

Inside

Labour's purges in the 1920s

See centre pages

Thatcher-Reagan partners in murder

Libyan civilians blitzed

THE LABOUR movement internationally must unreservedly condemn the murderous bombing of Libya by the United States, and the equally disgraceful collusion of the Thatcher government in planning the raids on this small nation.

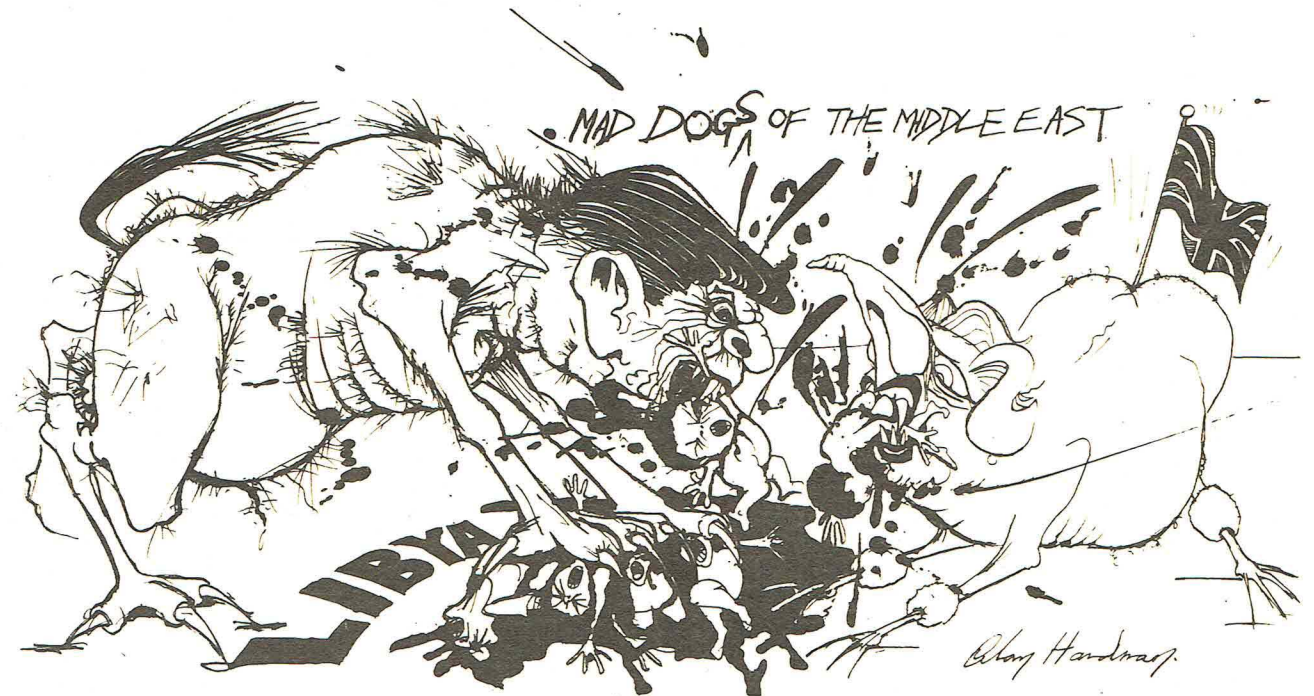
the family. Even the French embassy was badly damaged.



The claims of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher that the Libyan attack was essential to combat "terrorism" are the most disgusting hypocrisy. United States imperialism is itself the greatest worldwide source of state terrorism, which is worse. Thatcher and Reagan will back any "terrorism" in the interests of their own class.

Residential areas, hospitals and other civic buildings were hit in the Libyan capital Tripoli and in Benghazi. One target was apparently Gaddafi's own Tripoli residence, but the bombers only succeeded in injuring young members of

Marxists do not condone the planting of bombs like those in the West Berlin discotheque, where a US army sergeant was killed on 5 April, or on the TWA airliner, where four passengers were killed. Workers in Britain reacted



with understandable outrage two years ago when WPC Fletcher was shot down in front of the Libyan embassy in London.

These, the methods of individual terrorism, are completely alien and repugnant to the traditions and methods of struggle of the labour movement. Moreover, as a means of combatting US imperialism they are completely ineffective. They are political methods that vainly seek to substitute isolated individual bombers or hijackers in the place of a mass movement.

But standing as it does in implacable opposition to individual terrorism, the labour movement needs no lessons in morality from a butcher like Reagan or his acolyte Thatcher. These are the arch-representatives of American and British imperialism, powers that benefit from the economic

Continued on page 10

Get the Tories out now

PRIME MINISTER Margaret Thatcher has been plunged into a new storm of opposition after her connivance with Rambo Reagan's Libyan adventure.

Thatcher's dictatorial rule over her own cabinet has been exposed yet again. She probably never consulted any of her cabinet ministers in giving the go-ahead for the attack.

A wave of protests has spread across the country with two demonstrations in London and in Southampton a spontaneous demonstration organised by CND attracted 300 Labour movement activists with only a few hours notice.

Reagan had no military purpose in using F1-11 bombers from Britain. It was just a way of getting at least one European country to support him. And Thatcher was his willing partner.

She probably gave her permission at least a week before the attack but only she and foreign minister Geoffrey Howe knew about it.

Howe was packed off to meet the

EEC foreign ministers to discuss restrictions on diplomatic links with Libya. But it is unlikely that the Europeans knew about the bombing plans.

Thatcher is still reeling from the Westlands affair. No doubt she is hoping to bask in Reagan's glory and re-live the Falklands.

Secretive

But her secret collaboration with Reagan will have the opposite effect. Workers, and even middle-class and Tory voters will see Thatcher as losing touch with reality.

The Labour Party leaders must start a campaign to bring an end to Thatcher's government.

Labour must reaffirm its commitment on unilateral disarmament, ending Trident and closing down the American bases. This must be step towards a socialist Britain and a socialist America.

Militant needs your cash

Two weeks to the deadline for this fighting fund quarter. Show Labour's right wing *your* opposition to expulsions by sending

us fivers, tenners or more. Ask everyone you meet to sign our petition and give a donation! Fight the witch-hunt! Fight the Tories!

BLOC
Liverpool Labour Party
conference

See pages 2-3

Sheffield
City Hall
Saturday
19 April
11.00-5.00

Militant

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Militant, 3-13 Hepscoot Road London E9 5HB.
Phone: 01-533 3311.

Build the left

NEVER CAN the issue of the leadership of the trade union movement have been more urgent. Mass unemployment, permanent economic crisis and a ruthless Tory government have put the unions to a severe test.

Murdoch, MacGregor at the Coal Board and Michael Edwardes when at British Leyland no longer seem to represent an aberration. With the fundamental problems besetting capitalism, their provocative style of management has become the norm. Trade union leaders stuck in the old habits of amicable negotiation and conciliation are proving hopelessly inadequate to defend their members.

The right wing who dominate the TUC general council have no answer to the new situation. Every attempt they make to arrive at a compromise with the ruling class is taken as a sign of weakness.

The offer of 'new realism'—in effect an accommodation with the Tories—was met with the snatching away of union rights at GCHQ, the battle with Shah at Warrington and the miners' strike.

With 'new realism' in ruins, its architect Len Murray, was forced to retire to the Lords. Alistair Graham another proponent of this theory has given up, mainly due to the pressure of the Broad Left within the CPSA.

Even since the miners' strike, new voices have been raised about an agreement with the Tory enemy. In reply has come the newspaper bosses' offensive, fortified print works and brutal police behaviour.

Yet the miners' defeat was not confirmation that the unions have been "weakened" nor that the working class is "disinterested" in the struggles of any particular group. Hundreds of miners' support groups were established and millions of pounds raised.

But this instinctive solidarity was not matched by the trade union leaders. The right had no intention of mobilising their members in action behind the miners; the more left union leaders were paralysed with indecision.

At a number of stages during the strike the call advanced by the Broad Left Organising Committee (BLOC) for a 24 hour general strike to support the NUM, and to give the Tories a display of workers' power, could have won a massive response. Undoubtedly the threat of general industrial action forced the Tories recently to withdraw their threat of dismissal for the remaining trade unionists at GCHQ.

Even the left leaders lack confidence in workers' strength, though the trade union movement is still a mighty potential force for change. Despite 4 million unemployed the TUC is still 10 million strong. The overwhelming ballot victories recorded in favour of retaining political funds demonstrated the unshaken loyalty of workers to their organisations—the unions and the Labour Party.

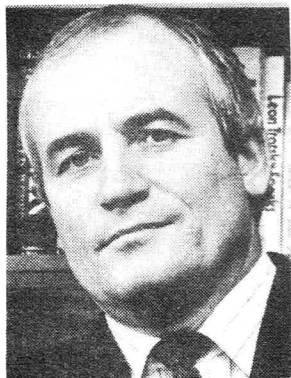
That loyalty now is being abused by the union leaders instigating and supporting witch-hunts in the party, including 'left' unions like NUPE. Its deputy general secretary, ex-left Tom Sawyer is one of the prime movers behind the expulsions of *Militant* supporters and in particular of councillors in Liverpool. It was the same union that severely let down the cleaners at Addenbrookes hospital, removing financial backing after a year on strike. The chairman of Labour's 'star chamber' Liverpool inquiry was right-wing NUR official Charlie Turnock. Now well-known witch-hunter John Golding has been elected as NCU general secretary.

The development of strong broad lefts in every union is essential as a means of building a fighting socialist leadership prepared to take on the Tories. The Broad Lefts in NUPE, NUR and NCU have a particular responsibility. The BLOC established to co-ordinate the left in the trade union movement has a vital role—to build a fighting left leadership at every level of the trade union movement, prepared to wield its full strength in the interests of working people and dedicated to the victory of socialism.

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LONDON BLOC MEETING

Wednesday 23 April 6.30pm. Small Hall, St Brides Institute, St Brides Lane, off Fleet Street, London EC4. Speaker: Tony Mulhearn NGA, and other rank and file Bemrose printers.



Labour right move the

THE LABOUR Party National Executive Committee meets on Friday for its sixth meeting to discuss the expulsion of members of the party in Liverpool.

In the midst of the crisis over Libya, in the wake of the Thatcher government's biggest ever parliamentary defeat and three weeks before crucial council elections, the NEC will be spending its time changing its rules so that only 50 per cent of those members eligible to take part in the business before the meeting constitute a quorum.

This follows the walk-out from the last NEC meeting by seven members which left

By Pat Craven

it inoperative. They were outraged at the continuation of an undemocratic hearing, even after a judge had ruled that many of the procedures to be used were contrary to natural justice.

NEC members have still not been given copies of the judge's ruling. The quorum change is a cynical ploy to enable this 'kangaroo court'

to carry on its show trial, paying no more than lip service to the court.

It is ironic that the quorum was raised from 10 to its present level of 15 in 1982, after the right wing gained a majority, because they feared that the left would delay business until enough right-wing union leaders had left the meeting to give the left a majority.

The 12 members on trial have refuted in detail all the charges of 'irregularities' and 'intimidation' by the Liverpool District Labour Party. They point to the failure to bring any charges against those DLP officers

who do not support *Militant*, despite their involvement in all the DLP's activities.

The 'charges' and 'evidence' have no basis in fact. They are merely a cover for a political trial against supporters of Marxist ideas. Left wingers on the committee are demanding an immediate end to these expulsions so that the party can unite against the Tories and Alliance in the council elections on 8 May.

Civil war

The alternative is civil war within the party. Already right-wingers in the

Witch-hunt against political ideas

MILITANT supporters Tom and Lorraine Mole are to be called before the next Bromsgrove Labour Party Executive to answer charges of selling *Militant* in the local High Street while a Labour Party event was in progress.

Tom had informed party officers that he

would assist in the activity for an hour, and then go and sell papers at the spot where he has regularly sold for the last five years. When Tom refused to stop selling, right-wingers broke into a heated argument between themselves, clearly bringing the party into public

disrepute.

A left-wing local ward secretary is also to be called before the Executive for allegedly passing around a list of names to be supported at an AGM. The EC is also refusing to accept into membership a 17 year old socialist because they claim his

views are incompatible with those of the party. This just confirms that the right in Bromsgrove and nationally are after a witch-hunt against ideas.

By Bill Murray
(Bromsgrove Labour Party)

CPSA - Back the Broad Left

ALISTAIR GRAHAM CPSA General Secretary, doyen of the media, rising star of the TUC General Council, has thrown in the towel, and decided upon a quieter life working for the Industrial Society. As a leading right winger, he seemed set to collect the glittering prizes within the bureaucracy of the trade union movement.

Like Sid Weighell of the NUR before him, he was pushed out by the opposition of the membership, and especially of the Broad Left.

The CPSA Broad Left was the first of the new open and fully democratic broad lefts. *Militant* supporters played a major role in its foundation in 1977, and argued against a secret, closed structure, with only NEC members deciding the broad left policy and the NEC slate.

Broad Left record

Most of the other broad lefts, including the most recent in the NUJ, follow this more open structure.

The CPSA Broad Left has a proud record of supporting all union disputes. It alone remained firmly behind the DHSS Newcastle Central Office dispute. Only the Broad Left supporters on the NEC firmly supported financial aid to the miners.

It is only the Broad Left that has a coherent policy on pay, hours and on the recent attempts by Graham, the right, the 'soft right' and the Communist Party and the 'Broad Left 84' to accept a new grading system, selling jobs for the introduction of new technology.

The Broad Left has chosen John MacCreadie, a CPSA headquarters full-



Terry Adams, John MacCreadie and presidential candidate, Kevin Roddy.

time official, as its general secretary candidate. He will be standing alongside Eddie Spence, a DHSS lay official, as Broad Left candidate for general treasurer, and Terry Adams, also an HQ full-time official, standing for deputy general secretary.

John MacCreadie and Terry Adams were the only HQ senior officials who supported the introduction of regular elections for officials and the demand that they should earn no more than the membership.

There is no doubt that the

left is in a potentially strong position following Graham's departure. His undemocratic merger plans with the SCPS were rejected by conference, his long term pay system was rejected and his whole strategy on pay and conditions has been summarily dismissed by a contemptuous membership.

Election chance

Now in May CPSA members will have a chance to elect a president and general secretary responsive to their needs. Every left ac-

tivist must fight for the election of the Broad Left executive slate.

But the present battles in the CPSA are merely a foretaste of what the Broad Lefts will have to be prepared for in every union. *Militant* supporters will play an important part in the building of the left and in the creation of a fighting, democratic, socialist leadership.

By Bill Boyle

goal posts

Parliamentary party are using the press to spread demands for the withdrawal of the Labour whip from MPs Terry Fields and Dave Nellist, and rumours that a special conference is to be held in May to launch a wholesale purge of *Militant* supporters.

Both ideas have been officially denied by party leaders, but in *Labour Weekly*, Chris McLaughlin has reported that "Labour leaders... are working on a tight new disciplinary code which they hope will be impregnable to any challenge in the court. The aim is to enable the party to take

action—up to and including expulsion—without becoming entangled in lengthy legal cases".

Pressure vital

If the purge of the left is not stopped, the Tory press and the right wing will cry for more, until the whole party has been engulfed in conflict and every shred of left-wing policy abandoned.

Pressure on the NEC, especially on members representing unions, is vital, to save not only these 12 Liverpool members but the future of socialism within the party.



Votes "null and void"

THE LABOUR Party general secretary, Larry Whitty, has sent letters to all the delegates to the Liverpool Labour Party Temporary Co-ordinating Committee saying the election of officers has been declared null and void. Affiliated organisations are to be asked to submit written nominations for the officers' positions.

This 'temporary' committee was only supposed to be in existence until the District Labour Party AGM in June. By the time all the affiliated organisations have been written to, had their meetings and sent in nominations, the elections will have taken place just as the TCC is being disbanded.

By Jose Aitman

Right in retreat

IN THEIR haste to attack *Militant* supporters, Labour's right are prepared to trample over the party's rules and natural justice. As a result of this in many cases they are coming unstuck.

Eddisbury Constituency Labour Party in Cheshire is recommending to the next General Committee that Peter Naylor (expelled in January) be reinstated. But this was only after the threat of legal action, and advice they received from the party nationally that in the light of recent judgements they should back down.

One prominent Executive Committee member complained at the meeting that they had been "led by the nose by the regional office". The whole mood of the meeting was demoralised and weary. It is the left locally, boosted by the reinstatement, who are

enthusiastic to get out and take on the real enemy—the Tories.

Meanwhile the attempt to expel Dave Ireland and Maureen Brown from Cannock and Burntwood CLP has been blocked by a High Court injunction. The Bakers' Union in line with their national policy of opposition to expulsions, financed the court action on behalf of Dave Ireland, who is chairman of the local Bakers' branch.

At the General Committee meeting where the injunction was raised, the CLP secretary was presented with an award for his knowledge of the party constitution!

The right's behaviour has engendered growing opposition locally to the witch-hunt, with sales of *Militant* doubling. Miners from Littleton Colliery are particularly incensed, and

are beginning to become active in the party, determined to wrest it from the hands of the right wing saboteurs.

The attempt to question Pat Bell's membership of Gower CLP in South Wales has also been stopped. His local Gowerton ward refused to issue him with a new party card last month, because he sold *Militant*.

At the recent Gower General Committee meeting the chairman ruled this unconstitutional as no written evidence of Pat's involvement with *Militant* had been provided, and he had not been given the right to reply to the charges.

Further attacks are possible, however, for the chairman added that 'evidence' could be selling *Militant*, raising fighting fund for the paper or speaking for the paper at a public meeting.

But at the following Gowerton ward meeting, members were angered by the way this issue had been dealt with, and a new card was issued.

Union ballots—kick in teeth for Tories

LABOUR'S FULHAM win may have boosted the leadership's hopes of reaching Number 10, but the trade unions have provided Labour with 39 poll victories over the last 12 months.

By Jeremy Birch

Of the 37 unions that balloted on whether to retain their political funds, every one voted in favour, with an average yes vote of 83 per cent. Two unions, IRSF and the Hosiery and Knitwear Workers which did not previously have political funds, successfully held ballots to set them up.

In COHSE, UCATT, FBU, Tailor and Garment Workers, ASLEF and the National League of the Blind, outstandingly over 90 per cent of the votes were cast for the political levy.

What a kick in the teeth for the Tories, whose 1984 Trade Union Act had forced these ballots to be held. Enthusiastically backed up by the Alliance, the Tories were out to seriously weaken Labour's ability to raise finance and also to undermine unions campaigning against government policy, or against cuts, etc. For these could have been deemed political, and if there was no political fund, then union money could not have been expended on

these issues, however much they affected their members.

Yet many Labour and trade union officials were themselves convinced that several of the ballots would renounce the political funds, and were giving dire warnings about the party's future. The press employed opinion polls to predict that white-collar unions like ASTMS would vote against. In the event 81 per cent in ASTMS voted yes.

In alarm they were forced to organise a campaign with leaflets, posters, etc and for the first time for years to try to politically convince workers at shopfloor level. And the response was overwhelming. While it is true that much of the campaign material still thought it necessary to try to blur the issue—this was about the 'organisations' right and their own party—ordinary trade unionists knew what the vote was all about.

Unions like the CPSA, still without a political fund, and unaffiliated to the party, should build on the successes so far, and organise their own ballot.

The labour and trade union leaders, relieved at the campaign's results, have decided to maintain the political profile with the establishment of a Trade Unionists for Labour organisation. Unlike the previous Trade

THE UNIONS' YES VOTE				
Union	Turnout %	For	Against	Yes vote %
SOGAT	56.8	91,760	25,947	78
ISTC	67.7	28,633	4,404	86.7
FTAT	30	11,410	4,269	72
UCW	69.4	102,546	33,337	75.5
NCU	78.7	77,183	17,757	81
GMBATU	61	448,426	54,637	89
APEX	59.9	39,465	14,380	73
BFAWU	62.04	19,954	2,237	89.7
AUEW (Eng)	37	238,604	44,399	84
EETPU	45	140,913	26,830	84
NUR	61.1	71,907	10,580	87.2
PLCWTWU	88.7	2,242	697	75.3
ASLEF	85.4	19,110	1,491	93
TSSA	67.2	22,975	10,017	69.3
NUS	34	6,179	963	86.5
CATU	73.4	17,967	5,383	76.12
Scalermakers	54	460	135	77
TGWU	49.5	511,014	119,823	78.9
COHSE	40.3	81,012	7,731	91.3
NUDAGO	67.71	2,388	439	84.47
NUTGW	87.4	52,634	4,968	90.7
NLBD	82.54	2,218	221	90.24
NUFLAT	84	20,956	5,963	77
USDW	39.5	134,592	17,824	88
ACTT	49	7,149	5,043	59
NGA	72.6	68,559	18,931	78.2
TWU	76	7,790	905	89.6
NACODS	75.19	9,930	1,481	87
TASS	55	91,389	29,467	76
NUPE	59.3	329,442	60,332	84.1
RUBSSO	40	1,244	358	77.5
GUALO	92.4	928	176	83.5
MU	36.5	10,492	3,237	76.33
NUM	76	96,226	9,958	90.25
FBU	87.4	30,607	7,552	79.6
ASTMS	40	102,236	23,996	80.99
UCATT	30	56,733	5,295	91.5
Two non fund holders vote yes for first time				
NUHNW	90	35,017	6,616	83
IRSF	87	39,776	8,862	82

Unions for a Labour Victory which mainly just channelled money to the party, the new body will be encouraging trade unionists to become individual members, and union branches to send their full delegations to local parties.

Not uncritical

Perhaps some on the right believe this will help swamp left activists with 'reliable' workers. In general the reverse could be true. The Labour Party needs an injection of ordinary trade unionists. But

as they become more politically involved they will not be uncritical.

The political ballot results confirmed workers' fundamental allegiance to Labour. But also after seven years of Toryism, and after some setbacks in industrial battles, they represent a turning back to the political plane by the working class looking to a future Labour government to solve their problems. Inside the party ordinary workers can play a full role in the fight to ensure that government really does represent their interests.

Strike by Belfast bus workers

BUS WORKERS in Belfast have taken strike action in face of a rising number of attacks. The rioting of Loyalist opponents of the Anglo-Irish Agreement has put bus workers in the front line. Last Tuesday night 17 buses were attacked and the late buses were taken off the road.

By our Belfast correspondent

In the first two months of 1986, 245 buses have been attacked and the situation is getting worse.

On Wednesday the men went on 100 per cent strike. At a mass meeting they demanded that the Transport and General Workers' Union and management take steps to defend them. They have also put a ban on after 7pm runs on Saturdays until attacks on drivers cease.

One of the injured workers, Aiden Connolly, with his arm in a sling and wearing dark glasses due to eye injuries, explained, "I was coming down along the Crumlin Road when all hell seemed to break loose. A petrol bomb came through the window right on top of me. Luckily it wasn't alight, but I was covered in petrol".

Another driver may lose his sight in one eye after he was hit with a brick which came through the front of his cab.

Attacks on Catholic homes have also increased. The press have played up the extent of the attacks against the RUC by Loyalists, but have almost ignored the sectarian attacks on Catholics, dozens of whom have been forced to leave their homes, burned out by bigots. In one typical incident last week, Arthur Osborne from North

Belfast was forced to leave his home after it was petrol-bombed. He told *Militant*: "This is the third attack on us since we moved in last July. We had a window broken in August, another in January and now this. We have to move out now. We feel our lives are in danger. Bigots have done this because we are Catholics, but I'm not a bigot; my next door neighbour is a Protestant and he is like a second father to me.

"Everyone is concentrating on the attacks on the police which I also condemn, but there is little coverage on the news about Catholic families who are victims of these thugs and there is no special provision to move us to safety".

Neither the paramilitaries, nor the so-called security forces can defend workers against these attacks. The trade unions must act immediately.

The conference of the Northern Ireland Committee of the ICTU being held later this month must have an emergency debate on the situation to hammer out a socialist alternative to the Anglo-Irish deal, and take the necessary steps to defend workers from these attacks.

IN A blow to attempts to spread sectarian poison to Scotland, the women of Cowie, a mining village in Stirlingshire, stopped a Loyalist march.

150 marchers from The Kingdom of Fife No Surrender Club, with four flute bands, had intended to march from Cowie to Stirling and then back through other villages. But nearly all the villagers, both Catholic and Protestant, with women to the fore, sat in the road in front of the march and forced police to persuade the marchers to disperse.

Islwyn slums

AT LAST year's party conference, Neil Kinnock made much of the fact that only a Labour government could have given him "the chance of a comfortable home with a working father and mother, away from cramped rooms and away from a place that was pest and damp infested".

Unfortunately many workers in his own constituency, with its Labour

council, are still waiting for this chance.

A meeting of the Islwyn council housing committee was interrupted by tenants from the Morrisville council estate. They complained of rising damp, no central heating and outside toilets, and demanded improvements from the council.

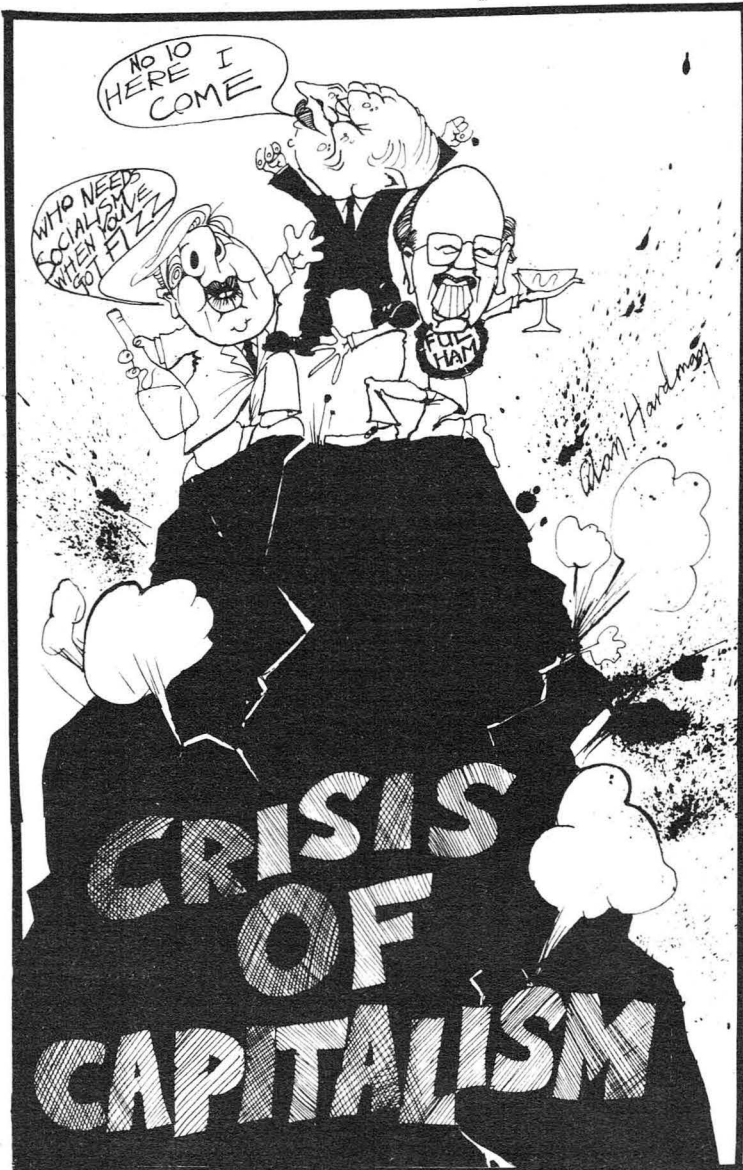
Two tenants have erected 12 foot high banners outside their houses, as the only way to get the council's attention for their two year fight. One reads: "£22 a week for a council slum".

May Day Greetings

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.

What Labour must learn from Fulham



LABOUR'S VICTORY in Fulham will give a big boost to the morale of activists and Labour supporters in the run-up to the local elections.

Nick Raynsford won with a 3,503 majority. He said afterwards that: "the dark night of Thatcherism is coming to an end".

These are the sentiments of workers everywhere and *Militant* supporters welcome the prospect of the return of a majority Labour government.

But what does Fulham mean? Much was made of the big swing to Labour, bigger than expected. Roy Hattersley claimed that this was due to the moderate policies of the candidate and that the influence of *Militant* had been 'penned in'. The right will undoubtedly use such arguments to continue the attacks on the left, and to further water down Labour's policies.

But they would have used exactly the same arguments and come to the same conclusions if Labour had been smashed.

Irrelevant

The extremist tag that the Tories and Alliance tried to pin on Labour fell flat. Ever since the NEC failed to expel the 'Liverpool Twelve' the press have tried to work up a frenzy about Labour 'extremism'. But in the event this wasn't an issue.

A poll in the *Mirror* said: "Three quarters of all voters said that Labour's attempted action against *Militant* supporters made no difference to the intended vote: "That figure rose to 86 per cent among voters who had already declared themselves as Labour voters".

Neil Kinnock had staked his reputa-

tion on the bid to expel the 'Liverpool twelve'. But despite the Liverpool inquiry and the right's obsession with *Militant* this wasn't relevant to voters in Fulham.

Labour won, not because of the computer-aided campaign, not because of the policies of moderation but *despite* the campaign being apolitical.

Polarisation

Labour won because of the polarisation of class interests as a result of the miners' strike and the unrelenting attacks on working people by the Tories. The recent exposures of top Tories and the Westlands affair have added to this polarisation but ironically it was the Alliance which has lost out. The Tories, when the chips are down, are the most convincing opposition to Labour.

However in a general election Labour won't have all the 'fizz', as Neil Kinnock puts it, and computers to fight in every constituency. The party will have to rely on its policies and winning support for them. If Labour had campaigned on a radical socialist programme the general swing to the party would have been converted into a landslide. This is the real lesson for the general election. As initially in France and Greece where socialist governments were elected with big majorities, so in Britain Labour could win with a landslide.

In 1980 Labour came within one per cent of winning Southend East with a Conservative majority of 11,000 and was getting 48 per cent support in the opinion polls.

Now the most optimistic polls put Labour at 36 per cent. The 10.9 per cent swing in Fulham still wouldn't give Labour an overall majority.

Moreover, a continued internal war on the left would eventually have a seriously damaging effect on Labour's support. A split and divided party would become a vote losing issue as it was in the 1983 general election.

Labour leaders must address the problem of how to increase the party's support in the aftermath of Fulham to ensure a majority Labour government. This won't be done with more expulsions.

By Ken Smith

Kilroy-Silk attacks Labour candidates

RIGHT WING Labour MP and witch-hunter Robert Kilroy-Silk, is urging voters in his Knowsley North constituency not to vote for official Labour Party council candidates who were replacing 'good moderates'.

His former agent Peter Fisher has taken him at his word and is standing as an independent 'Labour Against *Militant*' candidate.

The Labour Group has unanimously condemned Silk's statement. Knowsley North CLP has asked the NEC to take disciplinary action against an MP who states that Labour candidates should not be supported.

Obviously Silk is worried about his own pending reselection. This is still being held up because of the spurious investigation into the party, and the delay is being used to try to attack union delegations, but only those on the left.

GBATU regional officials have intervened over a number of delegates.

But despite this bureaucratic manoeuvring the left demonstrated its strength at the recent AGM, where its nominations for officers consistently won by about 66 to 33 votes.

In order to ensure that the right to reselection is upheld, the CLP officers are reluctantly considering taking legal action.

By Lesley Holt
(NW Region LP Womens' Committee, personal capacity)

'Moderate' intimidation

LABOUR OFFICIALS in the Fulham by-election were so keen on maintaining their 'moderate' image that *Militant* sellers and young socialists were subjected to harassment, swearing and physical abuse. Some were told they would be reported and expelled.

Some canvassers had come a considerable distance to help only to be told that they were not wanted. The Labour Party Young Socialists were consistently blocked in their attempts to organise canvassing of young voters

and youth events.

Despite this a canvass of first-time voters recruited ten new members to the LPYS.

Two girls who agreed to join said that they went to the Labour Party headquarters to help in the canvassing, were asked where they lived and were then told by a councillor: "You're not supposed to be living there, you're students. I'll be taking this up in the council after the election."

'Communists' help Lib-Tory pact in Bermondsey

OPPONENTS OF Labour in the local elections in Bermondsey are collaborating to defeat Labour candidates, especially those on the left.

In Bricklayers ward, where deputy leader of Southwark council, John Bryan is standing for Labour, the Tories have not put up a candidate, giving the Liberals a clear run.

In an apparently deliberate attempt to defeat a socialist Labour candidate the Communist Party is also standing a candidate in Bricklayers—its only candidate in all of Bermondsey's 21 seats.

This ward is the second most marginal in the constituency and the few votes this sectarian, so-called Communist Party may gather could be enough to put the Liberals into the seat.

By Ben Eastop

Socialists can expect complicity between the Tories and the other Tory party, the Liberals, but open sabotage from a party which calls itself socialist is the worst crime. This is the party which hypocritically talks about the need for unity in Liverpool to fight the Tories' attacks.

John Bryan is a fighter for socialism. He has consistently backed the strategy on Southwark council for no cuts in jobs and services, and no rate or rent rises to pay for Tory cuts. As a result of his opposition to rate-capping he now risks possible surcharge by the district auditor.

Is the Communist Party, along with the Tories and Liberals, going to dig the knife into socialists like John Bryan who have



John Bryan, Deputy Leader of Southwark council standing for election in Bricklayers ward, Bermondsey.

Keep Bermondsey Labour Stop the Liberal threat

Join the mass canvass every Sunday 10.30 am at: Spa Road Housing Office, Grange Road, Bermondsey. Or help in the week— phone 232 2666 for details or turn up at Spa Road Housing Office, 10.30am, 1.30pm or 6.30pm.

made these personal sacrifices in defence of working people?

Despite this alliance of disrepute Labour activists

and young socialists are campaigning hard to get both Labour candidates, John Bryan and Bob Law, elected.

Poll shows a quarter oppose expulsions

PETER KELLNER is political editor of the *New Statesman* and a big fan of Neil Kinnock. Consequently he loathes *Militant* and never misses an opportunity to attempt to prove that *Militant* is an electoral liability to Labour. He was at it again on Sunday with an article on the results of an opinion poll conducted for the *Observer* by the Harris Research Centre among Fulham voters.

Polls such as these are notoriously unreliable for anything other than the simplest snap-shot of views at a particular point in time, and even then should be treated with caution. Nevertheless, the poll results are quite interesting and the slant that Kellner puts on them—that *Militant* is a liability—is not clear from the article.

In response to the question: 'Do you approve or disapprove of Neil Kinnock's handling of the Liverpool *Militants*?', 44 per cent approved, 25 per cent disapproved, and 32 per cent didn't know.

This is where the weakness of all such polls becomes obvious. Presumably, we should interpret 'approval' or 'disapproval' of Kinnock's actions as 'for' and 'against' expulsions or at least disciplinary action of some kind.

If so, this is quite staggering. According to the poll one quarter of the electorate actively disapprove of the expulsions, and less than half actively approve of the expulsions. Kellner says that among Labour voters, the figures were almost the same as for the sample as a whole. He then goes on to say that 'curiously, it is Conservative supporters who are most impressed by Kinnock's actions'. Why 'curiously'? Conservatives all round the country will no doubt be delighted to see Kinnock attacking socialists—it saves them from doing it if the Labour leader turns on his own side and distracts attention from their party's problems.

The Harris poll asked a second question about *Militant*, this time a direct question on expulsions: 'Do you think that members of *Militant* should be allowed to remain members of the Labour Party or should they be expelled?' Despite the loaded wording of the question, 16 per cent of all electors said they should be allowed to remain, 25 per cent didn't know and 59 per cent were in favour of expulsions. Even here the results are quite encouraging. Given the degree of anti-*Militant* propaganda churned out by the unholy alliance of Fleet Street and Walworth Road, it is surprising that still nearly a fifth of all voters were actively against expulsions. Among Labour voters there was not even a majority in favour of expulsions, and almost one third (28 per cent) actively opposed expulsions.

Stop the pushers



LPYS conference—campaigning on all issues affecting young people.

THE DEBATE about drugs at LPYS national conference showed that the Young Socialists were actively campaigning on all aspects of young people's lives.

Susan Crosdale from West Derby North YS described the common occurrence of seeing young people taking drugs on the back of local buses in Liverpool.

Areas of high unemployment and social deprivation had corresponding levels of drug abuse. Croxteth had over 97 per cent youth unemployment and drugs are about as easy to get hold of as sweets.

Rather than arresting miners and now printers the police should be chasing those who make millions out of pushing drugs.

Report by Neelam De Freitas

She received rapturous applause when she asked: "If 13 and 14 year olds can find the pushers so easily why can't the police?"

Theresa Carr from Manchester Wythenshawe YS said some parents of drug addicts had phoned the YS secretary. They had been to every conceivable agency and were frustrated that nothing was being done to help their kids.

One of the parents told the YS members: "We've seen

what you can do on the telly, the role you played in the school students' strike and in mobilising support for Liverpool councillors."

The YS held a public meeting to publicise the real effects of taking drugs. 100 people attended, with heroin addicts in the front row. 40 people signed their names to say they were interested in the YS.

Drugs on dole

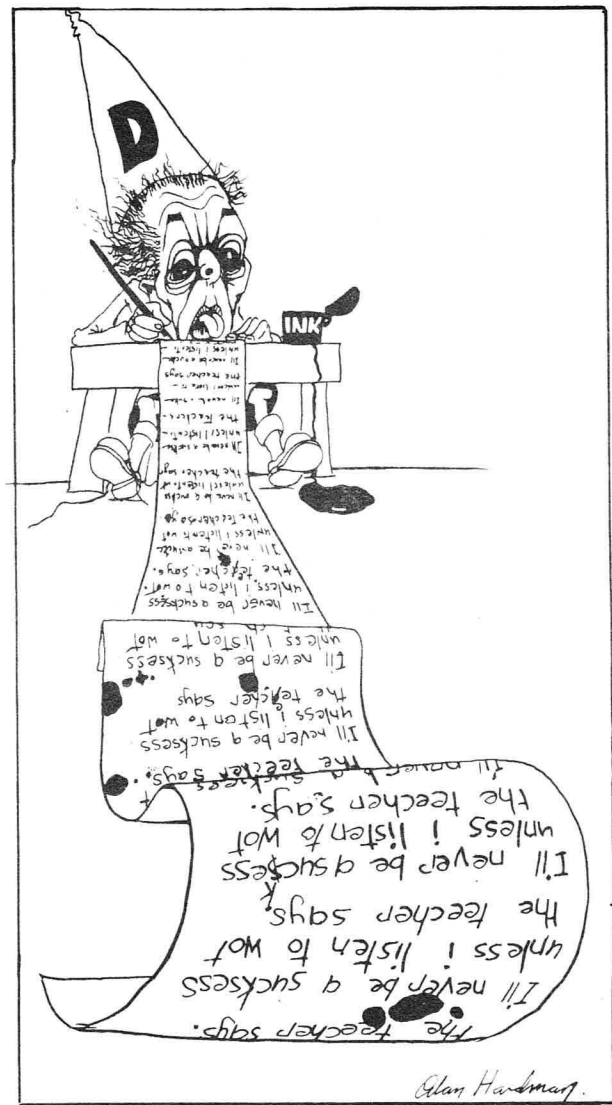
Michael Morris from West Derby quoted from an article in the *Guardian* reporting results of the first detailed investigation held into drug taking in schools.

Four out of five young people taking drugs are on

the dole, a higher proportion of school children with fathers on the dole had started taking drugs.

Rob Owen National Committee (NC) spoke of the hypocrisy of the Tories who moralised about the issue and tried to frighten drug pushers with tough words, but in practice actually made things easier for them. For instance there are 3,000 fewer customs officers since Thatcher had come to power.

"In fact," he said: "Thatcher is breeding the social conditions which force young people onto drugs. Tories prefer to see young people on drugs rather than fighting against them."



THE MAD MONK strikes again! Not content with indiscriminate cuts in education, Sir Keith Joseph now wants to push through the proposed new GCSE exam course without consultation with the teachers.

Sir Keith claims that teachers are merely using the GCSE as a political lever in their dispute. Yet even fellow Tory MPs have expressed concern over the readiness of schools and teachers to teach the courses.

Once again he shows a total lack of concern for the students involved. Who cares about their education? Besides Sir Keith won't be around to see the results - he's not standing for Parliament again. But then who would vote for him anyway?

Bootle stops the fascists

THE LABOUR Party Young Socialists in Bootle called an anti-fascist demonstration on 1 April. They were determined to counter the plans of the National Front to hold a meeting on the steps of Bootle Town Hall.

The Tory controlled Sefton Council took out a high court injunction against the Fascist rally taking place due to their embarrassment at the prospect of a large counter demonstration.

Despite the confusion as to whether or not the meeting was taking place, 100 YS members, Labour Party members and trade union and labour movement activists joined the demonstration.

Four fascists left a nearby pub, to the jeers and catcalls of the counter demonstration. Due to the presence of the Merseyside labour movement, the fascists called off the meeting and a well known fascist was arrested and charged with possession of an offensive weapon.

He is known to have been responsible for physical attacks on black and white workers and labour movement activists.

The National Front and other fascist groups must be prevented from peddling their racist and anti-working class filth. The labour movement on Merseyside has once again shown the fascists that they will be prevented from organising in the Merseyside area and it will continue to oppose fascism, wherever it rears its ugly head.

By Emy Onuora (Bootle LPYS)

Absolute beginners speak

WHILE READING through my mother's *Woman's Own* dated 5 April—I came across an article containing a question to young children on "What worries you?"

One eight-year old from Hampstead said, "I don't worry about dying. That gets rid of all your problems, doesn't it?... My parents come from Iraq. The war there worries me because all our family are still there".

A six-year old said, "I worry about war because my dad might be in a war. He's a mini-cab driver. When I see war on telly I'm glad he comes home at night because I know he hasn't gone off to be a soldier in the war".

A seven-year old from Liverpool said, "I've seen black and white people killing each other. I hate it. Daddy talks to the telly. That worries me. Dad hasn't got a job".

"Ashamed"

And the theme on employment continues, another seven year old from Liverpool said, "Dad's got no job. Mum's very upset about him".

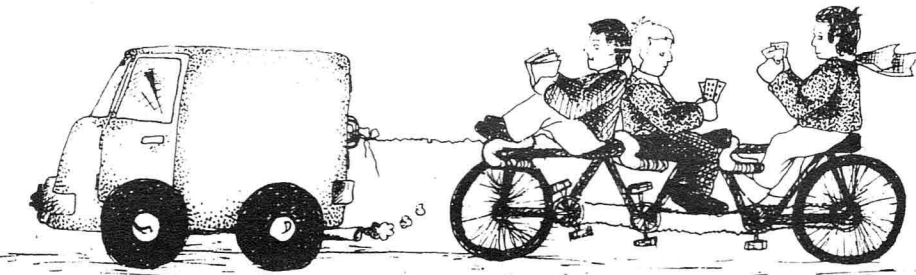
But perhaps the most revealing quote of all comes from a 10 year old girl again from Liverpool She said, "I worry about Dad. he's worked for Ford's but now he's

on strike. "I'm glad in a way because I worried about him getting hurt in the machinery at work. But with him out of work I'll have to go on free dinners and that makes me ashamed."

The burdens this system places on people starts with the very young. The system offers only a miserable future for these young people. A socialist government must give these young people something to look forward to—full employment and an end to wars.

By Paula Hanford (LPYS National Committee, Wales)

Dingle Dynamos ride again



AT YS conference a *Militant* reporter spoke to a group of YS members from Riverside, Liverpool, who have been raising money for Liverpool City Council.

Ronnie McCarthy and Frank Skelton cycled 400 miles from Liverpool to YS conference in Bournemouth. The others, Rachel, Cathy, Stewart, Dave, Nicola and Ann were busy producing leaflets and campaigning for sponsors. The 'Dingle Dynamos' have already raised £250 and hope to meet

their target of £400 before long.

"The idea came about when we were chatting in 'Poets Corner' after a YS meeting. We felt angry that unelected Tory judges had surcharged Liverpool councillors for nothing other than creating jobs. We wanted to make our own contribution to the legal appeal.

"We got an excellent response wherever we went, everyone seemed to know about what was happening in Liverpool.

"In Gloucester we were put up at just two hours notice by Labour Party members. One of them, a member of the FBU told us he kept in touch with what was happening in Liverpool by reading the *Militant*.

"The marvellous atmosphere when we arrived at conference and the tremendous response to Derek Hutton's contribution at the Labour unity rally made our journey worthwhile".

The two-faced Tories

THE DECLINE in moral standards in Britain has gone too far say a number of Tory MPs.

By Anne McKay

They are supporting a Parliamentary Bill from Winston Churchill MP designed to 'clean up' television and the film industry.

So you'd think that these defenders of our moral welfare would welcome Clare Short's Bill to abolish the soft-porn of the *Sun* and other gutter papers—but you'd be wrong.

Two staunch supporters of the scab *Sun's* right to plaster topless women over its papers have been Tory MPs Peter Bruinvels and Geoffrey Dickens.

Exploitation

According to Bruinvels: "Page three brightens up every man's day. I am sure wives don't mind." As for Dickens the *Sun* describes him as: "one of those red-blooded members confident of stopping Labour killjoy Clare Short pushing her Bill to ban page three through the Commons".

The *Sun* points out that on its first hearing Short's Bill: "aroused much laughter... and has no chance of passing into law". Whereas "Winston Churchill's measure... has a valid aim, to protect children against obs-

cenity on TV". Never mind if their parents bring it home every day in the *Sun*!

Still, with backers like Geoffrey Dickens where can the *Sun* go wrong? He said on 8 April: "Girls would give their right arm for a figure like Tracy's" (posing provocatively on the same page).

You remember Geoffrey... he hit the headlines about a month ago for trying to name a vicar accused of a sex offence. To justify his use of Parliamentary privilege he said: "I am fighting a national crusade to protect little children."

So why is this "child-porn campaigner" (as the *Sun* aptly describes him) siding with the *Sun* which regularly exploits girls as young as 16 and 17?

Apparently, portraying women as imbeciles to be gawped at by men isn't encouraging men to see women as objects to be 'used' as they like.

No, the reason for the increasing number of rapes and attacks on women is the 'permissive society'—an intangible phenomenon as far away from the Tory hypocrisy of 'Victorian values' as they can get.

Fund-raising fortnight

WITH ONLY two weeks to the end of this quarter we appeal to all our readers to send us a special May Day greeting of cash. £20, £10, £5 or £1, whatever you can afford.

John Steward a YTS trainee-cook in the Merchant Navy from Southampton this week sent us £20 representing an enormous sacrifice from his paltry YTS wages!

If you buy *Militant* every week then follow the example of Bill Edge, a bin worker on Liverpool City Council who pays £1 for every copy or Kevin Waddington, from London N15 who simply writes: "Dear Comrades, Please find enclosed cheque value £5 to aid your struggle for socialism".

George Jackson from Barking sent £10 while Bernie, a Telecom engineer from Southampton sent £5. Everyone of them backs a paper fighting for genuine socialist policies in the Labour Party and for a decent future for working class people.

Use petitions

Even if you are reading *Militant* for the first time and you like what you see, help us produce a more frequent paper by sending in your donation now. Collect money amongst your friends—write to us for a



FIGHTING FUND

Quarter ends 30 April

This week
£2188

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London East	2838		3500
2 London South West	1011		1500
3 London South East	1246		2200
4 London West	1397		2900
5 Manchester/Lancs	1841		4200
6 East Midlands	1245		3050
7 Humberside	940		2350
8 Merseyside	2777		6900
9 South East	927		2400
10 Southern	1132		3100
11 Scotland East	1095		3200
12 Scotland West	1301		3850
13 Eastern	1134		3450
14 Yorkshire	1438		5600
15 West Midlands	1006		4500
16 Northern	948		4550
17 Wales West	627		3150
18 South West	384		2150
19 Wales East	236		1450
Others	2274		5000
Total received	25797		70000

petition booklet to collect signatures against the witch-hunt, and raise cash from every one who signs.

The petition will give the right wing their answer to witch-hunts and expulsions in the party like a Fords worker from Swansea who gave £5 "in response to the attacks from George Wright".

Don't forget to enjoy yourself too! Celebrate May Day with an end of quarter party. Bradford supporters

aim to raise £100 with a Curry 'n Kebabs Nite with a Pop and Politics Quiz and darts match all swilled down with 80 pints of home brew (between them, I presume)! Happy fundraising!

★ Two comrades in Maryhill, Glasgow, raised £5 each by appearing in police identity parades. But it isn't something we would encourage all readers to try. One of them was positively identified twice!

THANKS this week to: John Carr, Parks Dpt, Wirral Borough Council who gave us £1 for his paper; Plashet YS for collecting £2.15; J Easy, Mill End £5; Alan Bird, Coventry £1; Angela Hughes, NAT-FHE, Warrington £2; Lynn Walsh, TV expenses £60; also £5 from hire of room donated by a landlord! Brixton readers' meeting £82 after expenses; North-West Regional Labour Party Conference Readers' Meeting £123; Luton Readers' Meeting £30.

By Ruth Campbell

New readers everywhere

LABOUR'S VICTORY in Fulham shows the hatred for Thatcher. The media, however, interpret it as a sign of hostility to *Militant*!

If Labour had done badly they would have drawn the same conclusion. Heads they win... tails we lose!!

The REAL feelings of ordinary Labour supporters are shown by our successful series of meetings organised against expulsions and for Labour unity.

In the run-up to the meeting in Sheffield, supporters are selling 40-50 *Militants* in the city centre almost every day.

Sharon McDermott, regularly goes out in her dinner break to sell *Militant*. Last week she took some extra time owing to her and sold 36 on one day, and 34 the next. How many readers could do the same?

The big meeting in Kinnock's constituency, Islwyn, has also produced some good sales. In Blackwood shopping centre, 35 and 50 *Militants* were sold over the last two Saturdays. The rest of Wales is keeping up. 35 were sold in Abertillery and a sale of up to 50 is now



Make the most of the publicity to sell *Militant*.

a regular feature on the Ringland estate in Newport, Gwent.

Labour's right-wing vainly hope to misuse the student movement as a bastion against Marxist ideas in Labour's youth organisations. But from last week's National Union of Students' conference we have already received payments for 80 copies of issue 792, 40 of issue 793 and 45 copies of *Militant Irish Monthly*.

Militant has commented on the

obstacles placed in the way of our sellers at one pit in the Lancashire coalfield. We are pleased to say that 16 copies were sold at Parkside colliery last week. In other words: persistence pays off in sales.

Use the widespread interest in our ideas to take *Militant* to many more potential new readers.

By Gerry Lerner

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.

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 now! £1 each + 25p P&P. Available from fighting fund department. Order yours now!

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

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

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 23 April—What is happening in the Labour Party? 8pm. For further details Tel: (0303) 43541.

CPSA Militant Readers' Meeting "What we stand for". Wednesday 30 April 6pm The Cock Tavern, Phoenix Road, London NW1. Speaker: Doreen Purvis (CPSA NEC, personal capacity)

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

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

"Militant fights back" meetings

SOUTH WEST
Bristol: Wednesday 23 April, 7.30pm. Earl Russell Inn, 143 Lawrence Hill, Bristol. Speaker: Robin Clapp.

NORTHERN
Sunderland: Monday 21 April.
Middlesbrough: Wednesday 23 April. Speaker: John Pickard.

EAST MIDLANDS
Sutton-in-Ashfield (Notts): Monday 21 April, 7.30pm. Public Baths, Book Street.
Gedling: Thursday 24 April, 7.30pm. Windor 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.
EASTERN
Peterborough: Wednesday 23 April, 7.30pm.

SOUTHERN
Portsmouth: Monday 19 May. Speaker: Peter Taaffe.
Bracknell: Tuesday 13 May, 8.30pm, Coopers Hill Youth Centre. Speaker: Keith Dickinson.

LONDON
Wimbledon: Wednesday 23 April, 7.30pm, Christchurch Road, London SW19 (nearest Tube: Colliers Wood). Speaker: Ben Wright.

Erith: Tuesday 22 April, 7.45pm. Erith Town Hall.
Bexleyheath: Tuesday 29 April. Welling Library.
Southwark: Monday 21 May, 7.30pm, North Peckham Civic Centre, Old Kent Road, London SE15.

WALES
Welsh Region Labour Party Conference: Fringe meeting, Friday 16 May.

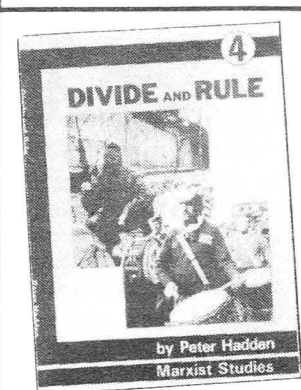
Islwyn: Thursday 17 April, 7.30pm. Speakers: Derek Hatton and Peter Taaffe. Newbridge Comprehensive School.

Maesteg: Wednesday 23 April, 7.30pm.

Bridgend: Thursday 24 April. Dunraven Arms, Wyndham Street. Speaker: Alun Morgan.

YORKSHIRE/HUMBERSIDE
West Hull: Wednesday 23 April, 7.30pm. Trades and Labour Club, Beverley Road, Hull.

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



Divide and Rule: Labour and the partition of Ireland. New issue out now. £1.40 plus 20p post and packing from: World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

Marxist Study Guide: James Connolly and the Easter Rising. Articles by: Lenin, Trotsky, Grant and Hadden. Introduction by Dermot Connolly. Single copies: 30p plus 20p postage. Five for £2 post inclusive. 20 or more post free. Order from: World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

A SOCIALIST alternative to the Anglo-Irish agreement C-90 cassette tape. Joe Higgins and Peter Hadden speaking at London *Militant* readers meeting in March. £1.25 plus 20p postage and packaging. From World Socialist Books 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

Education for socialists

THE SOCIALIST government in France has fallen. Lacking a clear strategy for taking on capitalism, the popular Socialist and Communist coalition, elected four years ago with 55% of the votes, was forced to retreat and finally turn its back on the millions of workers who voted for a fundamental 'change'.

What are the prospects for the French left? What are the lessons for socialists in Britain with the likely election of a Labour government on a reformist programme?
Reading: *Militant* 789, 790

and 792. Also *Rise of De Gaulle and the Class Struggle* by Ted Grant (30p) for historical analysis.

The General Strike: 1926 and Today.

3 May this year marks the 60th Anniversary of the British General Strike. Nine titanic days were to shatter the myth about "British compromise" and "social peace" and leave the ruling class teetering on the edge of collapse.

Only the betrayal of the workers leaders prevented the victory of the working class and defused the poten-

tially revolutionary situation.

Today, massive strike movements are once again sweeping Europe. This can be seen even in Norway, Sweden and Denmark, the so-called models of social democracy, and in Belgium recently where a workers movement reached general strike proportions.

Question of power

General strikes pose the question of power, but how and when do they develop?

How and when does a 24 hour general strike test and strengthen the mood of the workers? At what point does a general strike become an insurrection?

Reading: The General Strike—articles by Lenin, Trotsky, Taaffe and Grant (£1) and Trotsky on Britain Volume 2.

All books and pamphlets available from World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB. Orders under £5 add 25% post and packing. Over £5 add 10%, over £10 post free.

THE KAY Wool sweatshop strike at Upper-mill near Oldham ended with seven of the eight women agreeing a settlement short of their demands for reinstatement.

By Margaret Creear

But it has shown the explosive potential of hundreds of thousands of women working in appalling conditions.

The women were originally sacked for refusing to work Saturday morning overtime after working excessive hours in that week, in some cases almost 80 hours. The proposed changes in the Factory Act will make this widespread amongst women and youth as protection on hours and nightwork are removed.

The women were working with foam and thinners in dangerous conditions (see *Militant* 782, 783, 785). The factory had been visited by an Inspector without stringent action being taken against the firm.

Dismissed

This strengthens demands that the trade unions must have decisive control over the Health and Safety Executive, with the right to send trade union representatives into non-union sweatshops.

The letter of dismissal states they were sacked for refusing overtime and ignoring company procedure. The company has since admitted that they didn't have written rules, procedure or contracts.

As the dispute was publicised and the company came under increasing attack, they turned to character assassination. The supervisor was originally suspended on pay for refusing to give out work in sympathy with the refusal of the others to do overtime. She was then sacked for joining them on the picket line. The firm then raised allegations of gross misconduct, conspiracy against management and failure to allow management to manage! None of this was backed up with any evidence.

Just before Christmas they were offered £250 each and the official recommended that they accept this. The workers rejected it and decided to go for reinstatement and to try to improve conditions. Mass pickets were started on Monday mornings and a visit was organised to Dublin where the parent company was based.

The women were then offered a settlement, of £500 each, but the agreement attempted to deny the supervisor the right to go to a tribunal and to make it difficult for the other women to appear as witnesses on her behalf.

Although the union official recommended acceptance a new final agreement was reached. It gave £500 each, a testimonial that the women were good workers and an agreement that the supervisor would go to a tribunal.

This falls far short of what the women wanted, so why did they settle? One factor was the lukewarm response at the Dublin firm. For workers in sweatshops who go into dispute solidarity is vital. Once the firm started using non-union drivers to cross the picket line the main hope was to get the foam blacked or other pressure at the Dublin end. Solidarity can't be turned on and off like a tap, especially when workers can see fellow workers treated in an arbitrary fashion and when they are constantly reminded of lengthy dole queues.

Only through constant campaigns and explanation by the trade union leadership can we effectively achieve solidarity. This is even more true amongst very vulnerable workers in sweatshops.

But the main factor in determining the settlement

Why Kay Wools workers settled

was that the GMBATU decided to to make the dispute unofficial again—in effect to ditch the women.

They had only joined the union shortly before being sacked, in fact this may well have contributed to their sacking. However, from the first day this seems to be have been held against them in several meetings by their union official.

No union which takes a profit and loss approach to its members or an inflexible attitude on rules which stand in the way of effectively carrying out a dispute will attract workers in sweatshops. Many such workers only join unions when they are in dispute and want to fight in an organised way with the help of other workers. Many disputes in sweatshops include trade unionisation in their demands.

Second offer

The women explained to the union that they didn't want their strike pay, just that the strike made official so that they could stop people crossing their picket line and approach other unions. Six weeks after the women were sacked the dispute was made official.

The attitude of the official was to accept whatever the management said. According to a report of one meeting he told management that 'as far as he could see there was not a great deal that the union could get out of the situation'.

When the second offer of £500 was made which includ-

ed an attempt to prevent the supervisor from going to a tribunal, the official put pressure on them to settle. Only six workers were present who split 3-3.

The union said they would not renegotiate the agreement and as far as they were concerned the dispute was over and in any case the trade union official could use a casting vote.

One woman then changed her vote in favour of the agreement. The women felt unhappy about the whole procedure and weren't even clear on the contents of the agreement. They phoned the official to ask for further clarification and discussion.

He then issued a press statement that the dispute was unofficial, the women were breaking union rules and behaving in an undemocratic fashion.

The reason allegedly given for making the strike unofficial again was 'outside interference'. The women have never been informed in writing of the reason. It may refer to assistance given by the ATGWU in Dublin, or help from the Women's Council, the local PPC, and from the trade union liaison officer and other members of local Labour Parties.

In fact these individuals and organisations between them raised almost all the money donated to the women, and led to almost every meeting the women have spoken at, all the media coverage (except the unfavourable coverage by the union official) and even the visit to Dublin. 'Outside in-

A CHARTER FOR WOMEN WORKERS



Liverpool, Manchester and Rochdale Labour Women's C-

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

terference' is traditionally termed 'solidarity' in the labour movement!

Trade union officials should have a good record themselves of recruitment and struggle and should be elected by the membership and open to democratic control and recall if they are not up to the task.

As the proposed abolition of the Wages Councils deprives many workers of the few rights they have, the unions must move in and

organise these workers. But not just to issue them with a card and collect their subs. Workers will increasingly demand action from their unions.

The supervisor is now going to a tribunal. So the campaign continues. Speakers can be arranged on the dispute through: Margaret Ashworth, 5 Hawthorne Terrace, Mill Lane, Mossley, Ashton-under-Lyme, Tameside.

Single parent, multiple problems

I AM a single parent. I work part-time as a nursing assistant at a mental and geriatric hospital on a 10½ hour night shift, two and sometimes three nights a week.

Apart from enjoying my work, it enables me to be with my 12-year old daughter during the days when she is on holidays or sick. My wage is not sufficient yet...

Because I work I do not receive free dental care, prescriptions. Neither do I qualify for FIS as I work less than 24 hours week nor help with my daughter's clothes, school uniform, or free dinners.

What about my working conditions? This pearl of wisdom named "Margaret Thatcher" has seen fit to cut the National Health allowances. Normally my ward would be staffed by three nurses at night, one of them being a trainee. Now due to the cutbacks we have to work with two nurses, with no trained staff and we get no extra.

We have to really fight for ever meagre pay rise we get

as Thatcher knows we are reluctant to strike because of our patients. Perhaps you would like to work one of my nights, Maggie?

Finally in case I get bored with nothing to do (but also to keep the wolves from the door) I have to do a small machining job at home. This, in between the housework, sleeping days, washing and shopping, to say nothing of being dad, electrician, carpenter, decorator, in fact Jack of all trades.

I very rarely go out socially, which is just as well as there is no money to spare and anyway I am too bloody tired.

So come on you people in power, forget your space programmes, trips abroad, and massive wage rises for the elite.

How about giving us one parent families, who have got our fingers out, got off our backsides and on our bikes, (to name just a few of your favourite sayings) a fair deal.

By a single parent



Workers in Birmingham garment factory Kemal Bros on strike against low wages in 1984. Join the fight back. Prepare for a big demonstration in Manchester on 31 May. Photo: John Harris (IFL) II.

North West Region Labour Women
Demonstration and Rally

**End Low Pay
Fight
Privatisation**

Saturday 31 May

Speakers from:
**Women Against Pit Closures
Silentnight
Tailor and Garment Workers Union
USDW**

Assemble: All Saints (near Mancunian way) Manchester 11.30am
Rally: Crown Square, Manchester
1pm to 1.30pm

Creche available at the start of the march



MacDonal, Henderson and Tillett leave TUC headquarters to seek terms to end the 1926 general strike. The role of these leaders during the strike led to the building of the National Left Wing Movement.

THE DECISION of the NEC of the Labour Party to press ahead with the expulsion of up to 12 Marxists from the Liverpool Party is an attempt to 'clear the decks' for the next general election.

If Labour is elected on the policies of its current right wing leadership, and if it restricts its policies within the strait-jacket of sick British capitalism, it will find it impossible to carry out even the minimum reforms it has set itself. The logic of capitalism will force a Labour government limited in this way to carry out attacks on the very people who elected it—the working class.

In this event, the presence of a strong Marxist current within the party would provide a nucleus around which would gather all those in opposition to the policies of the leadership. It would pose a strong, united opposition to the right wing. That the right wing should therefore try a 'pre-emptive' strike, to expel Marxists, is nothing new.

The expulsions of communists from the Labour Party in 1925–1928 provides a number of lessons—and a warning to the right. *Militant* is a newspaper whose supporters represent a *trend* of opinion in the party—unlike the Communist Party of the twenties which was a separate and distinct organisation. But with these differences in mind, the witch-hunt of that period was not dissimilar to today's.

Joint membership

When the Labour Party was formed, it was through the coming together of a number of organisations sharing the common desire for a socialist transformation of society. For this reason, from the foundation of the Communist Party in 1920 up to 1925, it was possible for members of the CP to be individual members of the Labour Party, to stand as Labour candidates (Saklatvala was elected to Parliament in this way for North Battersea in 1922), and for trade unions to send Communist Party members as delegates to Labour Party committees and conferences. The MacDonal government of 1924 changed that.

In the December 1923 elections, Labour won 191 seats, with 4,356,757 votes—pushing the Liberals into third place, with 159 seats and 4,299,121 votes, for the first time. By January, the Conservative government—with 259 seats

By Tony Aitman
(Broadgreen Labour Party,
and one of the 'Liverpool 12')

—had fallen, and MacDonal formed the first Labour government.

Despite a radical election manifesto, the government was one of crisis. Asquith had already told his Parliamentary Liberal Party that: "... if a Labour government is ever to be tried in this country, as it will be sooner or later, it could hardly be tried under safer conditions". If Labour in government was seen to be attacking working people in the interests of capital—then socialism would be discredited and the Labour Party could do capitalism's dirty work.

That proved to be the case. MacDonal brought into the Cabinet, not just the right wing of the party, but people who had been lifelong Conservatives and Tory barristers!

The promise of taxation on wealth was thrown out of the window, yet the special tax on corporate profits was abolished because, said Chancellor of the Exchequer Snowden: "It was never a popular tax". His first budget "relieved the feelings of the rich, who had feared that there might be drastic impositions on their class".

The crunch for the Labour government came on the issue of the armed forces. In the past, the introduction by successive governments of the Army and Air Force Annual Bill had been the opportunity for Labour to move an amendment: "giving recruits the right to indicate their unwillingness to do duty in the case of trade disputes, etc".

Yet, when the first Labour government introduced the Annual Bill, it was in its usual form. The amendment was moved by Lansbury, opposed by the Labour government, and defeated with Tory and Liberal votes.

This was crucial for the Labour movement, as the dockers and transport workers were on strike, and the Labour government was threatening to use troops and the Emergency Powers Act against them. The matter came to a head over JR Campbell, the editor of the *Communist Workers Weekly*, who had been arrested under the Incite-

ment to Mutiny Act of 1797. He called on soldiers to "let it be known that, neither in class war nor in a military war, will you turn your guns on your fellow workers".

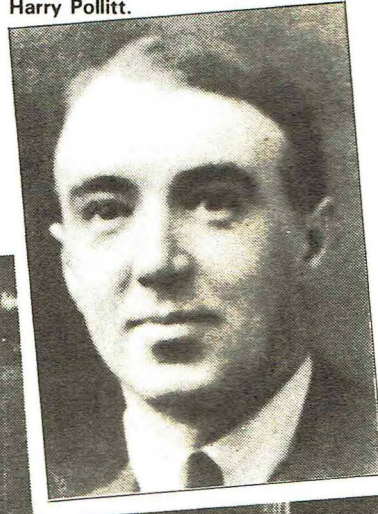
MacDonal was determined to press on with prosecution, but the massive opposition from the labour movement forced the government to drop it. MacDonal made it a matter of confidence in parliament—and the government fell.

The experience of the 1924 government had a profound effect on the Labour Party. Massive opposition to its policies came from the ranks of the party. Labour Party conference in 1924 was inundated with resolutions calling for control over the the cabinet, the parliamentary party and the party's policies.

Party democracy

The party ranks demanded that the annual conference should "enforce its decisions on a Labour

Harry Pollitt.



The first Central Committee of the Communist Party.

Labour purge the 19

government", that the PLP should appoint ministers and not the Prime Minister—and that, as the government could fall at any time, it repeals all "anti-labour alws" such as those dealing with "the right of troops and the police to interfere in industrial disputes, etc".

Labour Party members today will draw a telling parallel from the reaction of the Labour leadership. Fabian "theoretician" Sidney Webb, at that time Chairman of the Party, referred to the Constituency Labour Parties as "frequently unrepresentative groups of non-entities dominated by fanatics and cranks and extremists". MacDonal himself, foreshadowing Kinno's "impossiblism" speech said: "We should have a good deal of trouble with the extreme section, who would press upon us and expect us to do all kinds of impossible things".

More importantly, the right wing leadership decided to go all out to attempt to remove Marxism from the ranks of the Labour Party. But this was not easy, because in the early 1920s the Communist Party was by no means the ossified, Stalinist body it was to become, but a living organisation of some of the best working class militants.

For the 1924 conference, the Labour leadership proposed that the now annual application from the Communist Party for affilia-

tion be again refused, and that no member of the CP be eligible for endorsement as a Labour candidate. They also adopted a resolution from Sutton District Labour Party that no CP member would be eligible for membership of the Labour Party.

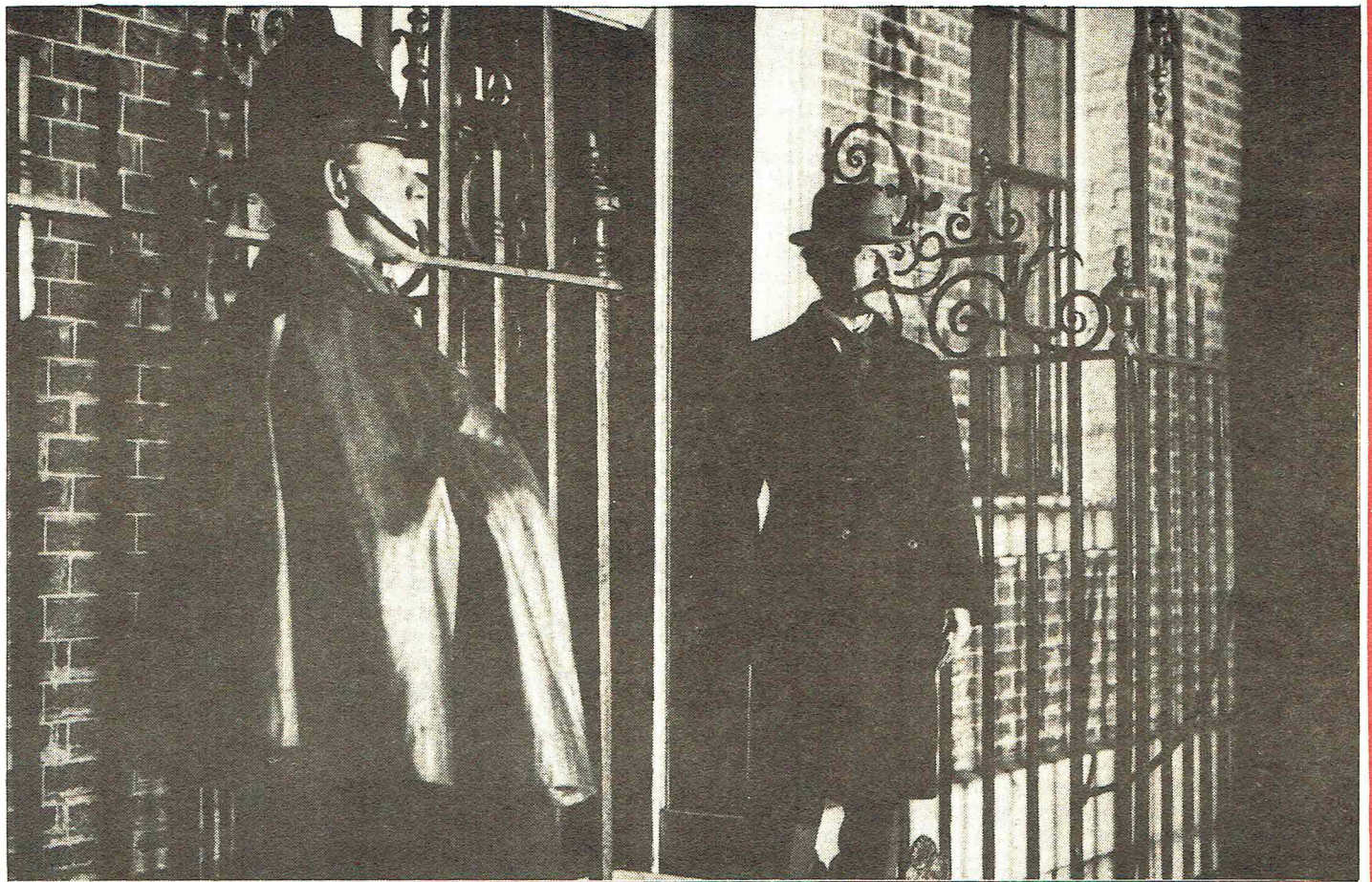
It is an irony of history that this resolution had been moved at a small meeting in Sutton by an ex-Liberal who had only just joined the Labour Party—and who left it before the 1925 conference took place! In the event, mainly due to the right wing trade union vote, both resolutions were passed: affiliation was refused by 3,185,000 to 193,000, and candidature by 2,456,000 to 654,000.

'Heresy-hunt'

Yet, reflecting the opposition of the rank and file to a witch-hunt, or a 'heresy hunt', as Ben Turner of the Woollen Textile Workers called it, the ban on individual membership was only carried by 1,804,000 to 1,546,000, with the agreement that the Executive report on its exact application to the 1925 conference.

The parallels between our modern right wing and the MacDonal leadership are reinforced by another proposal put forward at the 1924 conference. The right wing have always seen the youth as the

Years of 1920s



Ramsay MacDonald formed the first Labour government in 1924 which was a prelude to the expulsion of communists from the Labour Party.

most militant and active section of the Party, as the strongest advocates of the ideas of Marxism in the movement.

In a way reminiscent of Tom Sawyer's present-day attempts to hamper and starve the young socialists of cash, so in 1924 Executive proposed that the Young People's Sections (covering ages 14-21) should have no autonomy, and their work would be merely 'recreational and educational'. 'Care should be taken' the executive noted: 'not to over-emphasise their political side'. Like today's right wing, the 1924 executive wanted the youth reserved merely to do the electoral donkey work for the party.

The right introduced these measures to try to show that Labour was a 'sensible party', free from the 'wild men' as the militants were known, so that it could win the 1924 election. As Labour found in 1983, and it will find in the future, witch-hunts are a recipe for disaster, not success.

Labour lost in December 1924, and the Executive, learning nothing, went to the 1925 conference determined to try again to remove Marxism once and for all. This time, the response from the rank and file was overwhelming.

In the Rhondda, a special conference of the Borough Labour Party voted 12,090 in favour of the affiliation of the local Communist Party, with 5,668 against; it also voted 11,367 in favour of endorsing Communist Party members as Labour Party candidates, with 4,437 against.

On the question of individual membership, the vote in favour was unanimous.

This trend was reflected throughout the country. Leading trade union and parliamentary figures opposed the exclusion—Purcell, Cook of the miners, Swales (AEU), Gossip (NAFTA), MPs such as Lansbury, Maxton, Kirkwood, Wheatley, Maclean, Buchanan and Johnston, and other leading figures such as GDH Cole, Brailsford and Horrabin.

It is yet another irony of history that the conference that decided to outlaw the Communist Party was held in Liverpool. At that conference, the decision to ban Communists from individual party membership was carried by 2,870,000 to 321,000.

Yet, these figures hide the true position. In the Miners Union delegation, the decision to vote for exclusion was carried by only 67 votes to 56; half of the AEU delegation of 35 voted against ex-

clusion; within the Independent Labour Party, their delegation of 24 was split 13-11 for exclusion. Unlike many of the 'soft-lefts' of today, with a background in cushy union jobs or student politics, these ILP MPs had often a history of class struggle in Clydeside and other areas behind them.

It is to their credit that many of these class fighters opposed the exclusion of communists, unlike many of our present day 'lefts' and former lefts who, but for a ritualistic cleansing of their hands, are indistinguishable from the right-wing in the witch-hunt.

The National Left Wing Movement

THE MOST important outcome of the Liverpool conference was the setting up of the National Left Wing Movement.

On the initiative of South West Bethnal Green Labour Party, a delegate conference of ten local London Labour Parties was held on 21 November 1925 to discuss how to return the Labour Party to 'the idealism and fighting spirit of Keir Hardie'.

In January 1926, a second conference was held, with over 50 Labour Parties represented officially, and with delegates from the left wing in a large number of others. Among those involved were Tom Mann, of the Transport Workers; Councillor Joe Vaughan, formerly Mayor of Bethnal Green and a member of the London Labour Party Executive; Joe Southall of the ILP; Alex Gossip of the Furniture Workers; and William Paul, the editor of the *Sunday Worker*, a left wing paper founded earlier in the year. This paper more or less became the organ of the National Left Wing Movement, with a circulation of over 100,000 (at a time when Communist Party membership was 5,000).

Campaigning body

The movement became the body around which the fight against the decision of the Liverpool conference—both organisational and political—centred, both for the left wing groups within the Labour Party and for those suspended for refusing to bar Communists.

Nearly 100 local and Borough Labour Parties had refused to carry

out the Liverpool decision. Further attacks by the right wing increased the support it received from the labour movement; the January 1926 movement conference reported that 65 groups had been set up throughout the country, although the conference itself was so far only confined to London.

It had such support in the Labour Party that 60 members of the National Left Wing Movement were delegates at the 1926 Margate conference of the Party, with its Chairman, Joe Vaughan of the ETU, going as delegate from the London Trades Council.

General strike

To prepare for this conference, the first national conference of the movement was held in September 1926. The General Strike, and the role of the Labour leaders in this strike, gave it enormous impetus. Joe Vaughan again chaired this conference in Poplar Town Hall, and 150 delegates from 73 London Labour Parties and groups heard him call that they they should 'cleanse the Labour Party of the agents of capital'.

As in the first conference of 1925, he restated that the aim of the movement was 'not to supersede the Labour Party', but to 'remould it to the heart's desire of the rank and file'. Such was the support for the movement that at its second annual conference in September 1927 delegates represented over 150,000 individual members, with miners' leaders Cook and SO Davies present.

Will Crick, chairman of the Manchester and Salford Trades and Labour Council was its chairman. 1,455 Communist Party members were still openly members of the Labour Party, and 252 Communist Party members had been elected by trade union branches as delegates to local Labour Party General Management Committees.

The decline of the Communist Party

IN THE latter part of the decade the parallels between the 1920s and today begin to wear thin.

Apart from the fact that the Communist Party was a separate organisation, which today's Marxists are not, the CP of that time was also deeply infused with sectarianism. *Militant* supporters will never abandon the Labour Party to the right wing. Every one expelled

will fight relentlessly and will win reinstatement, but in the 1920s the right wing were handed a victory by the CP turning its back on the Labour Party.

All the features which allowed the British Communist Party to become the pliant tool of Stalin and the Comintern—during the General Strike and after—were present in 1925. From the inception of the National Left Wing Movement, sections of the Communist Party were opposed to it in the most virulent sectarian terms.

If the Communist Party had fought to retain the support and confidence of the rank and file of the Labour Party, there is no doubt that they would have won reinstatement and the National Left Wing Movement would have gained a far greater momentum. In the next few years, after the experience of the second MacDonald government, from 1929-31, the right wing were to completely discredit themselves by openly betraying the party.

But by the late twenties, the Communist Party, under the influence of the growth of Stalinism in Moscow, was progressively turning its back on Marxism. In her largely sympathetic *History of the Communist Party of Great Britain from 1927-41*, Noreen Branson wrote, that the purge became 'inevitable'.

'... The purge was made easier for the right', she wrote, 'by a change in the line of the Communist Party itself. The new line—which came to be known as 'class against class'—was a disaster'.

As early as January 1928, Harry Pollitt, later General Secretary of the CP, was arguing that Labour had become a 'third capitalist party'. This sectarianism was itself a product of the growing 'Third Period' ultra-leftism emanating from the now Stalinist Communist International. At its Sixth World Congress in summer 1928, this body attacked social democratic parties as 'counter revolutionary' and by the following summer they were denounced, along with the social-democratic trade unions as 'agents of capitalism' and 'social fascist'.

In Britain, by late 1928, the Communist Party came out in favour of the trades unions *disaffiliating* from the Labour Party and in support for the political levy 'only in order more effectively to work for the break-down of this bourgeois party'.

This lurch of the Communist Party into ultra-leftism led to the decline of membership to 2,500 in

1929. The Communist Party, which by then effectively ran the National Left Wing Movement, decided by 55 votes to 52 to close it down. Sales of the *Sunday Worker* declined dramatically as the Communist Party became more isolated, and that paper too was soon closed down.

By the time of the 1929 General Election, the Communist Party had alienated the majority of the rank and file of the Labour Party and had recklessly thrown away any chance it ever had of influencing them. It argued that the Labour Party was simply the 'Third party of capitalism... a completely disciplined capitalist party'.

By this means, the right wing were given an extra lease of life in the Labour Party. They had begun by hounding Marxists, but the communists themselves abandoned Marxism and marched into self-imposed isolation.

The attempt to stifle Marxism in the Labour Party today, however, will not have the same results as the exclusion of the CP in the 1920s. The fight against the witch-hunt and the abandonment of socialist policies will grow, as the *potential* of the 1920s indicated, into an unstoppable force in the constituency parties and trade unions.

Liverpool

The executive of the Liverpool Trades Council and Labour Party passed, by an overwhelming majority, the following resolution after the 1925 conference:

'Having heard the report of the work of the Liverpool Congress of the Labour Party, this Council affirms that the trade unions affiliated to the Council enjoy absolute freedom in the election of their representatives to this Trades Council and to the Labour Party'.

The Labour Party officials in London demanded that the Trades Council reconsider this resolution. The matter was again raised, and, with only five votes against, it was decided that the matter 'lie on the table'—they refused even to discuss the matter again.

History will repeat itself with regard to the Liverpool witch-hunt. The Liverpool labour movement will not accept that individuals who have given their lives to the party should be removed at the request of the Tory press and millionaire businessmen. The events of 1924-28 should serve as a lesson—and as a warning—to both the left and the right in the coming battles against the modern 'heresy-hunt' in the Labour Party.

Military action won't stop revolution

MARXISTS always judge acts of war, like the American bombing of Libya from the standpoint of class interests.

War and foreign policy are extensions of domestic policy, and whatever Ronald Reagan's personal characteristics, the military adventure against Gaddafi is motivated above all by the interests of the American capitalist class, in protecting its global interests.

The enormous firepower of the US Sixth Fleet is being brought to bear against a tiny nation of less than five million, not to combat "terrorism", but in the interests of the power, profits and prestige of American capitalism.

For all the capitalist powers—Britain and America included—"international law" is a mere facade to be used or disregarded in pursuit of naked class interests. It would be utopian to imagine even for a moment Reagan or Thatcher submitting to any supra-natural "law" or moral standards that came into conflict with British or American capitalist interests.

The special position the Reagan administration finds itself in arises from its dominant economic and military might, and its attempt to be the policeman of the world.

The economic crisis affecting the underdeveloped parts of the world have created an unprecedented degree of upheaval and instability. It is from this instability that terrorism arises in the first place, in the Middle East and elsewhere.

Where such a crushing social and economic crisis fails to find any expression in a mass movement to change society, the more impatient layers of the middle-class often turn towards the methods of individual terrorism. The individual terrorist, the "Liberal turned on his head", as Lenin describes it, seeks to change society by a single act of assassination or outrage.

The struggle of the mass to transform society along socialist lines, and the methods of Marxism and the labour movement have always stood opposed to individual terrorism.

In the Middle East, Marxists would struggle within the workers' movement, on the basis of workers' democracy and internationalism, for the transformation of social conditions around the slogan of the Socialist Federation of the Middle East.

Egyptian crisis

But even now, as a harbinger of the enormous movements that impend in the future, the Reagan administration has been forced to stand back and watch with horror the growth of popular revolutionary movements in Central America, South Africa and in the Philippines. Rumblings of future revolutionary convulsions were evident in the recent mutiny of Egyptian security forces, which led to the most serious internal crisis for over 30 years.

No area of the world is immune from mass upheavals and the kind of struggle that affected the Philippines.

The American ruling class are particular afraid of the developments in Central America and the effect of the revolution in Nicaragua in sparking off revolutions in the US-backed police-states elsewhere in the region; especially Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador.

Reagan is calculating that displays of massive US firepower around the world will somehow forstall the spread of revolutionary movements. The Libyan adventure will meanwhile strengthen him at home to force Congress to agree the enormous defence budgets projected for the future.

The reactionary role of individual terrorism is also apparent in the sense that the Berlin and TWA airliner bombs have given Reagan precisely the public support he needs to conduct his foreign policy.

The Middle East is an area of vital

strategic interest to imperialism—particularly for its massive oil reserves. But Reagan is using the Libyan issue at this stage primarily to build up a chauvinistic mood behind his multi-million dollar programme of aid for the Contras, fighting the Sandinista government. Thus the Libyan issue has provided a pretext and an aid for possible direct American military intervention in Central America and eventually, if it becomes necessary, in Nicaragua itself.

In reality, the US capitalist class—with all its military might—will be impotent to stop mass revolutionary movements around the world. They can intervene successfully against small states like Grenada and Libya, but are forced to stand idly by while the masses take the situation into their hands in countries like Iran and the Philippines, and, in the future, Pakistan and South Africa.

Lebanon

Even in little Lebanon, the US military intervention on the ground ended in ignominy, with the loss of over 250 American marines and no strategic gains whatsoever. The US fleet was reduced, as with Libya today, to a massive bombardment from miles away: cruel and painful to the local population, but completely ineffectual in bolstering US imperialism's strategic interests.

If in the future, the USA does intervene directly in Central America, its early successes will quickly give way to a long, protracted, bloody and unwinnable war like in Vietnam. But at least in the short term Reagan is building public support and illusions in US military might.

As in Lebanon, the results of Reagan's bombing of Libya will not be entirely as he calculates. The serious misgivings in the US Congress and among the European government ministers before the bombing did not arise for moral reasons, but because they saw the possibility of dangerous repercussions for the US and Europe.

Even more important is the possibility of a wave of revolutionary fervour among the Arab masses and in the Third World as a whole, directed especially against Britain and the USA. US spokesmen publicly suggested Egyptian President Mubarak should consider direct intervention against Gaddafi. But the wave of popular opposition to the USA will force Mubarak to distance himself from the Libyan raids and it may even lead to serious upheavals like the army mutiny of a few weeks ago.

The Gulf states, normally among the most firm supporters of US foreign policy in the region, have been forced to come out, in the name of Arab solidarity, against the raids. They will be conscious above all of the dark shadow of the Iranian revolution just across the Persian Gulf.

The possibility of military setbacks for their ally Iraq in its war with Iran, could raise even more sharply the prospect of revolution in the Gulf. The Saudis, Kuwaitis and the Gulf States, none of them supporters of the 'radical' Gaddafi, will not thank Reagan for his blundering intervention into an Arab state.

The long-term balance-sheet will show that Reagan's crude attempts to wield the policeman's club have only added to the instability and problems of US imperialism.

Workers will decide their attitude towards this issue on the basis of the class forces involved. Whatever the rhetoric in the gutter press about morals, "terrorism" and "international law", Reagan and Thatcher have acted in the clear interests of the capitalist class they represent, and against the interests of the labour movement internationally.

They and their system can have no support or succour whatsoever from the workers' movement: only the most determined, relentless and implacable opposition.



Spontaneous demonstrations took place in many parts of Britain and Europe after the attack. In London (above) 200 were arrested at a thousand-strong demonstration.

US acts of terrorism

REAGAN AND Thatcher's claims that they are defending democracy and taking a stand against "terrorism" are sheer hypocrisy.

They have given their blessing and often their armaments to vicious capitalist dictators around the world who have terrorised and killed tens of thousands of their own population. Around 60,000 have died in El Salvador, tens of thousands in Guatemala and 100,000 in Nicaragua before the revolution.

The vast majority died at the hands of dictators installed and maintained by US imperialism with British capitalism's backing.

How many opponents did Marcos in the Philippines and Duvalier in Haiti wipe out before a revolutionary wave forced the US to ditch the dictatorships? Pinochet is still Reagan's "ally" as is Botha in South Africa.

But radical governments which seem to threaten capitalist interests are different. Reagan's invasion of Grenada in 1983 was a message to third world governments, 'keep your heads down'. If you don't, say the US govern-

ment, we will bomb you, assassinate your supporters or leaders, arm your enemies and destroy your economy.

For years, it was revealed in the USA, the Central Intelligence Agency tried to assassinate Cuban leader Castro. Dozens of plots were hatched, many tried, and all failed.

The capitalist powers are prepared to use murder, terrorism, sabotage, pillage and rape when they are necessary to defend their system.



Reagan plans to destabilise the Nicaraguan government. The Sandinistas there have introduced land reforms, and are dramatically improving health and education. Hence they pose a revolutionary threat to capitalism in Central and South America.

The US government which

backed capitalist ex-dictator Somoza is now to give \$100 million to boost the pro-Somoza Contra rebels who are fighting a bloody but losing war against the Sandinistas. Thousands have been killed, ports have been mined and vast economic damage done to try to safeguard capitalism.

These same Contras, the scum of the old Somoza society, are up to their dirty necks in drug smuggling, prostitution and other rackets in the Honduran base areas.

Washington has sold the latest Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to South African-backed Unita guerrillas against the government of Angola, and to rebels operating against the Afghanistan government.

In the Middle East, Reagan has backed acts of state terrorism such as the bombing of PLO bases and Palestinian refugee camps in Tunisia and Lebanon.

If capitalism or US imperialism's strategic interests are at risk, Reagan has no moral qualms about the means he uses to defend them.

Ex-aide taunts Reagan



David Stockman, ex-Budget Director.

THE FOREIGN policy of the United States government may be the product of a collective body of advisers around Ronald Reagan, but serious doubts have been expressed about the President's grasp of policy questions. David Stockman, one-time Budget Director, has written a scathing attack in a new book.

"He (Reagan) is an incorrigible optimist", Stockman says, "... whose knowledge is primarily impressionistic: he registers anecdotes rather than concepts". That is a polite way of saying the most powerful man in the world doesn't understand what he's doing most of the time.

Libyans blitzed

(Continued from page 1)

super-exploitation of the ex-colonial countries. State terrorism and brutal repression of radical movements in the colonial world have always been a regular feature of the foreign policy of imperialism.

The real aim of the Reagan administration in bombing Libya is to whip up a wave of chauvinism in the United States, to get domestic backing for military aid to the CIA-organised 'Contras' in their campaign of terrorism against the Nicaraguan Sandinista government. The campaign of the 'Contras' is intended as a prelude to a later direct intervention in Nicaragua being planned by the United States. The support in the US for the raid indicates that, temporarily, Reagan has succeeded in this.

But the bombing raids in Tripoli and Benghazi will not succeed in achieving

Reagan's declared aim of stopping what he calls "Libyan inspired terrorism". It is far more likely to provoke a massive popular wave of opposition to US and British imperialism around the world. It raises the possibility of a nightmare of retaliation and counter-retaliation as Libya hits back at US and NATO bases in Southern Europe. It raises the possibility of new conflicts or even major wars in the Middle East.

The only solution to this dead-end lies in the organisations, traditions and struggles of the working class.

The press in Britain, as in the USA, will no doubt jump on the bandwagon of anti-Libyan jingoism. But the labour movement must make its own class position clear: that the main enemy of the working class in Britain is not Gaddafi, but the capitalist class in London and Washington.

Pakistan, Italy, Chile

Pakistani workers flex their muscles

Exclusive

"ZIA OUT, Zia out, Zia out", roared the countless mass—a million, perhaps two or three million people—who greeted Benazir Bhutto on her return to Pakistan last week.

Benazir Bhutto is leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), with mass support among the workers and peasants struggling against poverty and dictatorship.

But the leaders of the PPP also look to sections of the landlords and capitalists for support, and are involved in an alliance with 10 other opposition par-

ties, the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD).

This exclusive report by a Pakistani socialist describes the revolutionary mood beginning to build up among workers and youth even before Benazir's return, the Karachi general strike of 26 March (which went completely without mention in the British press) and the policies of the leadership at the head of this mighty movement demanding the transformation of society.

THE GENERAL STRIKE on 26 March in the Liyazi area of Karachi was a complete success.

The strike was called by the newly-formed Baluchi Unity Front against the killing of a student, Aslam Baluch, on 24 March. Baluch was participating in a demonstration of the unemployed. It was part of a wave of massive demonstrations and public meetings which had been taking place for days.

The Baluchi Unity Front is based among only one of the 11 nationalities living in Karachi. But to the surprise of the government and the opposition leaders, the response was enormous.

Life came to a virtual standstill in a quarter of the Karachi area. Two public meetings during the strike were attended by thousands. A bourgeois daily paper wrote:

"All the shopping centres, businesses, government offices and banks remained closed. Young people put up barricades and lit bonfires to obstruct the traffic. Public transport remained off the roads."

The general strike, the first in eight years, shows that the working class is beginning to find out its real power. Liyazi is a stronghold of the PPP and overwhelmingly a working-class area.

But the response of the MRD leaders fell tragically short of the movement of the workers.

They went to the house of Aslam Baluch to pray and to console the family. They protested against the killing by a press release only, and asked the government to punish the responsible police officers and provide jobs.

And that was it.

Nor did they call for any militant action at their public meeting in Nishtar Park the next day. This was the biggest mass meeting in three months, with over half a million present.

The MRD leaders have also addressed huge meetings in Lahore, Rawalpindi (60,000 strong according to the bourgeois press) and other industrial cities, but no working-class point of view has been put forward.

They demand the immediate resignation of General Zia, fair general elections and the reinstatement of the 1973 constitution. But the leaders do not have any policy for achieving these demands.

Mass movement

They believe that if they hold big public meetings, Zia will be forced to hold elections. They believe in a negotiated settlement with the regime, and consequently they are refusing even to hint at starting a mass movement.

The right-wing leaders in the MRD showed their real face when they condemned one of their partners, the left-wing leader Miraj Mohamed Khan, for naming 5 July as the date for starting a mass movement if the regime does not meet the MRD's demands.

The MRD leaders say they are opposed to any agitation as this might lead to renewed martial law. These leaders have become a real hurdle in the struggle of the masses against the regime.

But the strike in Karachi has shown a way forward for the masses. The lifting of martial law has had a tremendous psychological effect on party activists.



Funeral of police victim



Aslam Baluch

They are rebuilding their confidence to struggle against the regime.

The mood is getting stronger day by day. MRD public meetings are like football matches in Europe.

White-collar workers are moving into struggle also. In a Lahore hospital, for example, a small incident led to a province-wide strike by nurses, during which the first union of nurses was formed.

With the strike spreading like fire, all the dismissed nurses had to be taken back. Other demands were also met. But three weeks later, two of the nurses' young leaders were suspended. That was when the regime showed its real face.

Students, doctors, engineers and other workers

have also been striking. But as yet the industrial working class has not come onto the political field. One reason for this is their expectations of the MRD and PPP leadership.

Benazir Bhutto has now come out openly in favour of US aid to the regime to help restore "democracy". Yet she is the most popular leader. Although the party is adopting all right-wing policies, she and the new central committee are using left-wing slogans.

The PPP leaders are addressing huge public meetings but offering no perspective.

Despite Benazir's 'non-violent', peaceful approach, her return will generate a lot of confidence among the masses. At the same time, disappointment in the policies of the leaders will inevitably spread, the more these leaders are put to the test.

In the massive struggles ahead, PPP activists will see more and more clearly the need for a fighting socialist lead, for policies to mobilise the working class to topple Zia and prepare the socialist transformation of society.

Divisions open in Italian CP

ON 9-13 April the Italian Communist Party (PCI) held a congress at Florence.

The PCI does not have the tradition of holding an annual congress. This one was called as a result of rank-and-file pressure.

Last summer a debate arose in party branches all over the country over the goal of the PCI: does the party still stand for the socialist transformation of society?

The congress only revealed the tip of the iceberg, and did not express what is really happening in the party. If anything, members "voted with their feet": in the build-up to the congress, only 15 per cent of members attended the regional conferences.

Yet on one issue a clear

division emerged between the leadership and the majority of branches. Against the "theses" (policy statement) of the leadership, nuclear weapons were rejected.

It is the first time in many years that the leadership has been defeated in a congress vote, and explodes the formal 'unity' which has characterised the party in the past.

There is now the possibility of open factions developing in the party. This marks an important development towards more democracy in the party, and more determined struggle by the working-class rank and file against the openly reformist policies of the leadership.

Appeal from Chilean dockers

Sindicato Sitramaport,
II Región, Llanguihue 3925,
Pob. Oriente,
Antofagasta.

Dear Comrades,

We have received with great joy your encouraging letter, thanks to which we realise that we are not alone in the battle against repression, which the Chilean people have had to endure for so long. It is also an extra reason for rejoicing to find out that we have brothers abroad who fight for international workers' solidarity aimed at transforming Chile into a socialist society.

We face an arduous task for the year ahead, which has been branded as the 'make or break' year. However, with determination and help from people such as you, we feel confident that we shall succeed. Chilean workers have been murdered, tortured, imprisoned and repressed. However, we shall not give an inch in our struggle to once again see a free and sovereign Chile. A Chile where all Chileans can live in peace, justice and democracy.

As well as these messages, we enclose a humble project which will go a long way in helping us achieve our objectives.

We fraternally salute our brothers from the Chile Socialist Defence Campaign.

Forward to victory in unity and solidarity.

Unidad y solidaridad para triunfar

(signed) Enrique Hidalgo Mira, president

Eric Zepeda Quililongo, Secretary.

THE ANTOFAGASTA dockers' project is to set up their own union headquarters. This is how they explain the importance of the project:

"We are in dire need to have our own trade union headquarters in order to be able to properly carry out our trade union responsibilities. Since our trade union is the only maritime trade union whose activities are officially recognised, the acquisition of headquarters must be seen as a priority. The fact that the Pinochet regime has modified law no. 18.032 makes the need for our own headquarters imperative, for this gives the right to the bosses to employ workers without a trade union card. In practice what this has meant is the abolition of all trade union rights

and as from 2 January 1986 Chile no longer has dockers officially recognised as such".

The Dockers' Union will need funds not only for the rent or purchase of headquarters, but also to buy basic equipment such as typewriters, desks, stationery and toilet facilities.

Support for Chilean trade unionists, such as this appeal from the dockworkers, is essential. We urge all activists in the British labour movement and particularly delegates to the BLOC conference on 19 April to urgently send donations to the CSDC address: PO Box 448, Emma Street, London E2.



MRD leaders consoling the family of Aslam Baluchi—but calling no mass action.

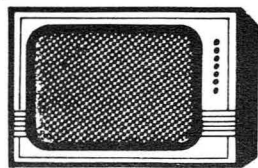
SOCIALIST PARTY OF CHILE

Invites you to celebrate 53 years of struggle alongside the people.

Pinochet out!

Democracy now!

Friday 18 April 7pm. Conway Hall,
Red Lion Sq., London WC1



Review

The Secret Diary of the Film Censors

Easter Monday.

The British Board of Film Censors was established in the early 1930's to supervise and control the film industry. At that time the cinema was becoming Britain's most popular entertainment.

The ruling class feared the potential of cinema, they understood that it could influence people enormously so they set out to curb and censor the film industry and put over their own propaganda.

They put the British Board of Censors in the reliable hands of an ex-army officer, Colonel Hana, and a Miss Short.

Colonel Hana set up rules known as Hana's 43 which covered everything from middle-class morality, religion, the monarchy, and officials of British colonialism.

Political

Alongside cut scenes of swearing, sex, drunkenness and other morality issues, their narrow minds went to work with the real task of political censorship:

For instance the film of Walter Greenwood's book *Love on the Dole* was banned. Unemployment was so politically sensitive for the ruling class, the film remained banned until 1940.

Another film was banned before it was made. *Tidal Waters* was about a strike by water workers in London.

Tidal Waters was never made. However, not all films on the subject of unemployment and unrest were banned. One film got through uncensored; a shipyard manager made an impassioned plea for the men to return to work. Of course they all agreed and trooped back.

This warmed Hana: "This was a film with good patriotic sentiments and high moral standards."

But the gems were yet to come. The censors banned any film showing Hitler's Nazi Germany in a bad light or attacking the Reich. Any film about foreign countries were referred to their respective embassies. That meant any films about Nazi Germany were sent to the German embassy!

Only when the British capitalists wanted working class support for a new imperialist war were anti-Nazi films shown.

Sergei Eisenstein, producer of *The Battleship Potemkin*, which was also banned, met the censors. He said: "I met a blind censor, he censored the silent films, I met a deaf censor he censored the sound films."

This sums up the nature of the censors; blinded by prejudice, deafened by class position and Mrs Whitehouse shows they haven't changed one bit.

By Tim White

Hackney South and Shoreditch LPYS

Tories reveal their housing priorities



Photo: Dave Sinclair

Tory Environment Minister Kenneth Baker refused more money to Liverpool City Council for them to improve the city's council houses. However he can still find the odd few million to repair a stately home for a few of the rich.

Dear Comrades

After the fire at Hampton Court on Easter Monday we had a statement by Environment Minister Kenneth Baker. He gave firm assurances that whatever money necessary would be found to repair this stately home.

This is the same man who said there was no more money for Liverpool City Council. I find this an incredible, but by no means unexpected, display of Tory housing priorities.

It is more important to rebuild one upper class stately home than to support those who are trying to provide ordinary working class families with the best council housing in the country.

Yours fraternally
Gary Cotton
Rutland and Melton
LPYS

Letters

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

Additives allowed

Dear Comrades,

My additives book informs me bleaching agent 924 potassium bromate, used in bread "can cause nausea, vomiting, severe abdominal pain, diarrhoea and even convulsions."

What a relief when Safeway stores wrote the following about additive 924: "This matter has been fully discussed. We would advise that 924 is widely used in the baking industry. It is a permitted additive" etc.

I always thought it was the customer that counted, it seems not. The only customer that counts is Mr and Mrs Shareholder.

Yours fraternally
Mike King
Southampton

Trained for the dole queue

Dear Comrades,

I attend a government training centre with a high percentage of applicants accepted for eight, twelve and twenty-six week courses. I know of only one person who actually found a job before he was due to finish there.

My wage is £38 with only 50p for travel expenses. I live 45 minutes away from the centre and rely on a £4.50 a week bus pass.

Young people on the Youth Training Scheme

spoke to me about how they earn a meagre £27.50 a week and could earn around £3 more on the dole.

The Tory government is determined young people will do something for nothing on YTS. The Labour leadership and the TUC have a duty to do more than just openly condemn the two year programme.

Yours fraternally
L Morton
Dundee Labour Party
Young Socialists



Photo: Militant

Youth Training Schemes offer little real hope of a job.

YTS—first introduced in 1572

Dear Comrades,

The Tory ideas about a compulsory two-year Youth Training Scheme are not as unprecedented as we thought!

In 1572 Elizabeth I made a statute that the unemployed should be found employment by the following means:

"Unlicensed beggars above 14 years of age are to be severely flogged and branded on the left ear unless someone will take them into service for two years".

The present government doesn't propose flogging or branding of young people but it is a sign that

things are reaching crisis proportions when our rulers are considering the reintroduction of feudal-style legislation 400 years later.

Yours fraternally
Max Neill
Morecambe

Barbarism of 'civilised' America

Dear Comrades,

On Monday 7 April I watched *Panorama*. It was about America's welfare state. In some of the states they make people work for their benefit. Oklahoma is one of the most reactionary.

A woman living there had three children aged two, one and eight weeks. She was told she had to work for her

benefit.

She had to get up at half past four and walk four miles across town pushing all three children in a pushchair to the day care clinic where she had to leave her children crying, while she went off to train for a week on how to find work.

It really touched me deeply as I have a 16 month old

daughter and couldn't bear the thought of leaving her in that situation.

If this is all that capitalism in the richest country has to offer, the sooner we get socialism the better.

Yours fraternally
Kim Horton
Stevenage Labour Party
Womens Section

Tartan but still blue

Dear Comrades,

Looking around the papers section of my local library I was amused to find a copy of that not so well known SNP paper *Scots Independent*.

The front page article made interesting reading. Tory defector to the SNP Iain Lawson was being interviewed by David Rollo.

After welcoming this Tory to the SNP, Rollo goes on to ask why Lawson joined the SNP. Lawson replied that after the closure of Gartcosh he believed that the Tory Party had become the nationalist party of the South.

Asked if his political philosophy had changed, Lawson basically said 'No'. Lawson showed his true-blue colours when saying he thought Malcolm Rifkind (new Secretary of State for Scotland) was fighting for Scotland.

Obviously any member or supporter of the SNP thinking it is a party willing to fight for the working class have been misled. The only party willing to fight for the working class in Scotland is the Labour Party.

Yours fraternally
Alec Gregg
Fife

Thanks

Dear Comrades,

Can I thank you for your support given to us during the nine month campaign to 'Keep mining in Maesteg'. We lost the pit in the end, but they knew we put a fight up! Keep up the fight for socialism. It will be ours in the end.

Yours fraternally
Ian Isaac
St Johns NUM

Unions too slow to defend workers' jobs

Dear Comrades,

Last November I was 'privileged' to find my first job. Many comrades will be familiar with the conditions: eight to five with 'voluntary' overtime.

I raised the question of a union (when out of ear-shot of the supervisor), and everyone I talked to agreed that they would join a union, but that they feared the sack if we joined together to form one.

I applied to the Transport

and General Workers Union for union membership anyway. I was promptly sacked, but I'm still waiting for a reply to my application.

The trade union leaders should get off their backsides and show the same determination for their class as the Tories have in bashing the unions.

Yours fraternally
Dominic Hill
Bristol West LPYS



Apartheid gone mad

THE FOLLOWING was reported in the *South African Weekly Mail*: "The Minister of Home Affairs, Stoffel Botha, disclosed in Parliament that last year more than 1,000 people were reclassified from one race group to another: 706 coloured people turned white; 19 whites became coloured; one Indian became white; three Chinese became white; 50 Indians became coloured... (etc. etc.)... no blacks became white and no whites became black."

Pretty feeble excuse

THE *STIRLING Observer* (2/4/86) carried an interview with Iain Lawson (see letter) about his defection from the Tory Party to the Scottish Nationalist Party. Amongst other fascinating aspects of his life, we learn that he was once chairman of the Scottish Young Conservatives. Asked why he became involved in the first place Lawson replied: "There was a lot of pretty girls in the Young Conservatives. But, of course I did eventually become involved in the politics." With commitment like that the SNP get what they deserve.

Contributors include Mark Heywood and Jim Newlands

Tories' unhealthy interests

FOLLOWING THE disastrous results of the 1982 NHS dispute, the unions organised in health have found themselves increasingly on the defensive against politically orchestrated campaigns to drive down wages and conditions.

Just as the Tories planned to take on the miners, they also planned to disrupt and disorientate trade unionism in the health service.

The main plank of their strategy has been the privatisation plan or to put it more precisely their competitive tendering process.

It's objective is to force low paid staff into accepting cuts in pay and job losses to prevent privateers from gaining control.

This has a two-fold effect—it saves money on the Revenue Budget and demoralises dedicated workers and activists. In some areas management have used competitive tendering to rid themselves of leading activists through enforced redundancy.

The second plank of the Tories' attack has been another management re-organisation

scheme, known as 'Griffiths'. This is the third such re-organisation since 1974.

Each shuffle has had a demoralising effect on the service and has been accompanied by a significant turnover of staff.

The ultimate aim of the Griffiths structure is to concentrate power in the hands of a ruling executive—the DHSS.

This is clearly demonstrated by a recent circular sent out by Victor Paige (£70,000 a year executive and top lackey at the DHSS) instructing all health authorities to alter the rules so that private companies win contracts.

There have been some recent examples where previously pro-privatisation health authority chairs have been removed from office for saying enough is enough. The next stage will be the complete abolition of health authorities.

If the Tories will use the judicial arm of the state to remove democratically elected councils like Liverpool and Lambeth then they will move even more cynically against non-elected bodies which show signs of resistance.

The scene will then be set for the introduction of their scheme for private management consultancy and the introduction of private medicine on a grand scale.

Wandsworth hospital goes on red alert

ST JAMES' Hospital, Wandsworth, is threatened with closure in 1988. Arthur Hautot (COHSE, St James', personal capacity) and June Hautot (Wandsworth Community Health Council) spoke to Robert John and Marie Walsh.

Arthur is a porter in the theatres and he told us how one morning (before the cold snap), while collecting a patient from Ward II, he noticed two women from medical records and asked what they were doing there.

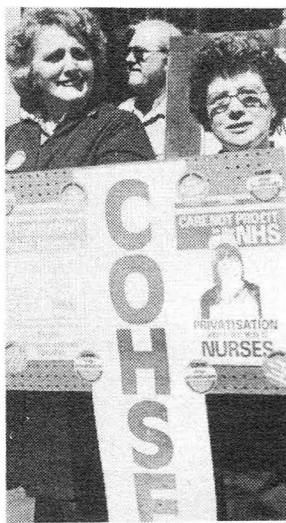
They said they were looking for beds—the hospital was on a red alert. If the patient on the trolley, about to go for an operation, had not had her pre-med she would have been sent home.

For a week the hospital remained on a yellow alert—"beds situation critical". The cold weather and icy conditions we have just had could have been disastrous in this situation.

Yet the red and yellow alert were denied by Hope Trenchard, chief nursing officer for Wandsworth Health Authority (WHA).

Since that incident, at least one other patient has been sent home after waiting two years for his operation and spending hours waiting in the hospital. Other patients have waited in the hospital up to 18 hours for a bed.

St James' is a hospital under pressure. In four theatres, they are 21 nurses

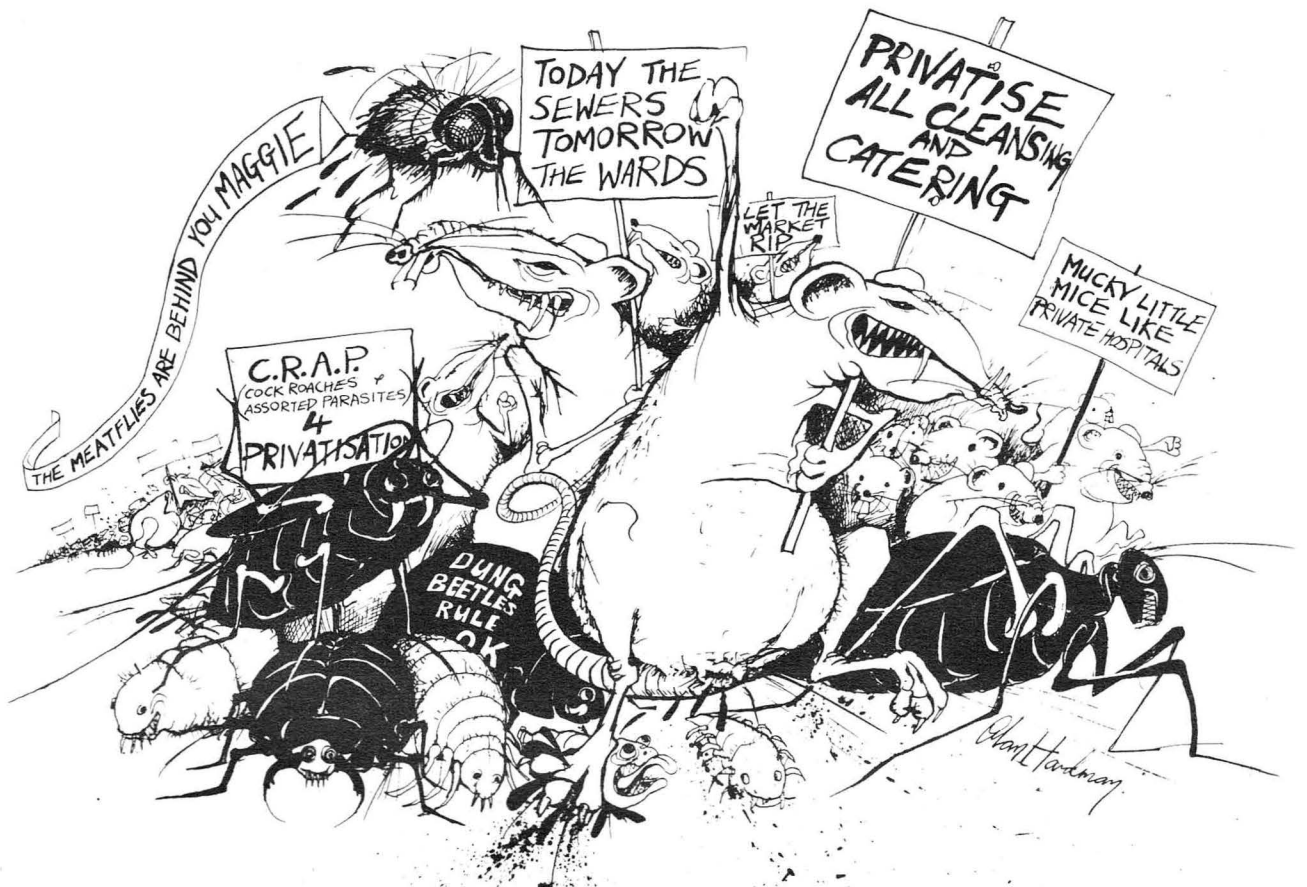


and four technicians down on complement. So, the situation of a full hospital with few or no spare beds is made even worse by the shortage of staff.

Nurses have been leaving St James because of the reorganisation and poor pay and of the NHS paying agency nurses to do the job. A trainee nurse will train at St James for three years and will then be offered a job for only six months.

Since 1980 nearly 700 beds have been lost in the WHA area. The Tories' claim that they are not cutting the NHS rings somewhat hollow in Wandsworth where resources have been cut by £20 per person in the last three years.

June pointed out that there are two issues involv-



ing the WHA proposals to St James' in 1988 and to transfer all its services to St Georges. One is that it means a further reduction in beds and services (not least the loss of the accident and emergency department)—but just as important to fight is the idea of having just one huge hospital for the whole area.

St James is going to be reduced from 470 beds to 420 beds in 1986/7 and in 1988 there will be a transfer of "all" services and 360 beds to St Georges'. A total loss of 110 beds. Even Dr



There's a lot of it about. National campaign

AGAINST THIS background what is the record of the leaders of the major unions whose members and jobs and conditions are affected?

Since the débâcle of 1982 the leaders have gone back to their offices and attempted to put their feet up. They have been totally unprepared for the attacks which have been unleashed.

What is worse they have begun to play a part in isolating and demoralising members when they have entered struggle.

It started with the valiant Barking women, continuing in a succession of isolations at Hammersmith, Sunderland, Newcastle RVI, York, Airdale culminating just recently in the betrayal of the brave comrades at Addenbrookes.

At no stage were any attempts made to link up the struggles. Broad Left supporters in COHSE and NUPE have consistently argued throughout this period for a nationally co-ordinated campaign of industrial action to unite all health workers in defence of their jobs.

The strikers at Addenbrookes were even accused of mismanaging strike funds and one

comic actually suggested that they were "on to a good thing".

The ultimate stroke played in the leadership's "struggle against struggle" was to play the "Trot Card" and accuse the Addenbrookes strikers of being a 'Trotskyist Front'. This is taking witch-hunts to the height of obscenity.

Thus the fight against privatisation is directly linked to the attacks on socialists in the Labour Party. If we fail to stem the tide of abuse that is at present being levelled at us, then the right wing will gain strength and move more confidently to isolate the left and support for local struggles.

It is for this reason that we must mobilise maximum support for the conference on 19 April organised by the Broad Left Organising Committee and Liverpool District Labour Party. That can also help launch a mass campaign against privatisation using the focus of BLOC's anti-privatisation conference in Birmingham on 12 July.

By Kevin Mullins
(Ex-member COHSE NEC)

Election opportunity—defeat Wandsworth's privatising council

McKearon, vice chair of the WHA publicly admitted there would be a reduction in services. Jobs will also go; the WHA themselves estimate 900.

All the hospitals in the district are being merged in St Georges'. There will be one massive hospital for a large population over a wide area. Moreover, St Georges' is right on the edge of the catchment area. The problems of getting there from, say, Battersea, are immense for someone who is sick or elderly. The idea of all these beds (1,275) in one hospital

doesn't make any sense. What happens if they have an outbreak of, say, legionnaires disease? or a fire? Then what do the people do?

Even the DHSS' own guidelines are for a maximum of 600 beds in one hospital. Already a large part of St Georges' is like a giant rabbit warren. The site has been developed piecemeal. You can walk miles before you find the part you want.

St James on the other hand has very good transport links, close to a BR Southern Region station,

underground and bus service.

A major weapon will be the support of workers in the other hospitals, especially at St Georges, whose situation is just as much as St James workers.

We must learn from the closure of St Benedicts, and the South London Hospital. Fighters in both those campaigns said they wished they had started fighting earlier.

As Arthur pointed out, 1988 might seem a long way away, but the building work at St George's is already ahead of schedule.

Industrial Reports

Hi-jacked on the high seas by bosses

THE CREW of the Doric ferry have been in dispute with Townsend Thoreson for five weeks over manning levels for tying up larger ships. They are 100ft longer than the others, including the Doric and overlap the berth at Felixstowe.

The NUS are demanding an extra man to be taken from the pool of labour for safety reasons and without costing the company anything extra. In spite of this the company continue to refuse the union's demand and can only talk about redundancies and no strike agreements!

It was against this background the bizarre events took place aboard the Doric ferry on Thursday 10 April. At 3.30am. Kevin Mason and Lenny Hennessy were on watch, protecting the cargo of 40 containers, when they saw a number of men approaching the ship.

Injured

They felt something was about to happen so they alerted the rest of the crew. Lenny and Kevin saw the men going through the door to cast off the ship and ran off to stop them.

These men were grabbed by the Chief Officer and pulled through the door before he kicked it shut on Lenny's arm, in fact he tried

By Teresa MacKay

to batten it down with Lenny's hand still in it!

They all went to the main deck and found the door lashed with rope and could not get out. They then tried the between deck and found all doors locked. The 21 man crew tried every emergency exit only to find they were sealed with padlocks or metal chains used for the cargo.

The ship then left the port without navigation lights, sailing over the spot where the ferry, the *European Gateway*, had sunk in 1982. In fact Kevin's father had drowned in that incident and several of the crew members, including Lenny, had been on the ferry when it sank and were very frightened that they were locked up without navigation lights on in a very busy shipping lane and would have no chance of escape if there was a similar accident.

Approximately 20 minutes out to sea the doors were opened. They agreed to have an hour's cooling down

period before David Woodland went to the Captain to find out what was happening and where they were going.

It was then that they found out that their hi-jackers were 11 Dutch sailors aided and abetted by the ship's officers, and they were bound for Europoort (Rotterdam). The Captain and the other officers were shocked to find 21 seamen aboard—they had sailed out of port not knowing how many people were on the ship.

They later found out that all lines of communication had been cut and, in the panic to get away, the officers had forgotten to lash the cargo so when they hit bad weather they found themselves in trouble.

Dangerous

The Dutch seamen were told to lash the cargo but this still did not stop one of the containers from turning over when they reached Europoort, though it could have been much more serious.

Brian Wickerson said he could not believe what was happening. He'd been a seaman for 40 years, served in the Falklands war, like some of the other crew



members, and they had been treated like heroes on their return. On this occasion they felt they were treated like criminals.

Throughout the trip the men said nothing abusive nor were violent to their hi-jackers. In fact the Captain congratulated them on their behaviour. The general feeling was that they were not getting involved with these thugs.

The whole affair is unprecedented. As one sailor said, "How can foreign sailors sail a British ship with a British flag?"

When the ship docked at Europoort the men tried to leave the ship only to be escorted back by the Dutch police and warned that they would be arrested as illegal immigrants if they tried again as they were neither passengers nor crew!

The NUS have been in touch with their solicitors

and will be taking Townsend Thoreson to Court, not only over the hijacking, but also because the ship was unfit to sail and every safety regulation was broken.

A similar incident took place on 1 April on another Townsend Thoreson ship which was in Europoort, and had been since the dispute had started. On that occasion the ship's officers took the ship over and sailed to the dry dock at Schiede where it was due for conversion. There were six men on board that ship and had been for two and a half to five weeks.

Sackings

Townsend Thoreson want 86 redundancies and when Kevin Mason phoned home he was told his redundancy notice was waiting for him. The NUS are refusing to discuss the issue of redun-

dancies until all manning levels are achieved. Management also want a 'no strike' agreement which is totally unacceptable as far as all men are concerned. They recognise the right to withdraw their labour is their only weapon against the bosses.

All talks have broken down so far and if this continues the NUS members in Felixstowe will be calling for a Full Chairman's meeting of all ports at Maritime House early next week. They have already promised full support if it is needed.

This may be the only language Townsend Thoreson understands. They must not be allowed to get away with such piracy or all seamen could find themselves in a similar position. The bosses have shown, yet again, that they will break every rule in the book if it suits them.

CPSA

TRUE TO form, CPSA's right-wing dominated National Executive Committee have voted to defer any decision on the government's pay offer to civil servants pending the outcome of further talks with the Tories.

In doing so, they are flouting the decision reached at the National Pay Conference in January and fostering illusions that a satisfactory pay settlement can be achieved through negotiations alone.

As the NEC had been called to discuss pay, *Militant* supporters John Macreadie and Doreen Purvis argued that the resolution they had submitted should be taken despite Alistair Graham's attempt to adjourn the meeting.

It called on the NEC to start immediate preparations for a pay campaign as instructed by the pay conference.

The President refused to take the motion for discussion but the right-wing NEC won by 15 votes to six for the motion to stay on the agenda until next week's meeting.

The refusal of Alistair Graham and the right-wing NEC to launch a campaign highlights yet again the dire need for a fighting Broad Left leadership for CPSA.

By Chris Baugh
(CPSA NEC candidate)

Ex-lefts and rights attack Broad Left

THE PRESS has opened its election campaign in the Civil and Public Services Association.

Articles on Monday in the *Guardian*, *The Times*, *Daily Express*, *Sun*, *Daily Mirror* through to the *Morning Star* attacked Broad Left candidates for the national executive and general secretary candidate John Macreadie.

The new outbursts have been prompted by an attack on *Militant* by Geoff Lewtas, general secretary candidate of the so-called 'Broad Left 1984' Communist Party-backed split-off from the CPSA Broad Left.



John Macreadie.

The Broad Left has in the past won the presidency and taken a majority on the executive. The media are reflecting fears that the Broad Left has regained the ground it lost when the BL '84 split the vote and let the right regain control of the

union.

Against the background of the witch-hunt in the Labour Party, Lewtas' vitriolic statements can only be interpreted as support for the right-wing's attempts to purge *Militant* supporters from the Labour Party and then positions in the trade unions.

But this demonstration of the BL'84's inability to counter the political ideas and authority of the Broad Left will only expose them even further to CPSA members.

Defeated in a series of local elections over the past months they are resorting to a smear campaign completely in line with the methods of the right wing. Even the *Guardian* commented: "His attacks on *Militant* were reminiscent of those made by Mr Graham".

In particular Lewtas' comments to the effect that: "The Trotskyist policy of insisting that the introduction of new technology must not lead to job losses was unattainable" will not win much support amongst the thousands of civil servants whose jobs, wages and conditions are under threat.

By Ian Ilett



Picket line during the strike.

Clydesdale steel strike over

AT A mass meeting last week the 2,000 workers at British Steel Corporation's Scottish Tubes Division voted to end their strike.

The vote was 507 to 393 to accept the recommendation of the 28-man Joint Strike Committee.

The settlement details include: protection of existing pay and conditions; seven per cent increase on all rates of pay; the reinstatement of 50 sacked men. This represents, in the words of Sam Harty, the TGWU convenor at Imperial, "A substantial climbdown on the behalf of the BSC management".

Many of the men at the meeting were wary of the recommendation given to go back to work when little hard evidence was available to show that they had achieved very many of their demands.

Pat Donnelly the convenor at Clydesdale assured the men that they had "secured everything we set out to achieve".

Doubts

However, many at the meeting were not convinced either by the assurances or by other statements he made such as: "Our works are in a hell of a state, the oil price drop has put our plant in a very serious economic position, we must go back to

work".

The four contentious issues of the 65-Clause "survival plan" which provoked the strike, namely wage cuts, increased workloads, rights to negotiate, promotion lines and changes in work practices have all been resolved to the satisfaction of the union. Rumours abound, however, of BSC plans to try and transfer production from Clydesdale to Corby and the possibility of a further round of new redundancies in August was also raised at the meeting.

By Chic Boyle
(Motherwell South
Labour Party Young
Socialists)

Industrial Reports

EETPU's vindictive attack on member

IN A move that exceeds everything the EETPU right wing leadership have done at Wapping, they have had the wages of one of their Scottish members, Jim Greer 'arrested' by court officials.

Already angered over the right wing's role in Wapping, EETPU members are disgusted at this latest episode.

It arises from an election to the EETPU Executive Council where Greer was challenging the right wing with a programme of democratising the union. His opponent implied in his election address that Greer was involved in stealing union funds.

Greer went to court and lost on a technicality, but the judge refused to dismiss the claim that it was defamation of character, which leaves it open for further action.

Costs being awarded against him and no legal aid available, Greer made arrangements with his solicitor to pay the sum by instalments. The solicitors for the right wing asked for and received the first payment in March.

However, before the next

payment could be made, Sheriff's officers arrived at Greer's workplace and issued the order for seizure of his wages. Greer's solicitor, on being contacted, said he had received a phone call from the union's solicitors advising that they had been instructed to issue the warrant that day.

To add insult to injury, Greer has to pay the costs for the warrant! It's also ironic but fortunate that he is in employment otherwise his household furniture could have been seized.

The need to end the right wing leadership's role within the EETPU and the trade union movement is clear. The EETPU Broad Left provides the alternative policies that can replace the right wing's bankruptcy. Come to the BLOC conference and build the Broad Left. And kick out the right wing before they destroy the EETPU.

Messages of support and donations to: EETPU Campaign, c/o Edinburgh Trades Council, 14 Picardy Place Edinburgh.



Black Murdoch's colour magazines

AT LONG last SOGAT have issued an official instruction to black Murdoch's two colour magazines. This about-turn by the national SOGAT leadership must be welcomed.

By a Bemrose SOGAT member

Because the call is long overdue, however, it has raised questions in the minds of many print workers. At Bemrose we were given a clear instruction at the beginning of the dispute to continue working.

This undermined those who saw the necessity for solidarity action and has made it considerably more difficult to win a 'yes' vote in the secret ballot now being conducted at Watford and Liverpool.

A positive result is essential for Bemrose workers, which is owned by Murdoch. If he get his way at Wapping then we will be next in line.

We will then have to choose either to become tame, docile employees or see the factory closed.

This change in tactic needs to be examined and then explained. From the beginning the union leadership's strategy for victory, if they had one, was to rely on financial pressure and the boycott to bring Murdoch to the negotiating table.

At Bemrose, out of the blue, the chapel were then informed that they had to black the *News of the World* colour magazine *Sunday*.

A chapel meeting was organised, John Mitchell, the National Organiser and some strikers addressed the meeting. It puzzled many that no preparations had been made and no propaganda material distributed.

The result of the ballot

could have an important effect on the strike, especially on the morale of strikers. Therefore, a massive and well co-ordinated campaign of propaganda should precede any such ballot.

The light-minded approach which has been adopted by the national leadership further complicates the campaign for a yes vote.

The lobby of Bemrose on Monday by the strikers played a positive role. But it is also a matter of grave concern why only SOGAT is balloting its members. It appears divisive to the rank and file that there was not a common campaign and simultaneous ballot by the unions.

New strategy

A new strategy is now urgently needed. This is being recognised by the activists on the picket line.

The starting point must be to unite all print workers in this fight. The decision must be now to shut down Fleet Street. If this course is not set quickly there will be little of Fleet Street left to fight for.

In the Bemrose context it is important to understand that a few weeks prior to this present instruction, the wholesale workers who had stood firm on the blacking

BLOC meeting: Print dispute 23 April 6.30pm, St Brides Institute, Brides Lane, London EC4. Speaker: Tony Mulhearn (NGA Bemrose, personal capacity), and other Bemrose speakers.

were told to work normally.

Rather than building the maximum unity, it appears that our leadership are fragmenting the struggle.

There are indications that some of the leaders are thinking of purging the so-called contempt over the instruction to stop handling Murdoch's titles, to enable the BDC to take place.

It is absolutely essential that the conference is held. But the labour movement in any large city could provide the funds to hire a hall and the delegates could be accommodated with local activists. If the decision to accept the role of the Tory judges is agreed it would be a terrible blow to the strikers.

All these factors are not helping those fighting for the 'yes' vote. Whatever lies behind this turn should have been clearly explained.

The ballot results will be known when the SOGAT executive again meets.

A majority vote would indicate that the dispute should be further escalated.

A rejection should not be used as an excuse to wind-down the dispute.

On the contrary, so late in the dispute the only viable course would be to call on all print workers to join in the struggle.

The union campaigned hard for the 'yes' vote for political funds. Industrially this is more important because the outcome will decide the very future nature and power of the union in the industry.

If the joint efforts of Bemrose workers and

strikers who are lobbying for a yes vote are defeated, a picket line will be established. The task then will be to get it honoured.

However, with the NGA nationally refusing to ballot their members there will be much confusion which could lead to a messy situation.

Leadership

A positive and firm approach is necessary, with Brenda Dean and other leading officials standing on the picket line. It has to be said that some members are complaining that the haphazard approach by the national leadership could be camouflage for their shortcomings.

Those of us who stand side by side with our sisters and brothers in this battle will try and strengthen the picket lines. But part of any settlement must be the guarantee that those victimised at Watford and Liverpool will be reinstated.

In our fight for reinstatement our one weapon must be to place picket lines up and down Fleet Street.

This strike is at a crucial stage. Murdoch's London managing director, Matthews, has stated that they are ready to pay extra compensation: "Once we have reached a solution then when job vacancies occur we will have no black book and we will be prepared to re-employ individuals who have worked for us before".

The pressure must be intensified to ensure that Murdoch is defeated and Wapping is a genuine trade union organised factory.



Printworkers march for jobs Glasgow/Newcastle to Wapping

Saturday 3 May, London 7.30pm, Embankment, for a march to Wapping and a massive national rally opposite 'Fortress Wapping' at 9pm.



Lobby SOGAT Executive Friday 18 April 8.30am onwards at Congress House Great Russell Street.



90 women cleaners sacked by Murdoch. 35 from the *Sun*, 55 from *The Times*. On the march to Wapping last Saturday. Joyce Pipe told *Militant*: "We are the lowest paid... but we need our jobs back."

Southend coach trip for printers' hard night out

LONDON PRINTERS have been organising to stop Murdoch's scab papers even after they get out of Wapping. But of necessity it has to be organised quietly. GRAHAM DOYLE, a member of the Labour Party Young Socialists accompanied a group of such pickets last week. His account of the night gives an indication of the difficulties they encounter—but also of their determination to win.

ABOUT SIXTY of us left London by coach, quite late, for an unannounced destination. One print worker explained their thinking: "We are going to hit the distribution where they least expect us. We could be anywhere at any time."

This night it turned out to be John Menzies' wholesale depot at Southend. A vote was taken to hit the depot at 2am as we arrived.

We blocked off the road into the depot and two of the pickets went down to find out whether the men working there were prepared not to handle Murdoch's papers.

While they were there an argument broke out between one of the pickets, who had to defend himself against a scab who ended up on the worst end of it. It was 3am as they returned to the picket and suddenly dozens of police started arriving.

They began pushing the pickets to the other side of the road and brought out the scab, who it was claimed had been assaulted. He looked quite well to me as he came up to pick out his alleged assailant.

To cap it all he picked out the wrong person. Then about fifteen police rushed into the pickets and scuffles broke out as police used truncheons, boots and fists against anybody who tried to stop the innocent picket being arrested.

The police nevertheless dragged a man across the road, beating him with truncheons as he tried to get away.

The struggle went on for about fifteen minutes. Two more pickets were arrested (later charged with assault!), four were hurt and the first man arrested was hospitalised. There were seven police casualties.

Eventually the pickets were forced back on to the pavement and six allowed on the road. It was now 4am. Nothing had come in or out of the depot. But the police wanted their pound of flesh.

At ten past four they boarded our coach, parked about 500 yards away, and forcibly dragged out a man who had been fast asleep on the back seat.

He was thrown into the back of their van, taken to the station and charged with serious assault on the evidence of the scab who started the trouble in the first place. Yet this sleeping printer had been feeling unwell and had not even been down to the picket line.

Police provocation was fairly continuous now but two vans which arrived agreed to turn back and nothing else got in or out.

It was 6am by the time we left Southend after checking that the arrested men had a solicitor and could get home when released later on. It was a tired but satisfied group which returned to London that morning knowing that Murdoch's papers did not get out in Southend.

Militant

Defeat Murdoch

See Page 15

Council elections — get Tories out

Labour must win

LABOUR CAN trounce the Tories and Alliance on 8 May, when 5,300 council seats are up for election.

In 1982, when these seats were last contested, Thatcher was waging war in the Falklands and reaping the political benefits. Now there is a hatred of the Tories among the millions of workers who have suffered from redundancies, rate-capping and cuts in the rate support grant, imposed by the government

and enthusiastically implemented by Tory and Alliance councillors.

Unfortunately, too, most Labour councillors have been prepared to carry out cuts. Consequently the anti-Tory mood has not yet been converted into solid support for Labour.

In Liverpool, however, the city council has proved that a fighting, determined group of councillors, with the support of the labour movement mobilised around them, can begin to reverse the tide of

Tory attacks. There, the canvassers on the doorsteps can point to jobs, new homes, nurseries and sports centres, as evidence that voting Labour can bring about genuine advances for working-class people.

Their reward has been the most violent campaign of abuse and vilification, from the Tories, Liberals, SDP, the press, Labour's right wing, trade union leaders—and former left-wing councillors who promised to carry out reforms, but caved in to govern-

ment pressure.

Liverpool councillors are now being punished for the crime of defending their city's jobs and services—surcharged and disqualified from office.

Launching Labour's campaign, shadow environment minister John Cunningham said that Liverpool and Lambeth councils were "untypical" and "they are not and never will be the norm for us". Yet they alone stood by party policy to resist Tory cuts.

Party workers on the doorstep are finding a fund of support, despite the attacks. If the achievements of the city council are explained to every voter, and a commitment given to continue the same policies, then Labour can secure yet another victory and set an example for all Labour councils to follow. When all Labour councillors match their words with deeds as in Liverpool, support for Labour will scale new heights, and Thatcher's days will be numbered.

Reagan condemned

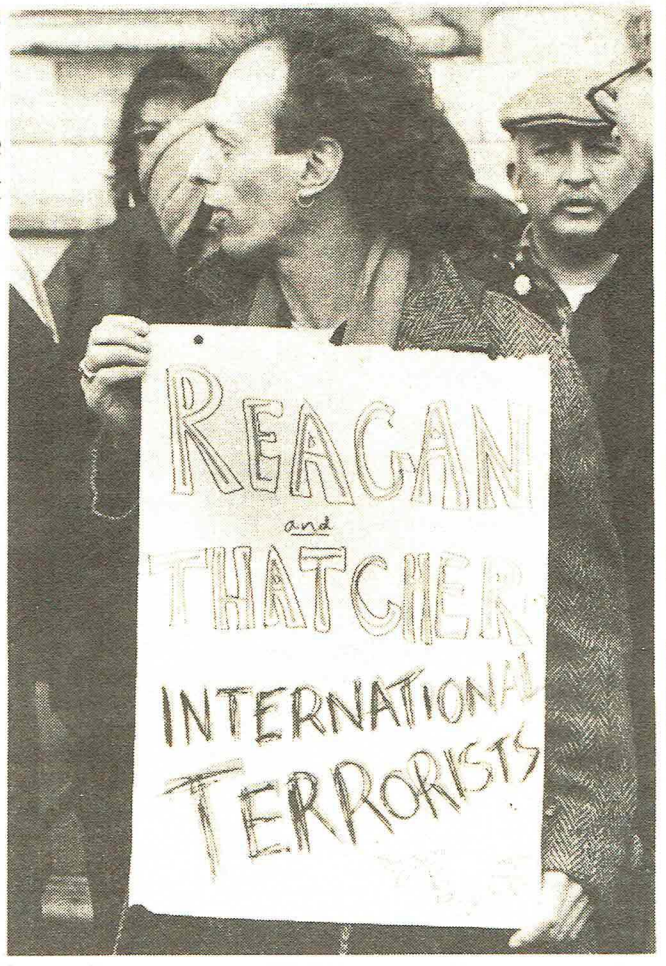
HOURS after the US raids in Libya, millions of workers around the world were organising protests. Almost every European capital saw demonstrations: 20,000 in Athens, 5,000 in West Berlin, 4,000 in Hamburg, 2,000 in London, thousands more in Madrid, Barcelona, Rome, Nicosia and elsewhere. Many more protest strikes and demonstrations are planned.

In Britain an early poll showed two thirds opposed to the use of British bases for the air-raids. The demonstration of 2,000 in London brought Whitehall to a standstill and led to 160 arrests.

But it is in the Third World that the biggest demonstrations have been seen. Tens of thousands have been demonstrating in Khartoum, Sudan. Anti-imperialist movements triggered off by Reagan's raid could threaten many of the rotten dictatorships propped-up by US sponsorship.

Right: A section of the demonstration in London.

Photo: Dave Sinclair



Blunkett answered by 1,000-strong rally

A THOUSAND people packed into Monday's Militant rally in Sheffield to hear editor Peter Taaffe and Derek Hatton of Liverpool City Council.

Sheffield City Council leader David Blunkett was obviously shocked by the turnout, achieved despite posters being ripped down as part of the council's 'clean-up' campaign. The overwhelming majority came from the city itself. They were not Militant sup-

porters 'bussed in' from all over as Blunkett claimed.

Derek Hatton told the meeting that Blunkett turned in favour of the witch-hunt because his council was not prepared to stand up to the Tories.

The meeting raised £1,500, including £5 from an old bloke who said that it included his fare home. Four local meetings are being arranged as follow-ups.

Liverpool

Auditor's political attack

JUST BEFORE the May elections, Liverpool City Council has been presented with a further report by the District Auditor. Hiding behind talk of supposed inefficiency and potential economies, he has launched a direct political attack on the City Council and its elected representatives without consulting them at any time.

Not surprisingly, much of the Liberal election propaganda has been based on this report. The District Auditor is clearly an instrument of Tory government policy, acting as a police agent to oversee local government. No councillor in Britain can feel safe when implementing policies that they were

democratically elected upon.

The City Council intends to answer all of the charges made by the District Auditor and expose the "entry of the Audit Commission and the District Audit service directly and blatantly into the field of party politics".

The council is demanding: "The immediate withdrawal of the present District Auditor and the establishment of a public inquiry to deal with the conduct of the Audit Commission and in particular the District Auditor for the north west."

By Dave Cotterill

Council's 'marvellous job'

IN THE first of eight mass canvasses in Liverpool, 50 people turned out to canvass the Liberal marginal ward of Kensington.

Despite the smears in the press locally, support for the council is still rock solid.

Among old people particularly there was a very anti-Thatcher feeling, following the miserly rise of 40p in the last social security uprating. But the attacks by Neil Kinnock and Labour's leadership on Liverpool have also sowed some confusion.

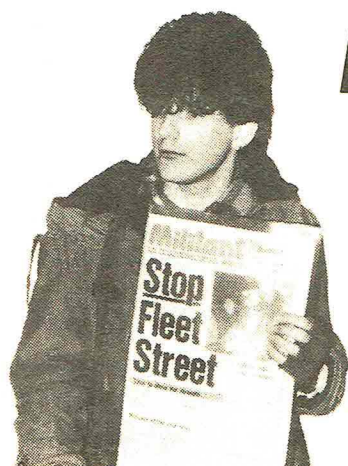
One old man told us: "I am not voting Labour if they are getting rid of Derek Hatton and Tony Mulhearn". After some discussion

we convinced him the candidate was not a witch-hunter and supported the city council.

One canvasser could not persuade an old man to tell him who he was voting for but eventually he said: "I never tell anyone, but I think the council's doing a marvellous job and Derek Hatton is great".

Militant and its supporters have borne the brunt of political attacks in the local press but this will not stop people supporting Labour. As one unemployed man said: "It's the militants that have won all the working class have at the moment."

By Mary Jennings



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