DESPITE THE cold and the rain, over 20,000 people turned out to back the rally and demonstration on Sunday 6 April in support of the sacked printworkers.**

Delegations from many parts of the country joined the march and joined the picket of Rupert Murdoch's Wapping printworks.

The rally began at 3.00pm with speeches from print union leaders, Willis of the TUC, Arthur Scargill and other trade union representatives.

Norman Willis was loudly heckled by print workers when he suggested that Murdoch's "offer" of the Grays Inn Road plant to the sacked workers in place of their jobs might form the basis of a settlement. Brenda Dean, General Secretary of SOGAT 82 was cheered when she said the fight would go on until the workers were reinstated and there was a proper union agreement for Wapping.

At 5.30 the march set off from Trafalgar square through the City of London, down Fleet Street, past the Bouveries Street plant where the *Sun* had been printed before Murdoch launched his attack on the unions. The streets were heavily policed by the City police force.

The procession took over the full width of the road as it approached the plant. As usual every cross road was blocked with barriers, police and police horses.

A meeting was held facing the main entrance. Arthur Scargill was cheered when he called for the picketting to be extended to all

TNT depots and even the newsagents if this was needed.

He made the point forcibly that the strike was not merely about printworkers jobs but the right of trade unions to organise freely. The issues were the same as those facing the miners before them and would not go away.

## Appeal

An appeal was made from the platform for the demonstrators to wait as long as possible to prevent the distribution of the *Sun* and the *Times*, by keeping the road blocked with people. Unlike the Saturday marches organised on previous weeks many were unable to stay late on the Sunday and the vans were able to get out at 9.30pm.

As soon as the vans had left the police charged what was left of the demonstrators. Their exercise in clearing the road was carried out with indiscriminate violence. A picket who was not quick enough getting out of the way of the police was struck down with a truncheon. The police casualties reported in the capitalist press occurred after this unprovoked attack.

If Norman Willis put the same energy into rallying support for the printers that he puts into "finding compromises" then the demonstration could have been half a million strong. The TUC must use its strength to defend trade union rights. The fact that 20,000 turned out with hardly any national campaign shows the potential that exists.

By Gerry Lerner

## Smash-the-Picket Group

**VIOLENCE FLARED** at Wapping on Sunday night when SPG storm troopers launched a vicious attack on pickets.

The trouble started shortly after 9pm on the Highway at the junction with Wapping Lane.

Mounted police charged demonstrators at the top of Wapping Lane, forcing them back to allow a convoy of scab lorries out of the plant.

With the lorries gone the police then retreated in the face of the pickets' anger. A line of mounted police then formed up behind the protesters about 50 yards down the road by the Old Rose public house.

Police charged, forcing the pickets back to a line level with the pub. A platoon of police also charged into the churchyard opposite, attacking people taking shelter there.

They sent snatch squads of police into the crowd to pick out pickets, and close down the pub.

The great majority of the police, involved in this military-style action wore flak jackets displaying no number. After this provocation glasses were thrown at police and a great deal of abuse was hurled at them.

But considering the lorries had left the plant already and that there were only two to three hundred people in the road, the police had no justification for the action. They had the situation completely under control and they charged the crowd in a deliberate attempt to inflame the situation.

By Mark Leslie



## Greece

## Workers move left



Protest against government policy

**SIX MONTHS** after announcing an austerity policy, the PASOK (Socialist) government of Greece suddenly decided in mid-March to invite the two Communist parties, as well as three small liberal parties, to begin a "national dialogue" on foreign, economic and social policies.

By Nicos Remoundos

An invitation for discussions was also sent to two right-wing parties, but this was immediately turned down.

The press hailed this as a brilliant move by Socialist prime minister A. Papandreou to embarrass his opponents and regain the initiative after the recent period of turmoil provoked by his austerity measures.

In reality the last months have marked a decisive turn into a new period of immense uncertainty and instability.

Behind this "initiative" lie the fears of PASOK's leadership about the catastrophic crisis of Greek capitalism and the bosses' need for further unpopular measures, continuing opposition to those measures, and the serious crisis in Pasok itself.

### Serious struggles looming ahead

The drops in the price of oil, in interest rates and the value of the dollar could save the Greek economy almost \$1 billion in 1986, and possibly offset the inflationary effects of devaluation.

However, the outlook is not at all rosy. Interest payments on the enormous foreign debt of \$12-\$15 billion alone will cost \$1 billion this year. It is estimated that Gross National Product may drop by 4 per cent. Private and public investment will probably decrease by 26 per cent and 15 per cent respectively, and unemployment will grow from 8.5 per cent to 11 per cent.

The government itself hopes for, at best, no growth, 18 per cent inflation, and a balance of payments deficit of \$1.7-2 billion. And all this in a

after these battles and without clear perspectives, some tiredness is creeping in among certain sections of workers.

At the same time, new layers of the class, as well as the youth and peasants, are joining the struggle.

Universities, technical colleges and high schools were closed down in March with national, regional and local strikes against youth unemployment and cuts in education.

Peasant associations are also mobilising. After three years of almost continuous growth of their income through EEC and government hand-outs, this year will be different.

The EEC decided on an average price increase of only 11 per cent for Greek agricultural products, while inflation is around 20 per cent. The government is also cutting back rapidly on subsidies.

### Leadership

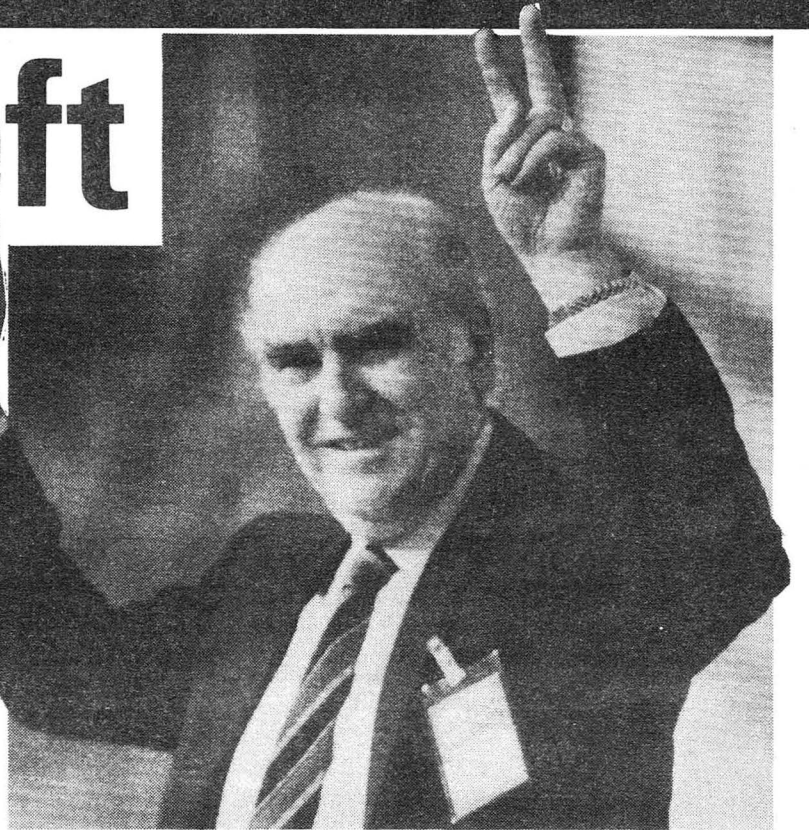
Even the employees of the Greek Secret Service threatened to go on strike, demanding demilitarisation of the service! Members of the riot police told the press that they do not want to be used any more against strikes or demonstrations.

The mood of the workers was shown on 26 March when 50,000 demonstrated in Athens, at a moment's notice, against the US attack on Libya.

An important step forward was taken when *Xekinima* (Marxist paper in PASOK) called a conference of union representatives from "problematic factories" (many of which were nationalised by PASOK, but are now on the verge of collapse under the burden of enormous debts accumulated by the former owners).

Under the threat of "modernisation" by the government—which will mean closures and redundancies—representatives of 40 factories employing 30,000 workers took part. They accepted the programme and united action proposed by the Marxist trade union leaders, and elected a committee.

Papandreou



# leaders move right

On 27 March, a five-hour stoppage was organised, with tremendous success throughout the country. There was 100 per cent participation in all major "problematic" factories, and a militant rally in Athens attracted about 10,000 workers.

The main slogans were: "The workers in the factories, the bosses on the dole"; "Nationalisation is here to stay", etc.

This success was only possible because a socialist programme was adopted, calling for the nationalisation of all major branches of industry under workers' control. The workers were enthused because united action was organised, with a campaign that took the issues to every factory.

PASOK has been shaken again and again, from top to bottom, by the struggles of the last few months.

A conference called by the recently expelled trade union leaders of PASOK and former Central Committee members attracted 1,400 trade unionists, youth and local party members, despite threats of expulsion.



Workers demonstrate in Athens

At the meeting, the policies and undemocratic manoeuvres of the leadership were decisively opposed by the rank and file, led by the Marxists. A call for the formation of a new party was defeated, while the formation of a trade union "broad left" (to be called the Socialist Workers' Union Movement—SWUM) was overwhelmingly carried.

The struggle within PASOK is continuing, despite the expulsion of leading left-wingers and the mistaken resignation of others. The major forces of the left rank and file remain within the party.

In a recent conference of PASOK trade unionists the leadership was decisively opposed and a few party hacks were shouted down. When the bureaucrats attacked *Xekinima*, delegates shouted: "They have done very well!"

At the same time, recent elections in the trade unions prove that PASOK still enjoys tremendous support among the workers. This shows that the Marxists were correct when campaigning against a new party, in

favour of fighting to win PASOK to a socialist programme.

Not only PASOK but both the CPs are in crisis. The leadership of the pro-Moscow CP has been forced to expel whole sections of the party in the Federation of Hospital Workers and in their youth section.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the only tendency in the workers' movement which is growing in influence and support is the Marxist opposition in PASOK.

The leadership of PASOK is facing two major challenges in 1986. One is the trade union conference, with the election of a new leadership. The other is the local elections next autumn.

The strongly pro-government trade union leadership (appointed by the court after the expulsion of their predecessors) is already involved in secret deals to secure re-election. The government is already trying to minimise the possibility of defeat in the local elections.

The bourgeois parties, on the other hand, are not at all eager to challenge PASOK and risk stirring up the workers. However, the ruling class has not abandoned the struggle. It is pressuring Papandreou to do more dirty work for them, so that they can attack when the workers' movement weakens and bring the government down.

Papandreou, glimpsing the defeat which he himself is preparing, hopes to play it like Mitterrand. He plans to move to the presidency in 1989, or before and change to proportional representation so that the Right cannot form a majority government.

But the defeat of the ruling class will not be achieved by clever parliamentary manoeuvres. Only united class struggle for power on a socialist programme will smash the reaction. With Marxist leadership, the rank and file of PASOK, the workers and youth can transform the party into a fighting organisation that will carry through this task.



## Netherlands, West Germany, South Africa, India, Bangladesh

# Big swing to Labour

**THE LOCAL council elections in the Netherlands in March have shown a big swing to Labour.**

Following the 1983 public sector strike, and facing unprecedented attacks on trade union rights and living standards by the CDA (Tory) government, workers have begun to turn again to their traditional party. In the council election, Labour has become the biggest party in 14 cities, with an absolute majority over all other parties in the key industrial city of Rotterdam.

Even in The Hague, Labour has become the biggest party for the first time ever. The swing to Labour has been most dramatic in the south and east of the country where Catholic workers, who traditionally

By Steve Morgan and Peter den Haan (Secretary, Rotterdam YS, personal capacity)

voted for the CDA, have voted Labour in big numbers. In many cases the Labour vote doubled from 20 per cent to 40 per cent.

As a result of the polarisation between the working class and the bosses, the many small left parties have been squeezed out. The 'Communist' Party (with a middle-class 'Eurocommunist' leadership, and the traditional Stalinist wing split off) has lost most of its former industrial base. From having been the second-

biggest party in Amsterdam in the past, it has been cut back to six council seats in combination with a pathetic alliance of 'progressive' fringe groupings.

But the swing to Labour has been less dramatic in cities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam, where Labour councils have been carrying out government cuts and attacking groups of workers like the firemen, with whom they are now in dispute.

## Coalition

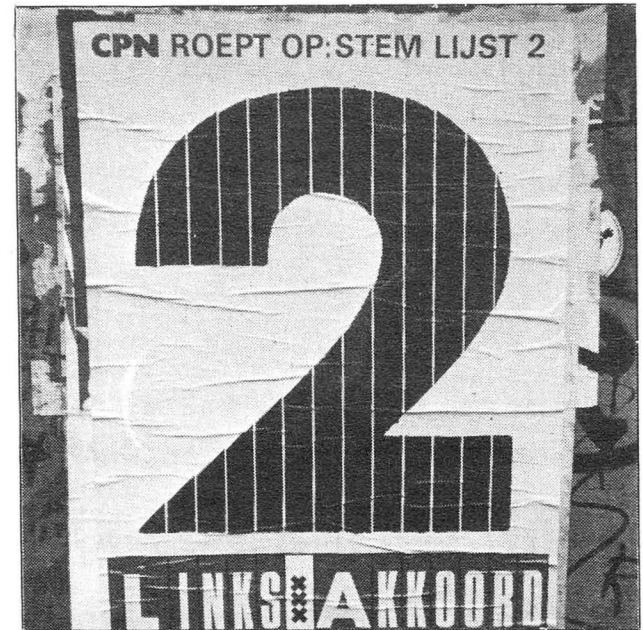
In Rotterdam the Labour Party improved its majority from 22 to 24 seats out of 40. Yet, amazingly, the right wing leaders decided to go into coalition with both CDA and the even more right-wing VVD, in the hope

of getting government grants!

When this was announced to the membership at the election celebration party, the leaders were howled down, and forced to make a U-turn. They have now taken the 'left of centre' liberals, D'66 as their coalition partner again.

Such actions, unfortunately, only serve to undermine the Labour vote in the forthcoming general election in May.

The local elections show that if Labour adopted bold socialist policies and fought the cuts in the big cities, then it would not only emerge as the biggest party in Parliament—as is likely—but could win an overall majority for the first time ever.



"Communist" Party poster says: vote for the "Left Accord" (a combination of the CP, pacifists, radicals and the "Evangelical People's Party").

# Workers fight anti-union law

WEST GERMAN trade unionists have been involved in the biggest mobilisation since the 35-hour week campaign in 1984.

The DGB (the German TUC) are conducting a referendum to show the opposition to new anti-union laws which threaten to tie the unions in legal and financial knots. Many workers want to see far more effective organised opposition against the government's plans.

The Tory Christian Democratic government's law affects workers' rights to unemployment benefits if they are laid off as a result of other workers' strike action; Kohl's government want the unions to meet the costs!

Up until 1969, the bosses did not use the tactic of lock out or lay offs very much. The capitalists themselves had to pay the wages of those affected. In 1969, the costs were taken over by the government who paid workers laid off due to a strike elsewhere from unemployment funds.

Because factories and industries are very interdependent, the unions developed a tactic called "mini-max", meaning minimum striking with maximal results. The unions would give strike pay to those directly involved in strike action; other workers got unemployment pay.

Automation, increased use of computers and cutting down on staff means that many companies no longer go in for extensive stockpiling. For instance the Mercedes Benz factory in Bremen gets parts from eleven other factories throughout Germany.

In some factories production is geared so that different parts arrive simultaneously.

By Detlef Black and Harald Muller (Ruhr) Debbie Lipinski (Hamburg)

This is very efficient and very profitable, but a drawback for the bosses is that if just one of these factories strikes, the whole production 'chain' comes to a halt.

Hence the change in laws. If the bosses claim they have a "cold lock-out", that is where production is halted due to lack of parts, they would be able to lay off workers and make the unions pay for maintenance of workers affected. These could number hundreds of thousands or millions.

Kohl's government want

to bankrupt the unions. Clearly the employers will also stretch that law to claim that politically motivated sympathy lockouts are also accidental lay offs due to lack of parts.

This new law, Paragraph 116, has been discussed more than any other union issue for years. 6 March was the high point so far of the protests. Workers struck and demonstrated throughout the country, despite a campaign on the radio to say the strikes are illegal and workers could be sacked for participating.

## General strike

But the campaign against Para 116 has concentrated overwhelmingly on challenges in the capitalist courts rather than workers' militancy. The union leadership do not want a general strike, but many activists

have decided that an all-out 24-hour general strike must be the next step.

Many of the union leaders say the solution is to wait and work for an SPD victory at the next election. Most workers want Kohl out and the SPD in, but are not prepared to see this anti-working class law bulldozed through. In any case, the SPD leaders have only taken up the struggle halfheartedly.

The union leaders see the dispute purely in terms of lost money. But many German workers point to the miners strike in Britain to show that disputes can be fought despite great financial difficulties; the most important resources the unions have is their membership and the most important weapon is solidarity. That is the key to victory against the Christian Democrats.



Trade unionists wearing Kohl masks protest against the new anti-union law.

## South Africa

ATTACKS BY the South African regime on the fighting leadership of the workers and youth continue. A recent victim is Sarrha Mthembu, executive member of the mass-based Alexandra Action Committee and Co-ordinator of the People's Courts in this black township outside Johannesburg. She has been detained weeks after her son was shot to death by the security forces during their murderous invasion of Alexandra in February.

Protests to South African Embassy, South Africa House, Trafalgar Square, London WC2.

Messages of support to The Chairman, AAC, 27 7th Avenue, Alexandra Township, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Copies to SALEP, 28 Martello Street, London E8 3PE.

## India

WITH OVER 50 killed in one week by Sikh sectarians in the Punjab, Prime Minister Gandhi's "peace agreement" for this troubled state in North India is in ruins.

Now Gandhi has appointed a certain S.S. Ray as governor of the Punjab—the seventh since 1982. Ray's main qualification for the post is his experience in bloodily crushing the left-wing Naxalite movement in West Bengal in the early 1970s.

At the same time, thousands more paramilitary forces were sent to the region, bringing the total to 250,000. Increasingly, the capitalist rulers of the "world's largest democracy" prove that they can only govern by means of bayonets and truncheons.

Capitalism has turned India into a hell of poverty and oppression, now threatened with disintegration. Only the labour movement, armed with socialist policies, can unite the masses of different regions and build a force to transform society.

## Finland

TWO WEEKS after a general strike by 250,000 manual workers ended in partial victory, 15,000 state employees in the Finnish capital Helsinki came out on strike in support of a 20 per cent pay claim.

Trains and traffic came to a halt, and President Koivisto had to move to a hotel because all his staff joined the strike.

The strike is due to become national on 16 April if the workers' demands are not met.

## Sweden

IN SWEDEN, the lull following the murder of Social-Democratic Prime Minister Palme has been shattered with the breakdown of wage negotiations between employers and the white-collar unions.

The unions imposed an immediate overtime ban by 350,000 workers, and gave notice of strike action by 60,000 workers as from 8 April. The bosses reacted with the threat of locking out 300,000 workers in industry and transport as from 9 April.

## Bangladesh

BANGLADESHI dictator Ershad, faced with growing struggles among workers and youth, is trying desperately to stave off revolution by transforming his hated regime into an "acceptable" civilian regime. But his attempts to hold elections on his own terms have faced massive opposition.

The latest plan is to have elections on 7 May (postponed from 26 April) under conditions of martial law. Although the opposition Awami League has agreed to take part, the smaller Bangladeshi National Party is continuing the boycott.

In spite of the capitalists' hopes of stability, elections held on this basis cannot end the political tensions in Bangladesh, nor the conditions of mass poverty which are driving millions of workers and peasants onto the road of revolution.



# Sales in Old Swan

Dear Comrades,

The press would have us believe that after Labour's defeat in the Old Swan by-election, *Militant* are on the run.

Since then, however, an increasingly large number of people have been won over to the ideas of Marxism. Our regular Saturday paper sales now reach a minimum of 25 papers, including *Mersey Militant*.

Recently one person paid £5 for two papers, and on the same Saturday another person bought five papers.

Surely this is not the sign of *Militant* on the run. We in Old Swan are confident that our ideas will spread and we hope to have a minimum of 50 sales very soon.

Yours fraternally  
Ian Collins  
Broadgreen South LPYS

# Letters

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

# Civil servants' gutless leadership

Dear Comrades,

I was a delegate to a recent area committee meeting of CPSA branches in Kent and East Sussex.

Recently union members at GCHQ in Cheltenham, where unions are banned, were threatened with dismissal. My branch moved a resolution at the area meeting calling for a 24 hour general strike if any member was sacked at GCHQ for refusing to resign their union membership.

The Communist Party and its fellow travellers dominate the area committee. Not one of their number had the guts to support and second that resolution.

Neither had they the nerve to oppose it. This is an example of the spineless leadership offered by the Broad Left '84 group in CPSA.

Yours fraternally  
Nigel Sheahan  
Kent (CPSA personal capacity)

# Graham's true colours

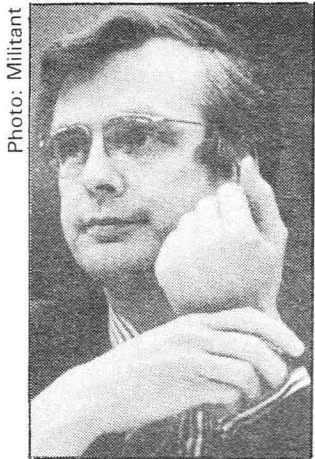


Photo: Militant

Alistair Graham

Dear Comrades,

Turning on the TV early Saturday morning, I found myself confronted by the face of Alistair Graham. Before I had a chance to switch off again he began to talk about his new job.

Apparently he was so convinced by the aims of the Industrial Society (a body used by big business to train management) that he didn't even bother to ask what the salary was before he got the job.

What a stroke of luck that they were offering £50,000 a year instead of the paltry £25,000 that CPSA were paying.

But it wasn't all bad. He finally got down to the

serious job of attacking the SDP. Accusing David Owen of making "cheap political points" over Neil Kinnock's recent problems. Graham raged: "He must understand that it's in the interests of all political parties that Neil is successful in getting rid of *Militant*".

Especially the Tories and the Alliance, eh Alistair?  
Steve Edwards  
Harlow

# Inquiry wastes party cash

Dear Comrades,

Over the years, like many Labour Party members contemplating the actions of our National Executive Committee, I have often muttered: "My cat has got more sense than that lot!".

I now have actual proof that this is true. Last week a thick brown envelope came thudding through our letter box. With an agility worthy of his namesake, our cat Hoddle jumped on it and proceeded to urinate all over it.

I chased him out into the garden, but only later discovered that the envelope contained a thick bundle of reports of the NEC "Enquiry into Liverpool District Labour Party". A difficult problem; should Hoddle remain in disgrace or be praised for his political acumen?

Seriously, the postage on the envelope was £1.70. Has every Labour Party branch secretary in the country had an equivalent mailing? If so, is this a sensible way to spend thousands of pounds of our money, when we are always being told that the



Richard Venton and Cheryl Varley enter Labour Party national offices for 'trial'. Thousands of pounds of Labour Party members' money has been wasted on the investigation into members of Liverpool District Labour Party.

Party is broke?  
Yours fraternally  
Geoff Jones  
Brighton

Eds—Leaving aside the cost of carrying out the inquiry, the Labour Party has forked out over £10,000 in postage alone in sending out the majority and minority reports. The printing would have cost another £6,000.

# Slur on Northern Ireland Socialists

Dear Comrades,

Whilst selling Irish *Militant*'s after a recent Labour Party meeting I was told that "militants in Northern Ireland are all extremists!".

To call our Irish comrades extremists, in my views, is not only a disgraceful insult but it shows the total ignorance these so-called socialists have of the everyday problems our Irish brothers/sisters face each and every day!

In November 1982 one of these 'extremists', Helen Woodhouse from Enniskillen, was tragically killed in an IRA bomb explo-

sion. Helen was the secretary of Fermanagh YS and an active member of the NIPSA union, believing in the unity of Catholic and Protestant workers.

In 1984 more of these 'extremists' from Derry and other areas were constantly harassed and then arrested by the RUC for collecting money for striking miners.

Today our Irish comrades continue to enter both Catholic and Protestant areas putting across the socialist alternative to the capitalist Anglo-Irish deal, and for their trouble they could easily be beaten up or



have petrol poured though their letter-boxes by thugs on all sides, not to mention having to live under the barrel of a British Army rifle!  
Angry  
Bob Harker  
Gateshead East CLP

# Constables critical of role of police

Dear Comrades,

This weekend, outside the conference hall at YS national conference I got talking to a couple of policemen. They were curious about the socialist programme of the YS, and we discussed many current issues as well as the role of the police at Wapping.

One admitted that he only joined after a number of low-paid jobs and a period of unemployment. He was critical of the role of the

police during the miners' strike.

He was sympathetic to the ideas of the YS, and two days later when he was on duty outside the conference hall again, he asked to buy a copy of *Militant*.

A while later, I noticed him again—this time wearing a 'Kick the Tories out' sticker!

Yours fraternally  
Val Kavanagh  
Brentford and Isleworth LPYS



## Reward for initiative

MEXICO CITY'S ex-police chief General Arturo Durazo has recently been extradited from America back to Mexico to face charges of corruption. Durazo organised cocaine and arms smuggling as well as collecting a dollar a month from his 25,000 officers, supposedly to pay for their funeral if they were killed on duty—a nice little earner to finance several luxury mansions.

## Tory logic

A LEWISHAM Tory Party newsletter *Bolts from the blue* deals with the Liberal/SDP Alliance. Apparently we had it all wrong when we said the MPs who left the Labour Party to form the SDP were a bunch of traitors. According to this newsletter: "A vote for the Alliance is a vote for Labour, and this means a vote for Militant Tendency". Follow that if you can.

## The not-so-Communist Party

IN VIENNA last week Labour MP for Leith, Ron Brown, walked out of a conference after the organisers had asked him to tone down the criticisms he was about to make of Margaret Thatcher. The organisers of the conference?... The North Korean Communist Party.

The attempt by the leadership of the Labour Party to expel Marxists has been watched worldwide. The letter opposite appeared in a Canadian newspaper *The Globe and Mail* (12/3/86):

Re Labor Seeks To Curb Marxists (Feb. 27):

I find it disturbing to read of Neil Kinnock's intentions to rid the Labor Party of its left-wing militant faction, particularly Derek Hatton and the Liverpool Council, who, it would appear, are among the few people who ever stood firmly against Mr. Kinnock and openly defied the Iron Maiden.

When Margaret Thatcher's Tory Government decided to reduce grants to the municipalities, she assumed that the balance would be provided by an extra \$10 per week on all property taxes. However, in my native city of Liverpool, where unemployment is more than 30 per cent, people simply do not have that extra \$10 per week, nor do they have any hopes of finding a job to earn it.

Mr. Hatton and the Liverpool Council realized this and took a firm stand against Mrs. Thatcher, refusing to increase the property taxes. They avoided bankruptcy by negotiating a loan to the city from a Swiss bank. These measures may seem desperate, but so is the economic situation of Liverpool's population.

If Mr. Kinnock continues this "witch-hunt," he may well appease the more moderate section of the population and gain their votes at the next election, but he will also be moving one step closer to the policies of the Tory Government, at the expense of sincere, hard-working Labor Party members like Mr. Hatton and the Liverpool Council.

G. Cowbourne  
West Hill, Ont.



# NUPE leadership attempts witch-hunt

NUPE's LEADERSHIP are playing the role normally associated with the EETPU in the witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters in Liverpool and elsewhere.

Up until 1984, NUPE's policy had always been one of firm opposition to witch-hunts in the Labour Party. The motion carried at the 1984 NUPE conference stated that: "Conference instructs our executive council to campaign forcefully against witch-hunts in the Labour Party..."

But in 1985 all this changed. The Executive Council decided to reverse their old policy and support a motion attacking *Militant* supporters and supporting expulsions from the Labour Party.

## Opposition

Tom Sawyer (NUPE's Deputy General Secretary) speaking in favour of the witch-hunting motion at NUPE's 1985 conference argued that: "the Executive Council is opposed to witch-hunting and expulsions."

Since then, however, he and many others in NUPE's leadership have used this resolution in order to justify their attacks against *Militant* in the Labour Party.

Tom Sawyer, in particular, has behaved like a latter day John Golding (right wing leader of the NCU who was behind the last witch-hunt) in his zealous campaign against Liverpool and *Militant*.

By Nick Toms

Recently elected to Labour's NEC he is now using that position to attempt to expel rank and file activists from the Labour Party who have been members longer than he has.

Since 18 November 1985 NUPE's leadership have written to every branch on the alleged 'crimes' of Liverpool City Council on no less than four occasions. One of these letters was five pages long and distributed to every shop steward in the union.

## NEC report

The latest letter contained a copy of the majority report into Liverpool District Labour Party but NOT the minority report which was produced by two members of the inquiry team.

If only NUPE's leadership would devote the same energy and resources to organising national action to

defend their members jobs and conditions then the Tories could easily be defeated.

The intentions behind this propaganda against Liverpool Council and *Militant* supporters have already been made clear at a number of regional Labour Party conference this year where NUPE has acted as the main organiser of the witch-hunt.

Some of NUPE's leadership have not just been content with attacking Liverpool City Council and *Militant* Supporters. Tom Sawyer, for example, in his capacity as chair of the Labour Party NEC youth Committee supported a successful move by the right-wing to cut the LPYS budget from around £11,000 to just £8,000, with the budget for NOLS being increased by a similar amount.

If it is no coincidence of course that the LPYS generally supports the ideas of *Militant* where as NOLS stands in the right-wing, camp of the Labour party, many associated with the Labour Co-ordinating Committee. He has also, more recently, put forward the idea that the age limit of the LPYS should be reduced to 21 - again, no doubt, to hamper the LPYS's cam-

paingn abilities and strength.

The NUPE leadership's witch-hunting activities have not been confined to the Labour Party. *Militant* supporters and other 'left' activists have also come under attack within the union itself.

## Left attacked

For example, the following was minuted at the meeting of NUPE's Executive Council:

"BLOC/NUPE Broad Left - The Executive Council expressed its concern at the distribution of material by this organisation at the recent Divisional Conference held in London and Southern and Eastern Divisions.

"This was further evidence of attempts to undermine the union's democratic structure and it appeared that the organisation was a 'front' for the *Militant* Tendency. It was AGREED to keep the matter under review."

Already *Militant* has published evidence of NUPE officials being used to 'spy' on Broad Left activists within the union. In several parts of the country witch-hunts have been directed



Tom Sawyer a new role as 'witch-finder general'?

against individual members of NUPE who support *Militant* and/or the Broad Left.

NUPE members face unprecedented attacks by the employers. They will therefore rightly want to know why the union is wasting time attacking a socialist Labour Council and

Labour Party and union activists

Why is NUPE's leadership not instead using all its time and energies to mount a struggle against the Tories and those right-wing Labour Councils who are attacking jobs and privatising and cutting services?

## Attack real enemies

AT THE same time as the NUPE leadership has seen fit to attack *Militant* supporters in the union, our members are facing the biggest ever attack on their jobs and conditions.

Such an attitude can only create frustration and confusion when we need a campaigning and united union.

Up and down the country services have been cut and privatisation introduced.

Seven county councils have now broken the national manual workers' pay agreement for school meals workers, who in some areas have had their pay cut by as much as 12 per cent.

These councils are: Devon, East Sussex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Somerset, Surrey and Lincolnshire. Another three councils have privatised school cleaning: Birmingham (when it was under Tory control), Dudley and Cambridgeshire. One council, Merton has gone as far as completely privatising its school meal service and have also privatised catering in residential homes.

These are the real enemies the union leadership should be attacking, not socialists and good trade unionists.

# A campaigning union needed

MANY NUPE members will be dismayed at the sharp move to the right by sections of NUPE's leadership.

Our union has always traditionally been regarded as being on the left of the labour and trade union movement. But recently a small clique based around the Labour Co-ordinating Committee within our union have been leading the way in organising an attack on supporters of *Militant* and others on the left.

From the end of the second world war to the late seventies NUPE's membership grew dramatically as result of campaigning policies and a leadership prepared to fight to improve the conditions of its low paid membership.

An expanding economy, with the development of the national health service and the welfare state, provided a favourable climate for a well organised union specialising in the public sector. Those conditions no longer exist.

While in general terms it would be unfair to criticise our union's organisation in this period, it is true to say that NUPE's historical development has led to many of the problems that we face today.

## Jobs for life

NUPE's tendency to recruit its officials from an academic background on the basis of an appointed job for life, as opposed to a system of elections is one of our problems.

Another is the development of branch secretaries' commission. In the past this method of organisation did to an extent, encourage the involvement of rank and file NUPE members.

Regretably, these methods have led to a structure consisting of unelected full time officers, of people who in many cases have never experienced the kind of conditions NUPE members have to live with—combined with many branch secretaries who have been worn out and are only clinging onto their positions to protect their commission.

By a NUPE member

In the changed economic and political conditions we are facing today, of decline in the economy and massive attacks on the public services by the Thatcher government, this historical development has now become a barrier to effective union action.

A 'victory' today for many sections of the NUPE's leadership at national, divisional and local level is not the creation of jobs, improvements in conditions of service, etc, but rather job cuts and a worsening of conditions of service to allegedly fend off privatisation.

It has meant that local struggles have been left isolated. In some cases they have been defeated simply because those in our union who have developed as trade unionists in the old days cannot cope with the much harder battles we face today.

It is no accident that the strike pay of those on strike



Newcastle rally against privatisation.

against privatisation at Adenbros hospital has been stopped. The seventeen month dispute has been an embarrassment to those in the union bureaucracy who have failed to build a campaign against privatisation and use the feeble excuse that the members are not prepared to fight.

## 'Heads-down'

It is also no surprise that these very same people are now peddling the line that we

must "keep our heads down until we get a Labour Government returned to office.

Of course we all want to see a Labour Government returned to office, but surely this does not mean we give up the fight to defend jobs and services.

Surely a national campaign to defend the NHS and local government services, exposing Tory cuts would be the best way of helping to ensure a Labour victory.

Instead good socialists in the Labour Party and some of the best activists in our union are being witch-hunted—even by ex-lefts in our union.

Any genuine activist in NUPE has a responsibility to help turn the tide by building the NUPE Broad Left.

For further details write to us at the following address:

30 Whinchat Road  
Thamesmead London  
SE28.

## A campaigning policy for NUPE

- ★ A vigorous concerted campaign to protect women part-time workers who have been particularly hard-hit by Tory employers.
- ★ A recruitment campaign amongst the non-unionists based on winning their confidence that the union will fight for them.
- ★ Total non-co-operation and opposition to in-house tenders involving cuts in jobs, wages, hours and conditions.
- ★ Special national delegate conference of the groups now under direct attack to discuss and plan tactics and strategy in launching the national fightback.
- ★ Mass membership rallies in every Division.
- ★ A real campaign to win physical, moral and financial support for the NUPE strikers in various parts of the country.
- ★ Workers cannot be left to fight battles alone and locally. To develop a NATIONAL response by linking together local issues and struggles.
- ★ To link the local fights to the broad political struggle against the Tory government.
- ★ Total opposition to witch-hunts in the labour movement. Unity is strength.

## EETPU

EETPU member Jim Greer has had his wages 'arrested' last week by Sheriff's officers on behalf of his own union. Details next week. For further details contact: 5 Dundas Street, Edinburgh.



# Industrial Reports

## NUJ's decision time

THE SHADOW of Wapping hangs over this year's Annual Delegate Meeting of the National Union of Journalists to be held this week in Sheffield.

The NUI missed a golden opportunity to win the battle against Murdoch before it had even started.

On this rare occasion journalists held sufficient industrial muscle to have stopped the move to Wapping by News International by refusing to work there. While Murdoch did not need printers thanks to the EET-PU, he still needed journalists.

Unfortunately, through a mixture of greed (a £2,000 one off payment) and fear (loss of job and career), the majority of NUJ members working for News International voted to go to Wapping. Since then over 75 have either been sacked or left—still way short of a majority.

This has opened the door to further attacks. At *Express* Newspapers, nearly 160 NUJ jobs are to go, along with the four day week and other rights. After a fight by 220 journalists at Maxwell's *Daily Record* in Scotland, they have been



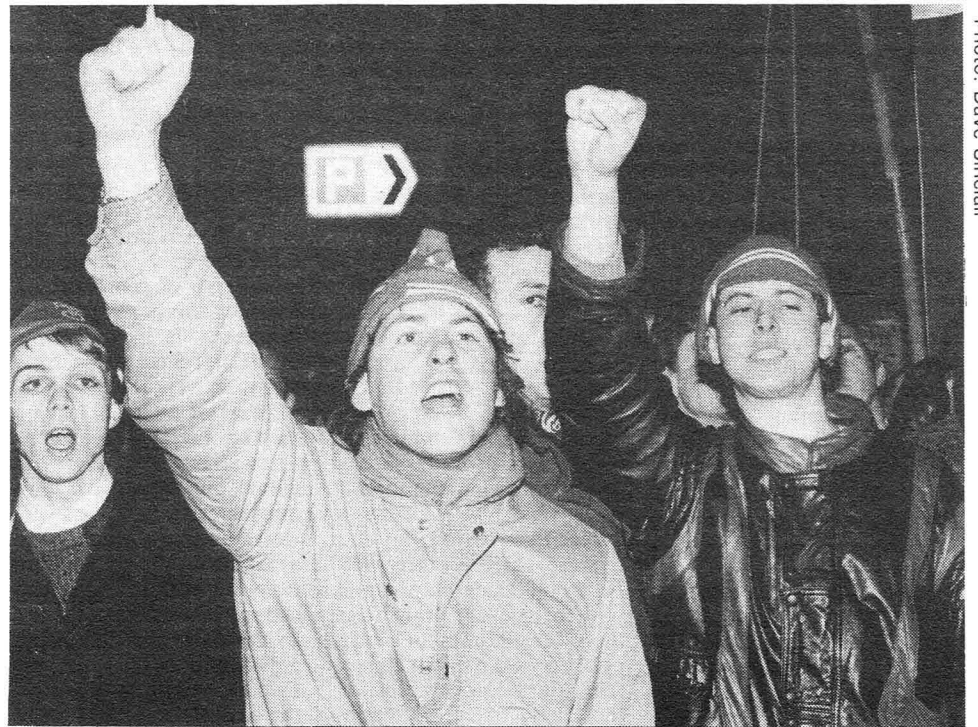
Inter-union conflict has weakened the print unions.

jobs and conditions.

And there are deals pending at the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian* which will mean further losses as Fleet Street employers try to reduce costs to match Murdoch and Shah at the expense of NUJ members' livelihoods.

The Sheffield ADM has an urgent need to establish a union wide policy that guides chapels and gives them the confidence to resist the drive by employers to tear up house agreements and impose technology agreements with catastrophic job losses for journalists and printers

It makes the calls at this ADM for a reopening of discussions on amalgamation with other media unions even more essential. If there had been one industry union to conduct the struggle for jobs and conditions we could have avoided the setbacks at Wolverhampton, Portsmouth and Kent last year and have been better prepared for the national newspaper struggles this year. ADM must instruct the executive to act quickly, and leave aside the past bitter prejudices which have kept the unions separate. Because neither the NUJ or the other



Young printers show their defiance at Murdoch's Wapping plant.

union will survive on their own.

But industrial organisation alone is not enough—the call for a ballot to set up a fund should be supported. Eventually NUJ members will recognise that without affiliation to the Labour Party too, they can never ensure protection of union rights.

Most NUJ members realise that they are used by the newspaper barons to pump out propaganda in

support of the present class system. The union has attempted to resist this through its own code of conduct, the new Ethics Council and a campaign for the right to reply, and even a one day broadcasting strike. But it has yet to face up to the reality: that until the ownership and control of the mass media is taken out of the control of the multinational companies and megalomaniac press barons, nothing will really change.

## Postal jobs threat

**THIS MONTH UCW members from the counter and writing section (C&W) will be facing one of the biggest threats to their jobs and futures.**

The Post Office management have already savaged the postal grades with a succession of productivity deals, agreements on part-timers and casualisation. They are now turning to the C&W grades, which will prepare the ground for the splitting up of the postal business into four sections (Counter, Girobank, Letters and Parcels) for subsequent privatisation.

A special conference on 14/15 April in Bournemouth is meeting to consider an agreement already sanctioned between the Post Office management and the executive council. The Executive report makes it clear that this agreement is a threat to our members' jobs and conditions and they point to industrial action as the only alternative which they say "is bleak indeed for both the membership and the business". Therefore the executive council find themselves fighting management's case rather than mobilising the membership.

Delegates should reject the agreement and instead vote for composite amendment (a).

Last year at a special conference of postal grades a similar agreement was rejected and members now find it back on the agenda of annual conference! What we need is an executive council that will recognise last year's decision and mobilise the membership in the fight for their needs rather than Post Office management.

Should conference not totally reject the agreement many of the other 260 amendments should be fought for as these safeguard our conditions of service.

Ron Deering, chair of the Post Office board, has recently stated that the Post Office has forced more industrial action than ever before. If the new agreement is accepted it will inevitably lead to an increase at local level. By contrast the national leadership and Post Office management are combining to force through these management attacks.

The conclusions of the rank and file will be the need for the building of a rank and file Broad Left to enable us to obtain a leadership that will carry out a national fight against privatisation and will defend jobs, conditions and services.

**By Eddie Thorpe**  
(UCW Indoor Branch Secretary, Holborn)

## Journalists demand more pickets

NATIONAL UNION of Journalists Broad Left supporters are calling on the National Executive Committee and the national officials to organise properly the Wapping disputes office at Acorn House. At their inaugural meeting in London on 22 March over 50 BL supporters heard criticism of the failure to organise an effective NUJ picket outside News International premises.

It was felt that a proper picket rota could increase the number of journalists who have stopped working for Murdoch—which has now reached over 75, according to Greg Neale, the FOC at the *Times* before the move to Wapping, who spoke at the BL meeting.

Broad Left supporters generally felt that the time for persuading those working inside Wapping was fast coming to an end and the NEC would have to face up to taking disciplinary action against those breaking NEC instructions not to cross picket lines at the Wapping site.

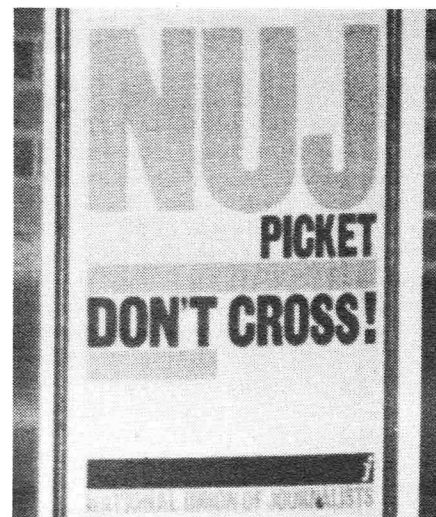
They were particularly angry that freelancers were expected to stop sending copy to News International while some Wapping journalists were moonlighting on other dailies!

The meeting urged full support for the mass pickets now developing and called upon the NEC to clarify union policy on avoiding losses in jobs and trade union rights and conditions in negotiations now taking place with other Fleet Street employers.

The Broad Left plan a major meeting at the Sheffield Annual Delegate Meeting where Dennis Skinner MP has agreed to speak, along with print workers fighting Murdoch.

For further details of the ADM meeting and Broad Left membership, contact Bob McKee, Acting BL secretary, 141 Hydethorpe Road, London SW12. Telephone 01-675 7027.

Reports by Bob McKee



NUJ picket line at Wapping.

## Silentnight strikers seek wider support

THE SILENTNIGHT strikers in Barnoldswick, Lancashire and Sutton, Yorkshire, have not been daunted by the rejection of their appeal against unfair dismissal by an industrial tribunal (see *Militant* 791).

"It makes no significant difference to the strike" declares their latest leaflet: "We are still fighting on. We will be seeking a possible appeal against the pre-hearing verdict after we have had further consultation with our solicitors."

"Mainly through the efforts of all our supporters, Silentnight are now on short-time working; we are now

looking ahead to stepping up leafletting campaigns against the Queensway and the Cop. If you would be prepared to help please contact.

**"We will win"**

"We are still seeking support from all quarters—moral, financial or otherwise. We would like to take

this opportunity to thank all those who have given their support in the past and all those who will give their support in the future.

"We have been on strike since 10 June 1985, sacked since 22 July 1985, for fighting for our trade union rights. The same battle is being fought by many others across the country.

"We can and we will win; all we need is the will and determination to see it through".

Two events have been organised to rally support for the strike, a mass picket on 21 April and a march through Keighley on 17 May. All trade union and socialist activists are urged to come along. See details in adverts.

Do you need a speaker? Contact: Terry Bennett, 22 Garrick Street, Nelson, Lancashire, BB9 8JA. Telephones: (0282) 603055/814556/8436489.

Please send donations to: FTAT Cravendale, 92 Branch Strike Fund, Treasurer: Mrs Ann King, 10 Rainhall Crescent, Barnoldswick, COLNE, Lancashire. Telephone: 0282-813662.

**KEIGHLEY TRADES COUNCIL SILENTNIGHT STRIKERS**

**MARCH AND RALLY**  
**KEIGHLEY**  
**SATURDAY 17TH MAY**  
**12.00 PM.**

**"11 MONTHS ON STRIKE - SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE SILENTNIGHT STRIKERS"**

**SPEAKERS**

**DAVID COATES** ET.A.T. NAT. ORGANIZER  
**DENNIS SKINNER M.P.** LABOUR PARTY N.E.C.  
**DEREK HATTON** DEP. LEADER LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL

**TERRY BENNETT** CHAIRMAN FT.A.T. CRAVENDALE  
**STEVE PRICE** FT.A.T. CONVENER  
**WOMENS SUPPORT GROUP**

**"FORWARD TOGETHER - ALWAYS TOGETHER"**

**ASSEMBLE: 12.00 P.M. LUND PARK**  
**MARCH: LEAVES 12.30 P.M.**  
**RALLY: 1.15 P.M. CLIFFE CASTLE**

### Support Silentnight strikers

## Mass picket

A mass picket will take place on Monday 21 April 1986.

The times will be 5.30am - 6.30am at the Barnoldswick plant and 7.00am - 8.00am at the Sutton plant.

We hope that we can count on you for your support.



# Industrial Reports

## Swan Hunter workers locked out

AT QUARTER to four on Tuesday morning this week Swan Hunter shipyard management secretly launched the new *HMS Coventry*. The ship was being delayed by an overtime ban imposed last week, following a one-day strike and mass meeting. The provocative action, which shipyard managing director Dennis Shadbolt called a "controlled launch", came the day after a lock-out of 3,100 workers after a further half day stoppage.

The immediate reaction of workers to the launch was one of 'real anger', and Tuesday morning saw 3,000 pickets on the yard gates.

This latest action follows a whole period of struggle in the recently privatised yard.

A few months ago there was an eight-week strike and the latest moves by management have come after the workforce rejected a derisory pay offer the previous week.

Initially the unions had asked for an increase in the basic wage from £134 to £195 but management would only offer £17 and this included 27 conditions of up to £6 a day and travel allowances between £3-£25 a week; compulsory overtime; a miserable £3-£6 a week increase in sick pay benefit, when we asked for parity with the staff; five minutes off the afternoon break; and dental and hospital appointments to be vetted by management.

Last week's meeting agreed to an overtime ban, to stop the undocking of the ferry in Hebburn Yard, and to delay the launching of the new *HMS Coventry* and *HMS Sheffield* (which are completed).

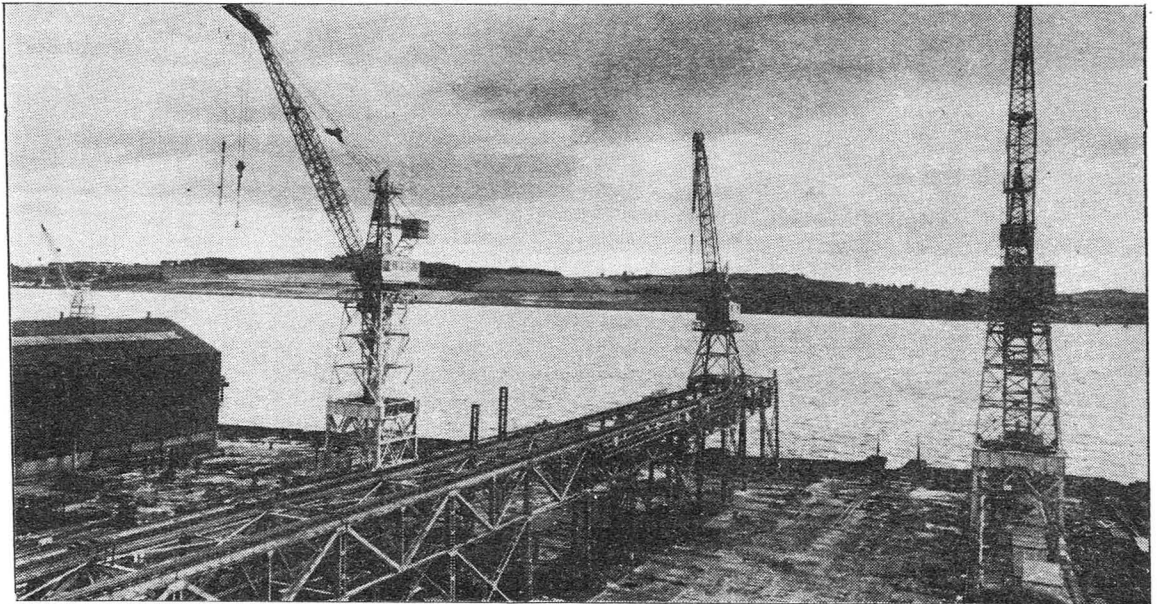
### Ships delayed

We are also considering the possibility of an all-out strike. If we don't fight back now management will walk all over us. This is the

mood of the whole yard, despite the fact that management have threatened to close us down if an all-out strike goes ahead, meaning no severance pay.

The workforce are not only struggling against an antagonistic management but are also having to fight a rear-guard action against their own officials and local Labour politicians.

After the overtime ban was agreed last week the Regional



Will Swan Hunter 'see no ships'.

G&M official instructed the workers to lift the ban, taking on-board the management's threats that the action would jeopardise the future of the yard.

### Labour MP

Nick Brown the G&M sponsored MP for Newcastle East also criticised the yards shop stewards at a local party meeting, commenting that he did not think the shop

stewards had been "very astute", effectively blaming them for allowing the yard to arrive at its present situation.

It is management who have provoked it, and they are preparing the way for even more savage cuts on the workforce and conditions. Already they have stated that due to lack of orders 50 per cent of boilermakers will soon be "surplus to requirement".

The yard, already down to 4,500

workers, is threatened with a further 1,000 job losses, if the Type 22 frigate order is not gained, with a further 1,000 within the next year.

We were solid for eight weeks during the last strike and that was over a two minute tea break. This time the fight is over our very future and we won't give in!

By a Swan Hunter worker

## Unions boycott GCSE exams

THE NUT Conference has now voted a total boycott of the new GCSE examinations until the union is satisfied that adequate funding and preparation has been made available. The vote, against the advice of the Executive, now no longer exempts examinations from industrial action—a similar decision was also supported by the NAS/UWT conference, also against the advice of their executive.

These two decisions exemplify the growing upsurge of feeling amongst teachers that it is time to go on the offensive against this government.

Amongst the NUT there is a massive feeling that the practice of covering for absent colleagues should be permanently ended.

### No cover

The right-dominated executive narrowly held back demands that this should become full national policy immediately.



NUT conference.

But it was apparent that in those schools and areas where cover has been withdrawn, as part of the present industrial action, it will never be restored. It will be claimed as an industrially won improvement in working conditions.

The NUT conference also saw some of the hardest fought and highest level political debates on the ques-

tions of fighting racism, defending local government, the widening of union objectives, and the question of a political fund.

### Block vote

Although again the executive held back the pressure for change, block votes accounting for at least 45 per cent of the member-

ship were consistently ranged against it.

The problems facing education are not going to go away, the struggle against the Tories is continuing to radicalise new layers of teachers.

By Ian Hunter  
(Chester-le-Street NUT)

## Miners reject bonus schemes

DERBYSHIRE MINERS voted heavily against the NCB's new bonus scheme (see *Militant* 790). Charlie Law, a surface electrician at Whitwell Colliery, gave us his reactions to the new scheme and ballot result:

SINCE THE strike ended the atmosphere has been lousy. They're sticking the boot in wherever they can—accepted practices are being wiped out. "We're in charge again now. We've got the big stick so do as we say", has

been management's attitude. The ballot result shows the Board we're still alive and kicking. We might be down but not out. We're letting them know we're still there by lifting a foot and kicking them where it hurts!

### Scheme

The new scheme would make me about £15 bonus for a week instead of £27. They said it should work out at about a fiver a week drop so its two and a half times

what they said.

A surface man at one pit got the same as a surface man at another. Under the new agreement, a canteen worker at Warsop gets more than a faceman at Whitwell. Any pit can hit bad times, so it's good to have a fall-back rate. Sometimes the Area carries one pit, then it will be another—it works all the way around.

The Area Council have voted for a weekday overtime ban. Low-paid surface and out-by workers rely on

weekends, so it will cut production slightly without damaging men's pockets. If we worked to rule, virtually no coal would come up the pit. I don't think the ban will be enough action to make the Board change its mind.

Two shifts came on strike this week at Shirebrook Colliery, refusing to work with UDM members. This is proof that in Derbyshire the mood is changing, with more and more miners realising the only way to beat management is to fight them.

## Steel bosses sack 400

IN ITS latest salvo in the eight week long dispute between the British Steel corporation and its Scottish tubes division employees, the corporation has sent out 370 redundancy notices, including 12 compulsory redundancies.

The short letter enclosing no details of termination of employment disclosed that as of 28 March 1986 these men no longer work for the British Steel Corporation. Archie Lilley, one of the 122 and branch secretary of Clydesdale ISTC said: "They've not given any reason why these 122 individuals have been chosen. They know we will pull holes in any reason that they try to give. Random selection of compulsory redundancies including a great deal of trade union activists, is not on".

### "Survival Plan"

Management are not envisaged to be losing any wages or worsening of conditions in the so-called survival plan, but as usual the workforce is expected to bear the full brunt of any cuts. Yet they always get the smallest share of any reward.

Harry Carlin is one of a seven-man negotiating committee being sent for talks in London with the British Steel Corporation management and ISTC union officials this Thursday.

He stressed that: "There will be no sell-out on compulsory redundancies, and no sell-out on promotion line

security negotiations, no sell-out in the battle against wage cuts and bonus cuts. There will be no men left standing at the gates this time".

### Further action

The outcome of Thursday's meeting remains in the balance, but it is likely that no settlement will be achieved and step-up of the action will be required. The men at present are considering picketing the rest of the British Steel Corporation's Scottish steel plants, including Ravenscraig, Dalzell and Clydebridge and will consider, if necessary, further support action in escalating the dispute.

A major rally has been planned at Bothwell this Saturday (12 April) at 10am, where the steelworkers will march through the town. Similar rallies have been planned for Coatbridge and Airdrie later on.

For eight weeks now the 2,000 men have been fighting a determined battle to save jobs and protect conditions of employment. If the leadership of the union matches that determination and fights, then it seems likely this dispute could escalate nationally. As Harry Carlin pointed out, "if they get away with this at Clydesdale, Imperial and Calder then no plant can consider itself safe."

By Colin Fox  
(Motherwell South CLP)



# Militant

The siege of Wapping

See centre pages

## Step up action against Murdoch

“NO!” was the unanimous answer of the strikers on the Wapping picket line to Murdoch’s offer of a “labour movement newspaper”.

By Peter Jarvis  
(NGA in personal capacity)

This dispute is not about providing funds for a labour movement paper; it is in defence of union rights.

Murdoch is out to smash effective trade unionism. If he is allowed to get away with this action then other bosses—and not only in the print industry—will follow his lead. Already the other press barons are pushing and winning major concessions from the unions.

The offer, which is claimed to be worth £50m, in no way solves any of the fundamental problems. Kinnoek and Co. at first seemed to bite the carrot, but eventually declared it could only be considered “as part of a larger package.”

This cynical offer by Murdoch could have been used to expose the undemocratic nature of the press in this country where a handful of millionaires dictate what should be read in the newspapers.

Murdoch’s offer must not go unanswered. It is clear that the strike is biting. But we cannot be complacent. As in any battle an advantage must be pressed home, and quickly.

Murdoch has never fought by the rules of the “game”. His friends the Tories have changed the laws to his advantage. These laws stop any legal solidarity action. The print unions are committed to fight these anti-trade union laws.

Action is necessary to win this strike and this has to be taken



regardless of these new laws.

Already SOGAT funds are sequestrated and union cars are impounded. Anytime now the premises could be taken. We must ask, can we stand by and allow this to happen?

The courts will bide their time and take this step when it will do the maximum damage. We must respond if this occurs. The action will not fall from the sky; it will have to be prepared and the campaign must start now.

The preparation will be a warning to the judges and the ruling class that if they dare to instigate further action it will be met by the strength of the working class.

The willingness to mobilise the power of the working class is the one—and most important—ingredient missing from the dispute.

Decisive action now is essential to maintain and win further workers to the struggle. The wholesalers in London who have stood firm throughout

the strike now face the prospect of a fight against job losses.

It baffles many activists why the two Sunday colour magazines are still being produced. It is known that the heads of the unions gave instructions that they should not be stopped. This undermined activists who saw the need for such action.

A call for extending the action must be made and the campaign launched to secure the required response. The demonstration last Sunday saw 20,000 on the streets. This is only a fraction of those who could be mobilised.

The picket line at Wapping can be stepped up. Already offers for help are pouring in to aid in picketing TNT depots in the regions.

The strike is at a crucial stage; the first chink in Murdoch’s armour has appeared. The time is ripe to step up the action.

About 20,000 came out to support the print workers struggle on 6 April. A clear lead could build solidarity and beat back Murdoch.

Photo: Mick Carroll

### CPSA needs left leader

THE CIVIL and Public Services Association National Executive Committee has decided to run the General Secretary election, made necessary by the resignation of Alistair Graham, as soon as possible.

The election will run from 9 May to 27 June, Broad Left members and Left activists will want to begin immediate preparations for the election of John MacCreadie, Broad Left candidate, to reverse years of decline in wages and living standards for all CPSA members under Graham and the right wing.

### Chris Peace re-elected

CHRIS PEACE, who the Welsh Labour Party right-wing are trying to get expelled has just been elected delegate to the Welsh Regional Conference of the party in May.

His CLP, Cardiff Central, has also nominated him for the Regional Executive Committee (REC). Last year, Chris topped the poll in the CLP section for the Executive, but on the REC the right-wing refused to allow him to take his seat.

## BLOC

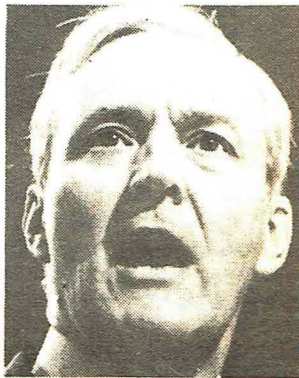
Liverpool Labour Party

### conference

**Sheffield City Hall**  
**Saturday 19 April**

Speakers include:  
Tony Benn, Derek Hatton

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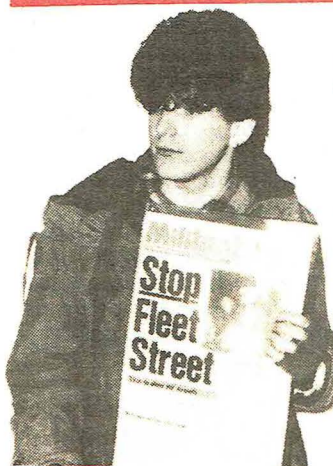
### Thatcher From page one

Militant fights for a vast expansion of education, and for a major programme of public works like building schools, hospitals and housing to get people back to work and solve our many desperate social problems.

Workers will respond to a socialist campaign against this Tory government and the people who back it. There would be more support than ever for a socialist policy

of nationalising the commanding heights of the economy under workers’ control and management. We can not tolerate the lousy priorities of the bosses any longer.

The Tories are on the ropes. They can be knocked out in the next round, the council elections, if the labour and trade union leadership concentrates its’ campaigning fire on beating the real enemy, the Tories. For a socialist alternative to Thatcher!



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