

# Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

25p

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Inside...

Libya

Centre pages



# Youth under attack

**IN TORY Britain millions of young people face a desperate future.**

## Jobless up

★ 1½ million are condemned to a life of boredom and misery. 40 per cent of the total jobless are under the age of 25. In inner cities youth unemployment is as high as 90 per cent.

## Wages down

★ 90 per cent of all young workers are living on poverty wages.  
★ 500,000 young workers' wages will be cut from poverty to starvation levels with the attack on the wages councils in July.  
★ Millions of school leavers will be 'conscripted' on to the extended two-year YTS, on slave-labour wages.

★ Unemployed under 25 year olds will lose £5.50 under the Fowler review.  
★ Young people forced into bed and breakfast accommodation will be made to move on every few weeks, creating a sub-class of young 'nomads'.

## Benefits cut

★ Every student will lose their right to claim all benefits—denying education for all.

Faced with this, young people are looking for a radical answer. The Labour Party Young Socialists campaigning on socialist policies aims to provide it. They are out to win the youth vote for Labour, but also to ensure that the next Labour government implements a programme of socialist change and gives some hope to those young people in despair.

By John Ellen  
(National Chairman,  
Labour Party Young Socialists)

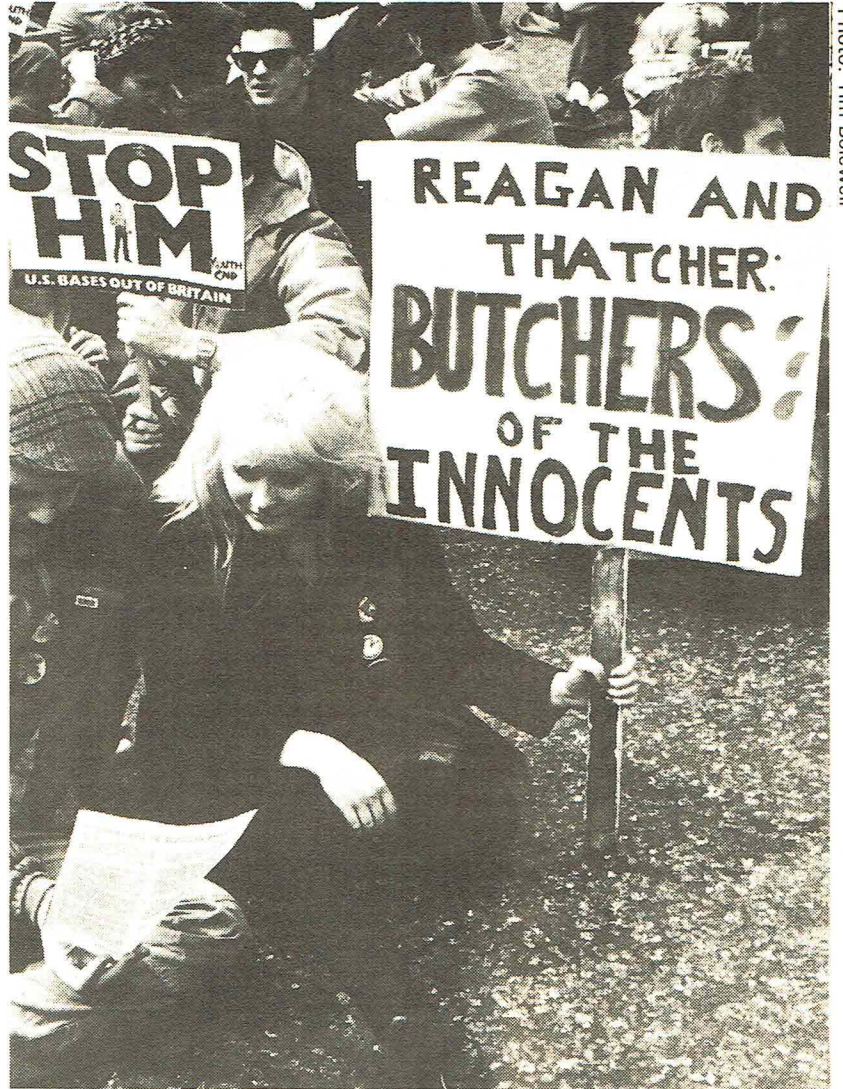


Photo: Tim Bolewell

Some of the thousands of young people protesting against Reagan's bombing of Libya. The only young speaker in Hyde Park on Saturday was John Ellen, national chairman of the LPYS, which also demonstrated at the US embassy on Wednesday.

**A DIRECT political onslaught is being launched from Labour's headquarters against the Labour Party Young Socialists, with the threat to the position of Andy Bevan, the party's Youth Officer.**

Using the apparently innocent idea of a "more co-ordinated" approach to youth, Joyce Gould, the director of organisation, is proposing the merger of his job with that of student organiser, held by Sally Morgan, into one youth development officer. Only one of them will be appointed; the other will be pushed into a completely different department.

It is certain that it is Andy Bevan who would be moved out. Andy Bevan has been youth organiser for nine years, and before that was chairman of the LPYS. He is sympathetic to the policies of the Young Socialists and has played an invaluable part in building up the organisation. He has become widely known amongst workers throughout the labour and trade union movement as an ambassador for Labour's youth.

When the LPYS marched to join the picket outside the sequestered Welsh miners' offices in the midst of the strike, Andy Bevan was greeted with acclaim when he spoke to the rally.

Sally Morgan has never hidden her hostility to the policies of the Young Socialists. Her experience of working amongst young people is virtually

restricted to the National Organisation of Labour Students. Her one year in office has seen a seven per cent fall in NOLS membership. The leadership of NOLS have used blatant manoeuvres to ensure that the Labour Co-ordinating Committee keeps control, including blocking opposition delegates to their annual conference.

## Defend Young Socialists

This threat to Andy Bevan's job is the most severe attack on the LPYS for 20 years. Since that time the LPYS has successfully fought for the right to elect its own national committee, rather than have it appointed for them, the right to decide its own programme and then campaign on it.

The appointment of Andy Bevan as Youth Officer was another victory for the LPYS, as an active outgoing organisation of working-class youth.

The Labour leaders and officials want a tame youth movement under their control. They are terrified of a mass youth movement supporting Marxist ideas. Whatever bureaucratic measures they take, these ideas will continue to attract young people.

But this attack must be answered by Young Socialist branches by writing to Joyce Gould at Labour Party headquarters, organising petitions, meetings, etc. Defend Andy Bevan's job, and double the size of the LPYS.

By Frances Curran  
(LPYS rep on Labour's NEC)

Up to  
30p

FROM NEXT week (issue 796) the price of *Militant* will go up to 30p. This is the first increase for two years, in which our costs have continued to rise. Newsprint has gone up 25 per cent and ink by 20 per cent.

We know all our sellers and readers will understand the necessity, and will be spurred to increase sales and boost the fighting fund to keep up the campaign towards a more frequent *Militant*.

**DAY! MAYDAY! MAYDAY! MAY**

Only one week to go! Rush in special donations and let us celebrate 1 May with a record quarter. Help us buy more equipment, increase our staff

and expand our paper to fight the Tories and the bosses. Send fivers, tenners, more if you can afford it. Every pound counts.



# Protestant bigots seek all-out clash

**IN NORTHERN Ireland since Easter there has been extensive rioting and nightly attacks on policemen's homes. Less publicised but even more sinister have been the widespread sectarian incidents. (See report inset)**

Catholic schools, churches and shops have been vandalised and burned. Catholic homes in mixed or predominantly Protestant areas have been petrol-bombed. Some have had shots through their windows.

Recently also there have been a few incidents of attacks by Catholics on Protestants, including the attempted burning of one Protestant church

As the Unionist leaders have failed to deliver on the destruction of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, the initiative has switched to the paramilitaries and especially the Ulster Clubs. There is ample

evidence that these groups are preparing for all-out confrontation. Ulster Club chairman Alan Wright makes no attempt to hide his bigotry: "Before it (the Agreement) was signed it was them against us and 'them' were the IRA. Now it is every Roman Catholic."

Within the Unionist parties, especially the DUP, the mood is also hardening. Last weekend's DUP conference heard calls for a Libyan-style bombing of Dublin. Delegates arguing for full support for the RUC were booed; there was a call for an all-out strike and a third mass demonstration at the headquarters of the Anglo-Irish Secretariat.

Paisley and Molyneux would clearly like to re-open negotiations with Thatcher but they would be unable to carry their supporters with them unless the Anglo-Irish agreement were suspended.

## Attack by Loyalist thugs

"WHILE READING my *Militant* newspaper on the train from Belfast a few weeks ago, I was attacked by three loyalists. They claimed to know who and what I was and where I was coming from (a Young Socialist meeting). One of the loyalists held my hands behind my back with his knee wedged against my spine. Another man proceeded to break a number of beer bottles across one of my knees. A third man had the job of preventing anybody from helping me; not that anybody did.

"I received continuous kicks and punches for around five minutes

before the men got off at Lisburn. I was dumped in a mess of beer, bottles, and glass. Before they left I was warned that if I ever got the train again they would do the job properly. All this went on in front of two conductors who did nothing. I had to be carried home by a neighbour. When the knee was X-rayed the next day, after the glass was taken out, it was discovered that severe damage had been done to my kneecap. There was also a large chip in the bone below it. I was in crutches for almost three weeks."

Understandably in Catholic areas a mood of concern is now beginning to develop, capitalised on by Sinn Fein who have held

defence meetings in a number of areas.

The situation is now so polarised that, if the Anglo-Irish Agree-

ment is maintained, civil war is possible. And even if the agreement were to be scrapped, sectarianism would remain at a dangerously high level.

Despite this, the leadership of the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (NICTU) do not intend to raise this issue at the NICTU conference next weekend.

From the trade union rank and file however, there is a growing demand for the leadership to cut across sectarianism. The campaign for a socialist alternative to the Anglo-Irish Agreement, launched by the Labour and Trade Union Group, has obtained the support of 15 trade union organisations. The latest are a branch of the Fire Brigades Union in Derry and the important Belfast Trades Council. They are demanding that the ban on political discussions be lifted and an emergency conference of NICTU to discuss the present situation.

By a Belfast correspondent

# S African strike leaders appeal to British workers

**THE LABOUR Party Young Socialists, with Irish Labour Youth, have launched a campaign to build support for the 1,000 members of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union (MAWU) on strike at the British-owned BTR Sarmcol plant at Howick in South Africa.**

South African workers have stepped up action in support of the BTR strikers. Wildcat strikes have taken place at 11 Dunlop plants... 1,500 workers at the Durban plant came out after a worker was dismissed for "intimidation".

These workers, members of MAWU and the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union, are demanding reinstatement of all victimised workers.

At a press conference in London MAWU Transvaal secretary, Moses Mayekiso, outlined the background to the year-long strike over union recognition which has involved the sacking of the entire workforce. He called for the isolation of the multinational and South African bosses who "enjoy the fruits of apartheid" in the form of cheap labour and super-profits.

### Direct links

When asked if these comments were "off the record" because he could face imprisonment on his return home for advocating boycotts of SA trade, Bro-



Press conference to publicise strike at British owned BTR in South Africa hosted by Dave Nellist MP (second from left). Metal workers' union leader Moses Mayekiso (third from left) and SA transport workers' union leader Jeremiah Zulu (right) called for international workers' links. Also present to launch the solidarity campaign were Fred Martin (left), TGWU branch secretary at BTR's Dunlop plant in Leicester; Linda Douglas of LPYS national committee, and April Ashley of the Socialist Links with SA Youth campaign.

**ON TUESDAY in the House of Commons Dave Nellist MP expressed his support for the BTR strikers. In an adjournment debate, he drew attention to the poverty wages being paid and called for international solidarity action to achieve a victory.**

Mayekiso replied: "It can't be off the record because our view must be heard." He has been detained four times and tortured for his leadership of workers' and community organisations.

Moses made it clear that he did not want the aid given by British workers to the

BTR strike to be a one-way process. During his visit to Britain he had sought to build direct links with union and youth organisations which would be the basis for return visits in the future.

The need for direct links was echoed by Jeremiah Zulu, president of the South

African Transport and General Workers Union. Also at the press conference TGWU branch secretary, Fred Martin, representing workers at Dunlop's Leicester plant (now owned by BTR) said: "If we have a multinational employer, then we need a multinational union".

Youth and trade union activists in Britain should put all efforts into building the LPYS solidarity campaign by visiting BTR factories, organising collections and

messages of support demanding that the TUC, or constituent unions, call a conference of BTR/Dunlop shop stewards to organise solidarity action and launch a combine committee to fight this anti-union company's attacks on its workforce in Britain and internationally.

Messages of support to: MAWU, PO Box 9451, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa.

By Phil Masters

## Sheffield witch-hunt averted

**IN THE aftermath of last week's magnificent Militant rally in Sheffield, party activists there have won a major victory against an attempted witch-hunt.**

Four *Militant* supporters, Pat Reet, Margaret Cockerill, Paul Sutor and Chris Hogg, had been suspended from Labour Party activity in Chapelgreen ward, Hillsborough, for distributing leaflets for the rally, described as "anti-Labour literature."

The local election agent, Bill Lee, wrote to the four that he had the power to suspend them pending an investigation and that he had taken advice at District, Regional and NEC level. NEC member David Blunkett is a member of Hillsborough Labour Party.

When Margaret Cockerill asked what suspension actually meant, she was told she could not canvass for Labour, give out leaflets or sell *Militant* even to her regular buyers!

The four refused to accept the suspension, as it was both unconstitutional and undemocratic. Pat Reet addressed the 1,000 strong *Militant* rally and afterwards a queue of people met her at the side of the platform to give their support.

The ward chairman Brian Headingly complained that he had to have his phone disconnected because it was constantly ringing with callers from Labour Parties all over Sheffield protesting at the expulsions.

Local party members in Chapelgreen have been outraged at the high-handed actions of the election agent which could only damage Labour's campaign in the local elections.

The angry reaction of the rank and file has forced him to withdraw the suspensions. Now they have been lifted the Hillsborough Labour Party must turn the whole party outwards against the real enemy—the Tories and the Alliance. A united campaigning party concentrating its fire on the Liberals in Chapelgreen can ensure a Labour victory on 8 May.

## Neil gets Militant

**MILITANT'S CAMPAIGN** against the witch-hunt came to Neil Kinnock's doorstep as well over 600 people packed into Newbridge Comprehensive School hall in the Labour leader's Islywn constituency

A rag-bag of local right-wingers 'picketted' the meeting, but the hundreds of ordinary working-class people from the local villages and estates swept past into the meeting to hear Derek Hatton and Peter Taaffe. This was despite only eight days notice of the meeting being given.

The right-wing leadership of Islywn Labour Party had predicted no-one would turn up locally and people would be bussed in from Cardiff and Swansea.

The press also gloated that the

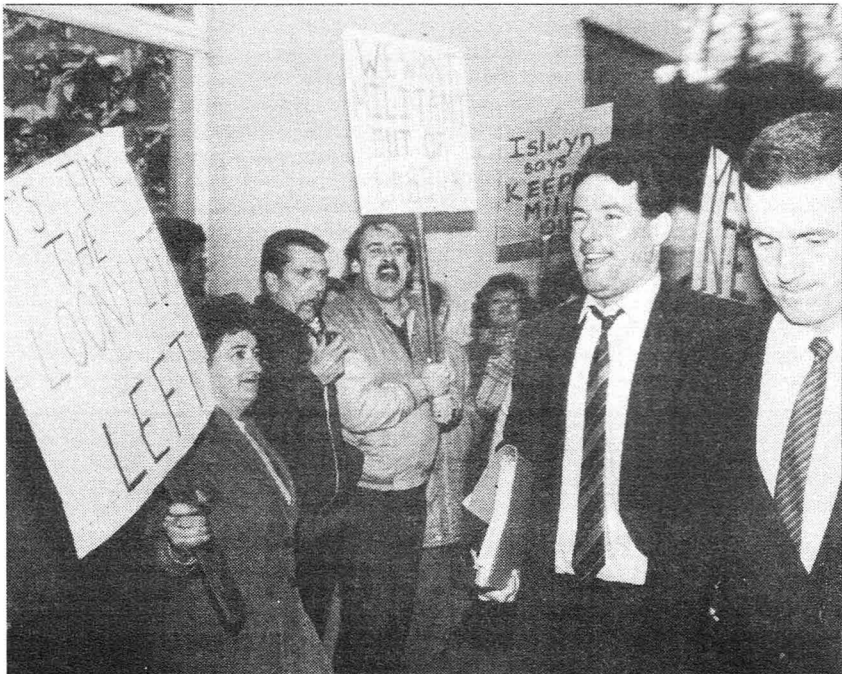
meeting would be a failure and would be made up of 'Militant members'. But in the event it was bigger than the Chartists' rally organised every year by the constituency party to which people travel from all over South Wales.

One member of Islywn CLP congratulated *Militant* on the meeting and said it was the biggest ever held in Newbridge.

Peter Taaffe denied that the meeting had been organised to embarrass Neil Kinnock as the right-wing had claimed. He said: "The meeting is an appeal to the leadership to drop the witch-hunt and to turn away from the madness of expulsions prior to the general election".

Over £650 was raised for the fighting fund.

Photo: Mark Pinder.



One 'picket line' Derek Hatton will cross.



# NEC changes rules but right in disarray

LAST FRIDAY'S special meeting of the Labour Party NEC approved drastic alterations in the expulsion procedure still facing 12 leading members of Liverpool's suspended District Labour Party.

First, the right wing majority, as predicted, changed the quorum, reducing it to half the members eligible to attend plus one.

The NEC was left without a quorum at its last meeting on 26 March. Seven left-wingers walked out because the disciplinary procedure—despite the previous day's High Court judgement in favour of the 12—still did not comply with the rules of natural justice.

The changes in the expulsion procedures now conceded by the right wing majority completely vindicate the seven left-wingers' action. The NEC has changed both the charges and the nature of the evidence they are likely to rely on against the 12 when they go ahead with the proceedings, probably towards the end of next month.

## Two charges

The 12 will now face just two charges: That they are "members of the *Militant* Tendency", which if upheld inevitably means expulsion. And, in the case of District Labour Party (DLP) officers that they were responsible for bringing about a "concentration of power" into the DLP executive at the expense of DLP delegates and the Labour group, which if upheld could mean anything between a reprimand and expulsion.

At the same time, the 12 have been told that the NEC will no longer be relying on the majority report of their inquiry team as evidence. At last they accept the objection, upheld by the High Court, that the report is merely a compilation of allegations based on undisclosed evidence from anonymous informants.

## Political views

This means that the evidence they are likely to be relying on consists of advertisements and leaflets for meetings, and press reports of meetings and rallies—'evidence' which reveals the fact that the 12 are being threatened with expulsions for public support for political views and not for any involvement in an 'un-constitutional organisation' which can be proved by the NEC.

This new procedure marks a big departure from the totally undemocratic form previously proposed. It exposes the hollowness of David Blunkett's vehement denunciations of the seven left-wingers for refusing to participate in the procedure proposed on 26 March.

The NEC has also conceded that the 12 may be able to call witnesses on some points, which they would not accept previously.

By 13 votes to 10 the special NEC also decided to call Pat Wall, selected as Parliamentary candidate by Bradford North, to the NEC for an interview before deciding whether or not to endorse his candidacy.

Three of those who voted for the expulsion procedure—David Blunkett, Michael Meacher, and Tom Sawyer—voted against interviewing Pat Wall, favouring his endorsement.

## Switched

However, Eddie Haigh, from the T&G, who had previously voted for Pat Wall's endorsement, abstained on this occasion. He said: "We have to come off the fence once and for all and deal firmly with this unacceptable face of British politics".



Pat Wall.

This postponement of endorsement will provoke widespread opposition, especially in Yorkshire, because of the overwhelming support of Bradford North constituency for Pat Wall as candidate and because the NEC's decision challenges the democratic process of reselection.

## Media

Labour Parties and trade unions will undoubtedly make their views known to the NEC.

This special NEC was presented to the media as a big reinforcement of Neil Kinnock's campaign against *Militant*. In reality, the right and former lefts like David Blunkett and Tom Sawyer were at sixes and sevens in their belated attempt to overcome the chronic disarray created by the collapse of their previous expulsion attempts.

In Liverpool, anger at the right's campaign against the leadership of the district party remains undiminished. Three urgent tasks face them: Winning a renewed Labour majority on the city council on 8 May; sustaining the campaign against the surcharge and disqualification of 47 Labour councillors who have implemented Labour policy on the council; and the continuation of a mass campaign against the latest round of cuts which the Tories are determined to impose on cities like Liverpool.

By a Militant reporter

# People's flag is dullest grey

THE LABOUR Party's Freedom and Fairness campaign is a further watering down of policy commitments.

While the reforms that Labour promises to act on are designed to offend as few people as possible, all the major issues facing working class people have been pushed aside.

The emphasis of the campaign is on "better education, safer streets and more effective crime prevention, improved housing", and other reforms that would not be out of place in a Liberal Party manifesto.

On housing, which could be crucial at the next election, there was much talk about home improvement grants and people's right to buy their own homes, but no specific pledge to build more council houses for those most in need.

"Where possible", says the statement "run-down or unsafe council estates will be replaced by houses with gardens". The Labour city council in Liverpool are doing just that, and yet have been attacked by the leadership for maintaining their

housebuilding programme.

Labour's ranks will be disturbed by the lack of serious policy proposals in this campaign, which symbolically has chosen grey as the campaign colour.

By Ken Smith

**LABOUR**  
PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

TERRY FIELDS MP commented on Labour's new campaign on LBC radio: "The peoples flag is white and grey. The Party turned its coat today. The deepest Red and Martyred dead, Replaced by a logo, computer-bred!"

# Battling for Bermondsey's future on the doorstep

LABOUR ACTIVISTS in Bermondsey are confident that Marxists John Bryan and Bob Law will win in Bricklayers ward in the local elections.

By Shareen Blackall

One full canvass of the ward has already been done which shows a swing towards Labour. 300 Labour posters are up in supporters' windows.

Two women from next door to the committee rooms called in to offer their help and ask for posters. After a short discussion they both agreed to join the party.

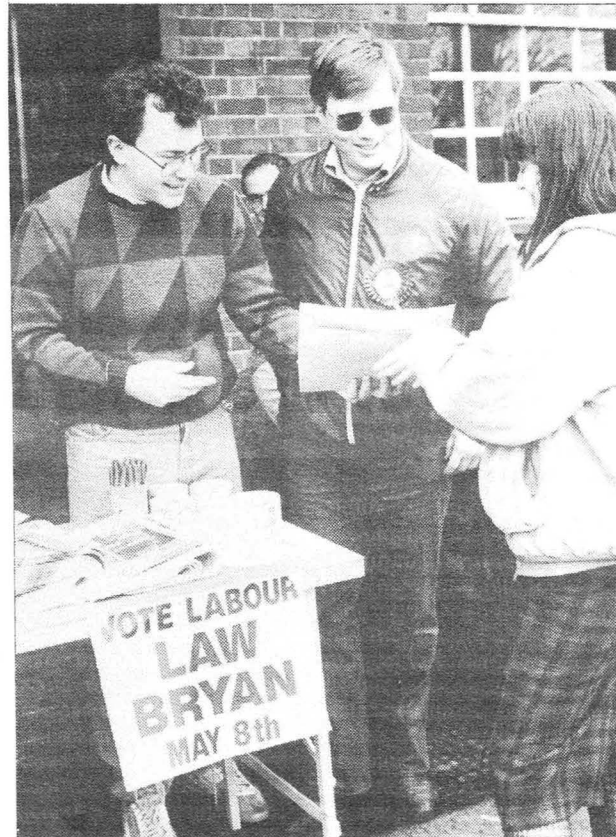
Local shops have been visited and a stall put up outside the shops at the weekend. One shop keeper came out and bought a copy of *Militant*. She said she would put the paper in the shop and if it sold she would order more copies.

Neckinger council depot workers have put up Labour posters and the FBU are sending in a team of canvassers.

Housing is the main issue, in particular the high rent arrears which Southwark council has accumulated and which is resented locally. Now arrears are dropping by £100,000 a month.

Housing repairs is also a big issue. John Bryan, councillor for the last four years has personally dealt with over 300 cases mostly to do with housing.

LPYS members have been amongst the most active in



Bermondsey Labour Party members and young socialists campaigning in local elections for candidates Bob Law (above with dark glasses) and John Bryan deputy leader of Southwark council.

the campaign and 15 people now want to join the young socialists. Another 35 want to join the main party.

Urgent help is still needed for canvassing.

Meet Sundays: 10.30 am at Spa Road Housing Office, Grange Road, Bermondsey.

Meet weekdays, at the same place at 6.30pm. Phone (01) 232 2666 for details.

●John Bryan has now been endorsed by Labour's executive as the party's parliamentary candidate in Bermondsey.

## Pontypridd ● Huddersfield ● Peterborough

# Stop the purge

RIGHT-WINGERS in Pontypridd have had to put off moves against nine *Militant* supporters but only until they get new guidelines from the national executive committee.

The Rhydyfelin branch had voted by 21 to 18 to call on the constituency party to investigate and where necessary take appropriate action against nine members, aged between 18 and 25. Members of the branch

had made allegations against the nine in a letter which was circulated to the members.

By David Jones (One of the 'Rhydyfelin Nine')

200 PEOPLE in Huddersfield have signed a petition against Labour Party NEC's decision to discipline Liverpool members. The petition was organised by members of the LPYS when they heard of Kinnock's planned visit.

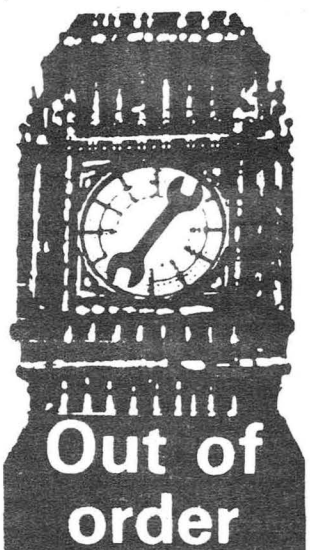
Labour Party members took part in a lobby of the meeting where Kinnock was speaking. They were prevented from physically presenting the petition by David Robertson, the regional organiser, Kevin

Barron MP and several others. The LPYS is now approaching labour movement bodies in Huddersfield to protest to the regional executive committee.

By Ian Broome (Holme Valley LPYS)

IN PETERBOROUGH, at a stormy party meeting in, ironically, Unity Hall, a resolution was passed by three votes to expel members who refuse to disassociate themselves from *Militant* "and such other events as selling papers, readers' meetings and other *Militant* organised events."

Three days later, TGWU Branch 10/742B voted unanimously to oppose



Out of order

SUPPORTERS OF Tom Clarke's Disabled Persons Bill have been celebrating Thatcher's climb-down. The government had intended to introduce amendments which would have emasculated the spirit and intention of the Bill, which seeks to provide proper care for the disabled.

It had been anticipated that the government would drag out the 'payroll' vote with a three line whip on the Tories to wreck the bill.

However, such was the support from MPs of all parties, every national disablement organisation and most local authorities, except the Tory controlled Association of County Councils, that a tactical withdrawal was forced upon the government.

Though the bill received its third reading and stands every chance of becoming law, the movement must be alerted to ensure that finance is provided by central government so that the Act can be totally implemented. Already we have a Chronically Sick and Disabled Act which many local authorities totally ignore.

It is feared that once again the government will pay lip-service to obligations to those least able to look after themselves and their families, whilst cynically failing to provide adequate resources. They are already stretched to breaking point in social services and totally unable to meet the needs of the community.

The government's defeat, although perhaps only temporary, shows that the invincible Iron Lady can be defeated, not only on this but on other attacks on working people.

By Terry Fields MP

witch-hunts and call for Labour to fight the Tories and not the socialists. All members present signed the petition and money was donated.

Paper sales have increased and a public meeting called. These attacks will not stop us from campaigning for Labour in the local elections and we are confident that once we explain the ideas of Marxism on the estates and at union and party branches, at the next general management committee meeting the resolution will be overturned.

By Kevin Zignani (East Ward Labour Party and TGWU 10/742B, personal capacity).



# BLOC unites in struggle

Reports by Jeremy Birch and Ian Ilett  
Photos: Dave Sinclair

## Building the left

THE 1986 Broad Left Organising Committee conference called in conjunction with Liverpool District Labour Party was a congress of workers in struggle.

Liverpool MP Terry Fields summed up the day: "As the cynics swim in their regurgitated new realism they will say this conference is irrelevant. If they had come and listened to the representatives of struggling workers speaking here, they would have seen the reality of life in Britain today."

Sacked printers, workers from the long-running Addenbrookes and Silentnight disputes, strikers fighting low pay at Downland Bedding in Liverpool. Lambeth and Liverpool councillors with their proud record of struggle, were all present.

They are a living confirmation that millions of workers, especially the lowest paid and those inexperienced in struggle, do not subscribe to the union leaders' defeatist philosophy of 'New Realism'.

Many more workers would willingly move into action if they had leaders confident enough in their class to use the strength of the movement to organise a campaign for action to defend their members.

The BLOC statement agreed by conference denounced: "the utterly false idea that the Tories cannot be beaten on the industrial plane, and that industrial struggles harm the prospect of a Labour victory."

"This conference totally rejects the idea that the trade union movement can in any way suspend the fight against privatisation, mass redundancies, cuts in living standards or attacks on trade union rights. The industrial and political struggles must go hand in hand."

But struggle on the political plane and the overwhelming desire of ordinary workers to elect a Labour government is being undermined by attacks on the left and disunity within the party.

BLOC was also a conference of workers discussing how to fight the witch-hunt in the Labour and trade union movement, which this time is emanating from the union tops.

From the floor, Francis Curran, LPYS representative on Labour's NEC explained: "expulsions are being led on the NEC by the trade union section. Building the broad left is the best way to stop the witch-hunt." They want to ditch any policies which will upset the bosses and their media.

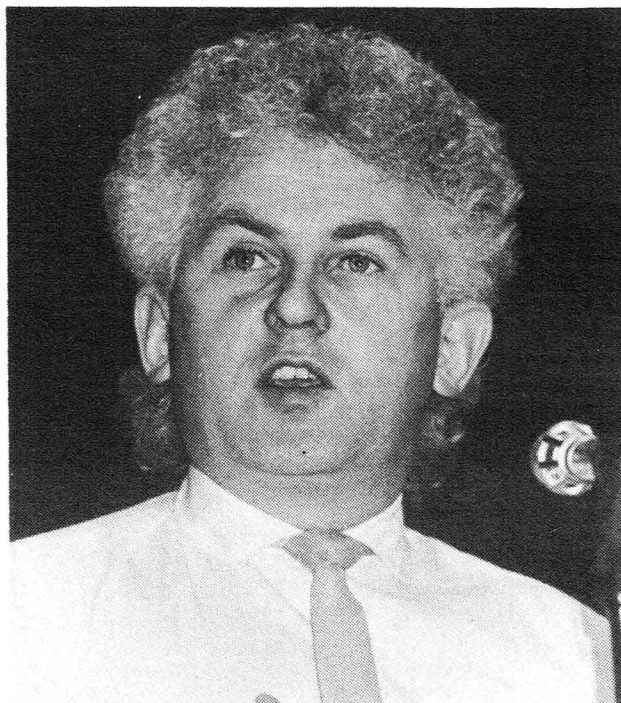
It is already being suggested that not all of the anti-union laws should be repealed. And for those already penalised by Tory law—NUM, SOGAT and Liverpool councillors—Kinnock has renounced retrospective legislation.

The very day after BLOC met, even left union leader Ron Todd accepted that under a Labour government on pay there will have "to be a form of discipline exercised by us." With Roy Hattersley urging some new control on wages, the pressure to fall in line in the interests of Labour unity is strong. But there cannot be unity and a witch-hunt at the same time.

The message from BLOC was that real unity is needed, behind socialist policies which can inspire active trade unionists who in turn can convince their workmates and neighbours to get out and vote Labour.

Delegates at the conference understood that building BLOC will be just as vital under a Labour government—to prevent our leaders bending to the enormous pressures the ruling class will exert. The success of this conference should give every activist confidence in the future of our fight to democratise the labour movement and arm it with socialist policies.

1,800 Labour and trade union delegates packed into the BLOC conference last Saturday in Sheffield City Hall to map out a strategy to defeat the witch-hunt and build the left. Class solidarity and internationalism were highlighted in the standing ovation for South African TGWU President Jeremiah Zulu, who appealed for direct links and the reception for striking hospital cleaner Sylvia Burton for her passionate condemnation of privatisation.



## CPSA left candidate

IT WAS fitting that the first platform speaker should be John Macreadie, Broad Left candidate for the general secretary of CPSA. "Workers owe a great debt to the CPSA Broad Left", he told the conference, "for being successful in forcing out Alistair Graham from the trade union movement. Graham has given up the fight and gone to join the bosses".

"The policy of the CPSA national conference is the policy of the Broad Left, that's how successful we have been".

Macreadie rebutted those who raise the idea of "impossibilism" about this programme—a programme

of a decent living wage and for the defence of every job. "These demands can be realised providing we have a union leadership prepared to fight for them".

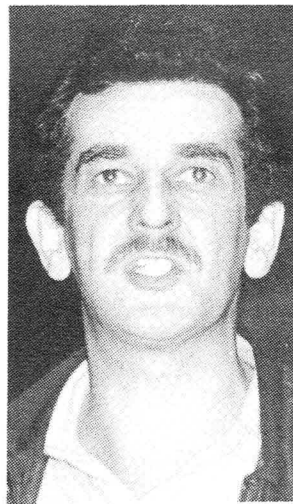
"New technology", he stressed, "should not be accepted for a few quid. Jobs must be defended".

To enthusiastic applause he gave a commitment not to accept the full £26,000 salary paid to Graham. "That money should go to help the struggles of our members".

"I give a pledge to this conference if elected I will be accountable to the CPSA members and conference, and also to the Broad Left".

Balloting for CPSA general secretary starts now.

## Officials 'reorganise' GMBATU



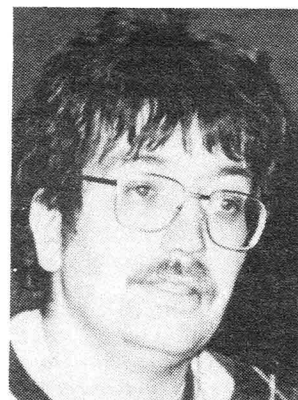
IAN LOWES, chair of Liverpool Joint Shop Stewards Committee explained that instead of the national leadership launching a campaign to defend the workforce, they are using the defeat of Liverpool's fight for extra money and the divisions which have blown up as a result, to witch-hunt leading activists.

One official had even said that the whole 9,000 Liverpool membership should be expelled if necessary. But Lowes issued a warning: "We have no intention of leaving the GMB. We will go on fighting. And we will be there long after John Edmonds and many of his regional officials."

## NUPE's new turn

NUPE BROAD Left secretary, Steve McKenzie, spoke from the platform on the importance of halting the shift to the right in NUPE and the prominent role its leaders are playing in the witch-hunt, which is now spilling over into the union.

Because the leadership have failed to organise a national response to the Tories' attacks there is a groundswell of criticism amongst



NUPE members, said Steve McKenzie, the leadership's response has been to attack the left activists who offer an alternative strategy.

## Rosyth's strategy

ROSYTH DOCKYARD EETPU convenor Jock Penman described the failure of the parliamentary strategy adopted on the advice of union officials and MPs in Rosyth's fight against privatisation.

One actually suggested writing to the 'Queen Mother'. "Maybe not such a bad idea now that the T&G have recruited her," he joked, "though it's rumoured she's only slightly to the left of Jack Dromey" (TGWU national officer who strongly opposed the Broad Left in Rosyth).



The bureaucrats stand for old style unionism with all its divisions, whereas we fight for workers' unity—that's why they fear us, he said.

## Women's low pay campaign

THE NORTH West Labour women's committee are organising a campaign and demonstration against low pay, Margaret Creear, a member of Labour's national women's committee told conference.

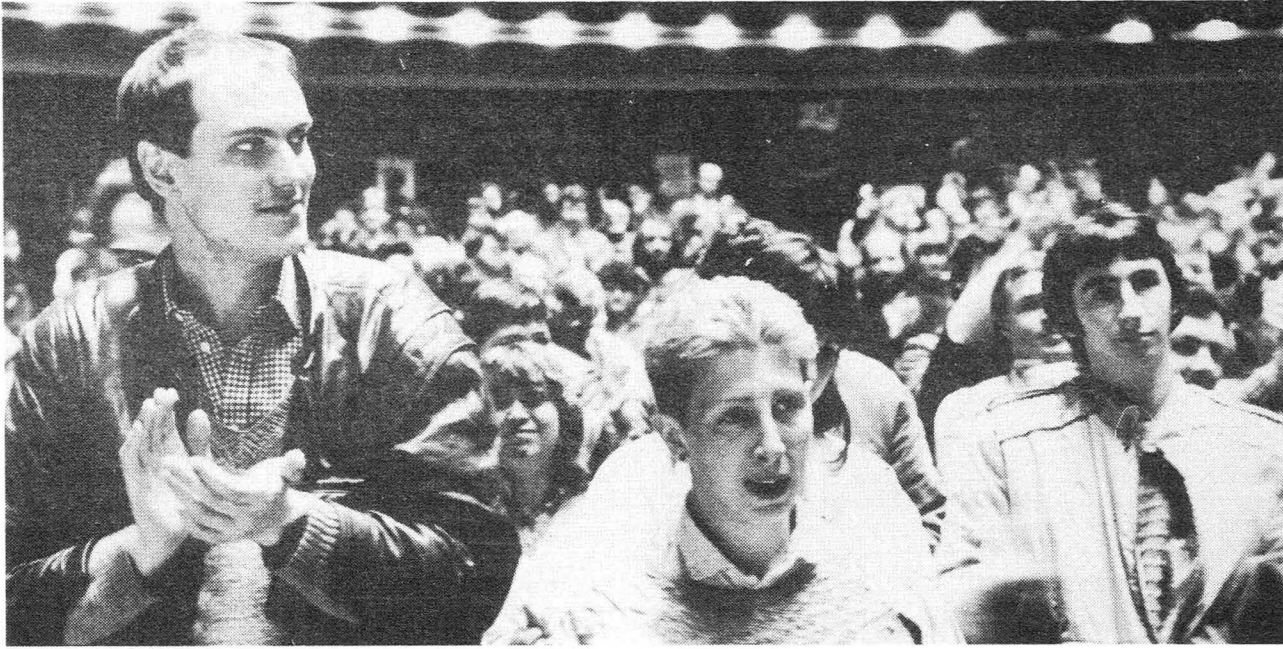
A spate of small sweat shop strikes in the North West show that low paid women are prepared to fight back, and they deserved support now, she told conference. "Poverty is a day to day issue. You can't come back to children whose formative early years have been deformed by



poverty and say: 'It's all right now—we've got a Labour government.'



# workers



## Liverpool says halt this attack on ideas

LIVERPOOL councillors like Derek Hatton and Tony Mulhearn have been punished by the Tory courts for protecting local people against cuts, and shamefully hauled before Labour's NEC inquiry 'kangaroo court'.

Addressing the conference, Derek Hatton recounted the view of one of their legal advisors as they left the High Court.

"It was the most political decision he'd seen in his

time. And secondly he thought the attitude and actions of Kinnock and the NEC had a 'catastrophic' effect on the decision on the High Court.

"We are in this position because we carried out the policies the labour and trade union movement gave us" he said. And that is why they are taking their case to appeal.

But even now while the Labour leadership are offering reluctant support for the

appeal, they are moving for expulsions.

The NEC inquiry under the chairmanship of NUR official Charles Turnock was a farce, said Derek: "I have been to many inquiries where the chairman could not understand the answer. But never where they could not understand the questions".

When it became apparent that Turnock did not understand what he was asking, the inquirers deliberately asked him to explain what he

meant. "After that Larry Whitty asked all the questions".

As for NUPE Deputy General Secretary Tom Sawyer, Hatton told conference: "he went to his first Labour Party conference two years ago, got himself elected to the NEC, and is now effecting the expulsion of people who have been in the party far longer".

"These expulsions have nothing to do with individuals, they are an attack on their socialist policies."

PAT WALL, selected as parliamentary candidate for Bradford North, has been refused endorsement by the Labour National Executive who intend to interview him about his political stance. "I'd have thought that after thirty six years in the Party that would have been clear" Wall told the conference.

The NEC is breaking the rules, he said. The only constitutional grounds for not endorsing a candidate is procedural irregularity, yet the selection was run by the regional organiser on behalf of the NEC. This is a clear case of political victimisation.

Whilst the right wing use smear stories against the left, like the accusations against the GMB in Liverpool, in Bradford fifteen GMB members met to cast 4,000 votes in the general secretary election—and it took a struggle by Broad Left activists to get the members informed of branch meetings.

## Lambeth leader denounces Tory 'justice'

TED KNIGHT, just removed by the courts from his position as Leader of Lambeth council, ridiculed the judges who had declared Lambeth's actions illegal.

"They know all about life in the inner cities—they drive through it to work every day...They said they knew Lambeth was deprived—they'd read about it."

Referring to the 300 other councillors now under legal threat he said they might now appreciate that if they'd stood firm nobody would be at risk. And it should also serve as a reminder to Neil Kinnock that it was not just a little isolated difficulty in Liverpool and Lambeth: "I've been expelled before" he said, "We will not go away."



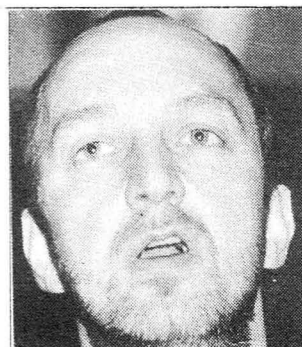
## 'Hammond's law'

SWANSEA TRADES Council delegate Roy Davis told how after eight years as an EETPU delegate to Swansea Labour Party his general secretary, Eric Hammond, out of the blue had tried to remove him.

His branch were not prepared to accept Hammond's witch-hunting and ignored Davis' 'removal'. But the right wing who control Swansea Labour Association welcomed Hammond's intervention to help rid them of a left wing opponent. But the fight continues, Davis said, and he attacked talk by some on the left of a split off from the EETPU.



## Railworker expelled



RAIL UNION activist Geoff Bright has recently been expelled from Sheffield Attercliffe Labour Party. It

was right, he said, to hold a joint BLOC/Liverpool council conference because the pressure for the witch-hunt is coming primarily from the right wing in the trade unions—"and many lefts are taking a far from principled position."

He demanded that the NUR leadership come out with a clear opposition to the witch-hunt, especially when assistant general secretary Charlie Turnock has put himself at the head of the witch-hunters on Labour's National Executive.

## Broad Left Organising Committee Fight Privatisation Conference

National Delegate Conference against privatisation  
Saturday, 12th July 1986  
Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham, 11.00am

All bona fide trade union organisations may send delegates (fee per delegate £3).

Send for credentials or application forms to:

Broad Left Organising Committee,  
P.O. Box 464,  
London E5 8PT

## Printers

SUN PRINTER John Brown, NGA Father of Chapel, addressed conference on behalf of striking Fleet Street printers. He nailed the lie that they had refused to accept new technology. "We have many new technology agreements — but negotiated agreements."

Murdoch's offer to Kinnock and Co. is a gimmick which should be refused, he said. "We want a Labour paper but not at the price of 6,000 jobs."

He appealed to SOGAT, though sympathising with



their problems, not to go to court to 'purge their contempt' because it would badly damage the workers' morale.

## Silentnight

SILENTNIGHT workers Gerry Cumiskey, Trevor King and Janice Duxbury spoke to *Militant* at the conference.

"I wouldn't exchange my seat in that conference with a scab earning his hundreds of pounds working for Tom Clarke, whose making millions", commented Trevor. "Last July we took our decision to lose our jobs or to lose our self respect and dignity".

For these strikers, coming to BLOC was a chance to see again many workers they have met on their trips around the country raising money and support. They have seen first hand how workers with experience of struggle can help each other.

"The miners made us aware of what we could claim and how to organise", recalled Gerry. "They've given us lots of support. They know what it's about".

Workers from Silentnight have visited Addenbrookes to show solidarity with others in battle. They have been on the picket line at Wapping, returning the support that Fleet Street printworkers had given to them.

These courageous Silentnight strikers are optimistic but want the maximum support for the blacking campaign, and the maximum turnout for the 18 May rally. "We know we are right", Tom confirmed.

## Addenbrookes

ADDENBROOKE'S STRIKE leader Sylvia Burton made the most powerful and moving speech of conference. She concentrated her attack on the human consequences of privatisation. When she and fellow workers in her Cambridge hospital were prevented from doing their jobs properly by privatisation, management were not just getting rid of domestics and cleaners: "We are barrier nurses preventing spread of infection." The spate of germ explosions in hospitals were a direct result of the cuts she told conference: "That's why you are going to die instead of live, inside your hospitals." She powerfully indicted Thatcher and the Tories with responsibility for such crimes and exhorted workers everywhere to stand and fight like the miners.

## Downland

BRENDA BUCKLAND on strike at Downland Bedding Company, Liverpool, told conference that women workers there only earned £5 more than they would get on social security.

The union put in for a £20 increase in January, but management is sticking to its £6 offer. So on 17 March the strike began.

At the firm's Kirkby plant the basic is £93, but at the Blackstock Street works they are on just £81.25. Men at the factory working nights receive £93 for a fifty hour week.

25 are now out, with 12 scabs going into work. Another 15 workers at Scotfeather which is on the same site, and is part of the same family concern, are also out.



# Deadline April 30

**THIS WEEK**, see every *Militant* reader, all your family and your friends in the labour movement, at work, school, college or estate. There's only week left until the end of the fighting fund quarter.

Unemployed worker R Dyson sent us £7.50, L James £10, P Lenihan £10, R Purdy £15, C Parry £18. Can you match this—or even beat it?

## "Hit list"

R Gow sent us £58 union expenses and Louise Birch £75 of her back pay as a teacher. Think seriously of making a big donation to *Militant* and asking others to do likewise. Draw up a hit list of readers and sympathisers, see all local opponents of the witch-hunt and aim to raise £25 from them in the next two weeks.

In Mansfield supporters have shown how readily workers will support our petition and donate to help fight the witch-hunt; a collection with a petition at AUEW No 2 branch raised £5.65 and at a Notts NUM

# FIGHTING FUND

Quarter ends 30 April

## This week £3366

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London East	3240		3500
2 London South East	1712		2200
3 London South West	1076		1500
4 London West	1438		2900
5 East Midlands	1453		3050
6 South East	1103		2400
7 Humberside	1061		2350
8 Manchester/Lancs	1894		4200
9 Merseyside	2898		6900
10 Southern	1161		3100
11 Yorkshire	2068		5600
12 Eastern	1237		3450
13 Scotland East	1149		3200
14 Scotland West	1301		3850
15 Northern	1127		4550
16 South West	544		2150
17 West Midlands	1142		4500
18 Wales West	744		3150
19 Wales East	236		1450
Others	2579		5000
Total received	29163		70000

meeting £4.50. Supporters in Kent raised £7.93 at the gates of Snowdown colliery.

But your hard work needs rewards. Make sure supporters in your area are organising a May Day party to end the quarter. Charge

for entry at the door, buy beer and food to sell and organise a raffle. A recent social in Tebbit's territory, Chingford, raised £71.08.

If you've got money accumulated over the weeks make it a *Militant* May Day.

Send it down straight away and get out raising more. Other donations include K Waddington £5, Jai Ramsingh £5, Jerry Cope £11, D Daniels £3 and P Warren £5.

## Sell Militant

LAST WEEK'S *Militant* front page 'Thatcher-Reagan partners in Murder' was well received on the demonstrations held last weekend.

One seller on the Grosvenor Square rally sold 35. Sellers around the country should keep their eyes open for local meetings and rallies on this issue.

Over 100 papers were sold at both of the recent large *Militant* rallies in Sheffield and Islwyn. These were on top of the sales that we reported last week in the run up to these meetings.

During the Islwyn meeting a special appeal was made for those attending to join us on the regular Saturday paper sales in the area. A number of volunteers offered to help.

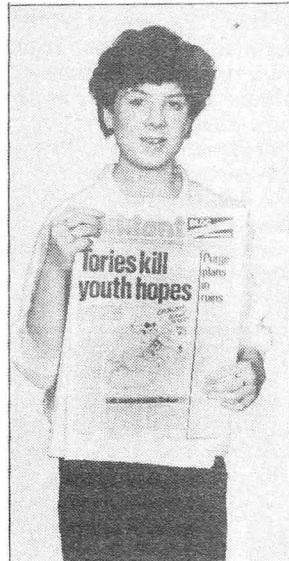
This paper appeal should become a regular feature of future *Militant* readers meetings.

The local elections are also providing good sales for *Militant*. In one ward of Hackney, 12 papers were brought in just 24 houses.

## Persistence

17 papers were sold outside a social organised by Bishopston branch of Bristol Labour Party to raise funds for the printers and Liverpool.

Two were bought by workers from the local Rolls Royce factory who were walking past. They both said



that they had seen sellers outside the factory but had never bought *Militant* before. Once again persistence pays off in extra sales.

LAST SATURDAY four *Militant* sellers at Bond Street tube were moved on from selling to people arriving for the US embassy picket. Police refused even to allow one seller to remain.

Two minutes later the four were arrested as the same two police ran up behind them as they walked away down Oxford Street. The four were later charged with obstruction of free passage along the highway.

To add to their 14 sales of *Militant* at the tube a further copy of the paper was sold to an interested policeman at West End Central police station. In court on Monday the four pleaded "not guilty" and will appear at Wells Street magistrates court on 15 May.

By Steve Poole  
(One of the accused)

## Education for socialists

### Marxist Education Tapes

1. Trotsky Commemoration Rally 20/8/85 Grant & Hemson C90
2. Anti-Witch-hunt Rally 25/2/86 Grant, Taaffe, Hatton Mulhearn C90
3. The Anglo Irish agreement 13/3/86 Higgins & Hadden C90
10. Origins of Bolshevism, 1860s-1900 Woods C90
20. China 1925-27 Revolution Taaffe C90
21. China 1944-49 Revolution Taaffe C90
22. World Famine Waddington C60
23. The Rise of Fascism in Germany Birch C60
24. The Post War Boom McKee C60
25. Spanish Revolution 1931-37 Woods C90
26. Theory of Permanent Revolution Bulaitis C90
27. Marxism and Black Nationalism Lee C90
28. Black Struggles against slavery Frampton C90

### Tapes from Marxist Weekend School September 1985

50. The Origin of the State Silverman C90
51. Is Britain a Police State? Edwards C90
52. Dialectical Materialism Pickard C90
53. Historical Materialism Cross C90
54. Is Marxism Relevant today? Grant C90
55. South Africa Rally Leggassick C90

### Tapes from Latin American School March 1986.

60. Revolution in Brazil and Argentina Walsh C90

Prices: C60 tapes £1.00, C90 £1.25. Please add 25p postage for the first tape and 10p for every tape thereafter. 10 or more tapes post free. Order from World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

### Marxist Weekend Schools

NORTHERN Leeds 7-8 June 1986

Courses on Russian revolution, Popular Frontism, Marxism and the trade unions, The theory of Marxism, Ireland.

Film: To die in Madrid (Spain 1936), International rally, disco, bar, crèche.

The cost? £5 (£3 unwaged) weekend or £2.50 (£1.50) for one day.

Bookings to 'MWES' c/o 63 Lincoln Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF2 0EP.

MIDLANDS/SOUTH WEST  
Birmingham, 14-15 June 1986

Courses on: Marxism and the trade unions, Theory of Marxism, Russian revolution, Colonial revolution and imperialism, Women and the struggle for Socialism.

Film: To die in Madrid (Spain 1936), International rally, disco, bar, crèche.

Cost? £6 (£4 unwaged), weekend, £3 (£2) one day.

Bookings to 'MWES', c/o T Cross, 12c Samuel Vale House, St Nicholas Street, Coventry, CV1 4LS.

## 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.

**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).

**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.

**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.

**ADDRESS** books 60p, bookmarks 40p, sew on badge 40p, plastic sleeve 20p, plus post. *Militant*, 10 Rodney Ct., Anson Drive, Sholing, So'ton. 0703 432480.

A **BUGGY** was taken by accident at BLOC conference. For re-exchange phone (01) 986 4232.

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

## "Militant fights back" meetings

**NORTH Spennymoor:** Memorial Hall, Town Hall, Spennymoor. Wednesday 7 May 7.15pm. Speaker: Norman Hall.

**NORTH WEST Ellesmere Port:** Civic Hall, Ellesmere Port, Thursday 29 May 7.30pm.

**Liverpool:** Sunday 4 May 7.30pm Philharmonic Hall, Hope St, Liverpool. Speakers: P Taaffe, D Hatton and Addenbrookes Speaker.

**SOUTHERN Portsmouth:** Monday 19 May. Speaker: Peter Taaffe.

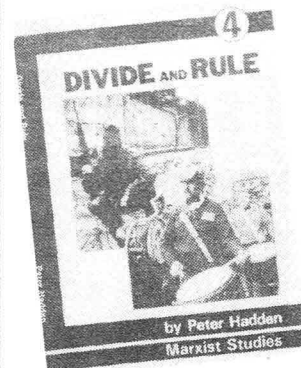
**Bracknell:** Tuesday 13 May, 8.30pm, Coopers Hill Youth Centre. Speaker: Keith Dickinson.

### LONDON

**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.



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

**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)

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

**BERMONDSEY** LPYS mass canvass. London YS branches are invited to canvass in Bermondsey Sunday 27 April. Meet 10.30am Spa Rd, off Southwark Park Rd.

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

**BRISTOL** East *Militant* Marxist discussion Groups: (held fortnightly) Thursday 1 May "socialism and war". For further details ring Bristol 650318.

**LEICESTER** Fight Low Pay Rally. On: Saturday 17 May 2-4.30pm. At: West End Neighbourhood Centre, Andrewes St., Leicester. Speakers include: Angie Donnithorpe (Joint Union Co-ordinating Committee, Leicester City Council) Dave Nellist MP (promoter of low pay bill).

**LEEDS** BLOC meeting: Support Women in action—end low pay. Leeds Trades Club. Monday 28 April 7.30pm. Speaker: Julie Marshall, Yorkshire Labour Women's Committee.

**Militant International Review.** Price 90p. Articles on Anglo-Irish Agreement, Liverpool and blacks in Britain. From: World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

**RUBY** Haddow and Jimmy Haddow wish to announce that on May Day a marriage will take place—their stand for life and socialism.

**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.



# LPYS answers attacks

LABOUR'S VITALLY necessary campaign to win the youth vote will be seriously damaged if threatened new attacks are launched against the Labour Party Young Socialists. Labour's NEC, already engrossed in expelling Liverpool party activists, is looking to continue the purge, now into the LPYS.

Ex-left Tom Sawyer, chairman of Labour's NEC Youth sub-committee, in an article in the witch-hunting LCC journal *Chartist*, outlines his proposals for organisational changes within Labour's youth. They seem to be nothing but an attempt to emasculate the LPYS, and to take on its Marxist majority not politically, but by administrative manoeuvres. They are not going to help tap the enormous anti-Tory mood developing amongst youth.

Tom Sawyer argues that "a political youth organisation must have a degree of independence and be allowed to challenge conventional attitudes." But not apparently the independence to adopt the ideas of *Militant*, to fight for a real socialist programme for youth, to oppose expulsions of class fighters from the party. Nor does he want them to "challenge" the Labour leadership's disregarding of the most modest demands of young people, such as the LPYS demand for a guaranteed job for youth, which Neil Kinnock dismissed as "impossibilist".

At a recent NEC Sawyer proclaimed it impossible to "defeat" our ideas by argument. He is certainly putting that into practice. His proposals are an attempt to muzzle the LPYS and in-

By Linda Douglas  
(LPYS NEC rep elect)

roduce political thought control.

All Young Socialists would agree that the "Party's youth work has been grossly underfunded." The LPYS budget has been consistently cut over the last few years from £23,500 to just £8,000. But with remarkable candour Tom Sawyer explains that "the fact is that the politics and domination of the *Militant* tendency make it impossible to make effective use of the resources... In my view resources will be made available by the wider movement if the approach to young people is right."

The right and soft left leaders in the unions and in the party must therefore be withholding money from the LPYS and its campaigns to win youth to Labour, because of its "independent", "challenging" policies. If the approach and the policies were "right", perhaps if the LPYS had Tom Sawyer's policies, the resources would be made available.

For the Kinnockite leadership of the National Organisation of Labour Students therefore, Tom Sawyer promises "more funding for NOLS work in the FE sector." LPYS members

in the FE colleges will find this particularly ironic. The NOLS leaders have spent the last year blocking the inauguration of FE Labour Clubs because of their sympathy for *Militant*. Does Tom Sawyer want tactics like these brought into the LPYS?

NOLS still prevents part-time students from joining.

It was for this reason that LPYS members established the Further Education Labour Students (FELS) organisation to attract these young students into the Labour Party. FELS is attacked in the article, yet NOLS membership in the FE sector has fallen to a mere 406.

Clearly Tom Sawyer and the Labour leadership want to use NOLS, which does not question their views as a counterweight to the LPYS. Seemingly he has been "told that it has a membership of over 10,000." The most recent figures handed to Tom by the Youth Committee show a NOLS membership of 6,600 and a majority are not party members, for it affiliated to the party last year on the basis of only 1,000 members.

Tom Sawyer really hopes to swamp the Labour Party Young Socialists in some broad organisation embracing trade union youth, women's sections, CLP's and of course sections of NOLS. He praises the Scottish Youth Campaign Committee and the National Youth Liaison Committee, which basically aim to exclude the policies of the LPYS.

There are no YS age members on the National Youth Liaison Committee but they do agree with Tom Sawyer's political position. Frances Curran who holds the only elected national youth position was refused membership.

In fact the LPYS has been campaigning since 1976 for direct trade union representation at its conference. Despite detailed proposals, neither the NEC nor the unions have responded. The LPYS would welcome widening the franchise for delegations to LPYS conference, providing they were all democratically elected, and representative of working-class youth.

The fact that this year's AUEW youth conference overwhelmingly opposed



LPYS members in action (above) at Wapping in support of the printers and (below) on the school students' strike in Liverpool last year.

## Winning youth to Labour

*Militant* interviewed John Ellen the new LPYS chair.

*Militant:* What have you and your LPYS been doing in your area?

JE: I'm from the Southern (East) Region. I've been on the NC since April 1985. This year I've been travelling around, speaking at all the branches in the region. I was active in the miners' strike and the print strike.

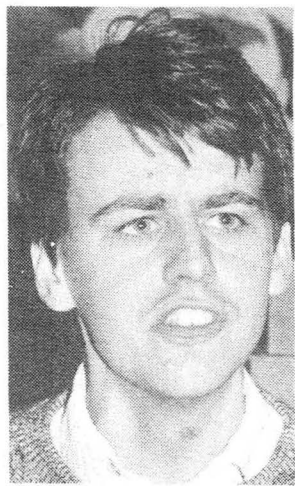
The LPYS organised a march in conjunction with the miners at Elvington pit, against police occupation of the village and we succeeded in keeping the police out for several months. We also initiated a printers' support group at Dover.

Our region has the largest LPYS in the country and there is a lot of respect for us from the labour movement in Brighton and Sussex. We have managed to win hundreds of young people to the ideas of socialism even in the so-called "soft south".

*Militant:* What is the LPYS planning nationally this year?

JE: We plan to organise the mass of youth in the country against the Tories. We aim to go where the youth are, to recruit young people to the ideas of socialism. The Tories have destroyed the hopes of millions of young people. Through our campaigning and ideas we are out to offer them a future.

I met Carl a 19 year old



John Ellen

unemployed youth from Manchester on a lobby of Parliament against cuts in benefits. He explained how he had attempted suicide on three occasions and showed me where he had slashed his wrists. He said "Young people in this country have got to be given a chance. They're not being given a chance under the Tories."

It's clear that the Tory strategy is to drive down the wages and living standards of young people through the "Tory Poverty Plan". All sections of youth will be hit. The LPYS is organising a national campaign with a petition to collect a million signatures for a guaranteed job, linked to a national minimum wage of £120. This is to be presented at Labour Party conference as part of a campaign to re-establish as

Labour Party policy the basic right of a guaranteed job on completion of education and training. We're going to be organising regional festivals around the campaign in the summer starting with the low pay demonstration on 31 May.

*Militant:* What do young people expect the next Labour government to do?

JE: A recent Gallup poll explained the real aspirations of young people. 93 per cent said that a job is a basic right for all. The LPYS is only echoing this aspiration through its demand for a guaranteed job and minimum wage.

It's estimated 90 per cent of low-paid workers are under 25. We'd expect the next Labour government to give young people a future that means something.

We welcome the fact that the Labour Party is placing great emphasis on winning the youth vote but that won't be done solely by organising concerts and snappy designs on T-shirts.

The Tories are on their way out. The local election results in May will prove that Labour should be campaigning now to kick out this hated Tory government and give young people like Carl a reason for living. For millions of youth socialism is not just an empty phrase or a nice idea, but an absolute necessity.



# Militant

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

## Thatcher miscalculates on Libyan raid

IN SUPPORTING Reagan's adventure in Libya, Margaret Thatcher thought she would be able to recover some of the fading Falklands spirit of 1982. But she has seriously miscalculated.

Reagan may have succeeded, albeit temporarily, in his main aim: to whip up a mood of jingoism in the USA to provide the basis for increased support for the 'Contras' and possible direct military intervention in Central America. But what has been a qualified success for him has been an unqualified disaster for Thatcher, close on the heels of Westland, BL and other setbacks and on the same day as her biggest-ever parliamentary defeat.

Opinion polls taken immediately after the bombing raids showed an average of 70 per cent of the population against the raids from British bases. Even among staunch Tory voters there is profound disquiet or opposition. In the current two parliamentary by-election campaigns, both in Tory seats, normally loyal Tories like farmers and shopkeepers have shown their anger at Thatcher.

As was the case over Westland and the sale of Rover, Thatcher has given the impression she will do anything to curry favour with the White House. But though she may be Reagan's 'pet poodle', she is contemptuous of the views of others, even in her own Cabinet.

The majority of her ministers were unaware that permission had been given, days before the raids, to use the British bases. When the EEC foreign ministers met in emergency session on April 14 to agree a joint statement, it included a call for "restraint on all sides". By then, Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe was aware that "restraint" was the last thing being planned by the Pentagon, but this was clearly not relayed to the other European capitalist governments.

Even the news, four days later, that three hostages had been murdered in Lebanon, failed to stem the tide of criticism. The father of one of those killed expressed his "disgust" at the use of British bases, adding—"but for that, my son would still be alive."

The wave of opposition has reduced Thatcher to a minority in the Cabinet. She was declaring last week that it was "inconceivable" that any British government would deny the use of the bases to the Americans, yet by the end of the week it seemed unlikely that permission would be given for any further air strikes using bombers from British bases.

But the political damage to the Tories has already been done. Many sections of society, from schoolchildren to Women's Institute members, believe that Thatcher and Reagan have increased the likelihood of nuclear war. They are both seen as warmongers, out of touch with the feelings and fears of ordinary people.

This has provided the Labour Party with another marvellous opportunity to campaign as the party of socialism and peace. There is no immediate risk of nuclear war, the Party should explain, because of the existence and strength of the workers' organisations in the West. Wars, in any case, do not arise through accident or misunderstanding, but through the definite and deliberate policy of the capitalist class in their own class interests.

It would not be in the interests of the capitalist class to engage in major war at this stage. But in the long run, in the event that the labour movement in the West fails to transform society on socialist lines, then it is possible that some authoritarian government in the USA could embark on the suicidal road of nuclear war.

The fundamental task for today is the struggle to change society. Labour must highlight the enormous waste of resources in the Tories' massive arms expenditure and in particular in the development of Trident. It must reaffirm its commitment to unilateral nuclear disarmament and cuts in defence spending. The fundamental question, in which context all defence policy must be set, is the socialist transformation of society to overturn the present class basis of defence and foreign policy.

Thatcher hoped in the last fortnight for another Falklands, but she succeeded only in achieving another Westlands. Her role in the affair has added to the likelihood that she will be replaced so that the Tories can attempt to refurbish their image before the next election. Labour meanwhile, must take full advantage of the Tories' difficulties and blunders to campaign to kick out this unpopular government and return a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

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# Raids strengt

ANY HOPES Reagan had of overthrowing the 17 year old Gadaffi regime were dashed last week. The murderous bombing raids, the civilian deaths and the casualties suffered by his own immediate family have considerably strengthened Gadaffi's position in Libya.

Ironically, before the American confrontation with Libya began this year, there were some signs of growing discontent as a result of increased economic austerity. Oil prices have fallen considerably in the last few years and even more drastically in the last few months. Foreign earnings from oil, \$22 billion in 1980, are expected to be as low as \$9 billion this year.

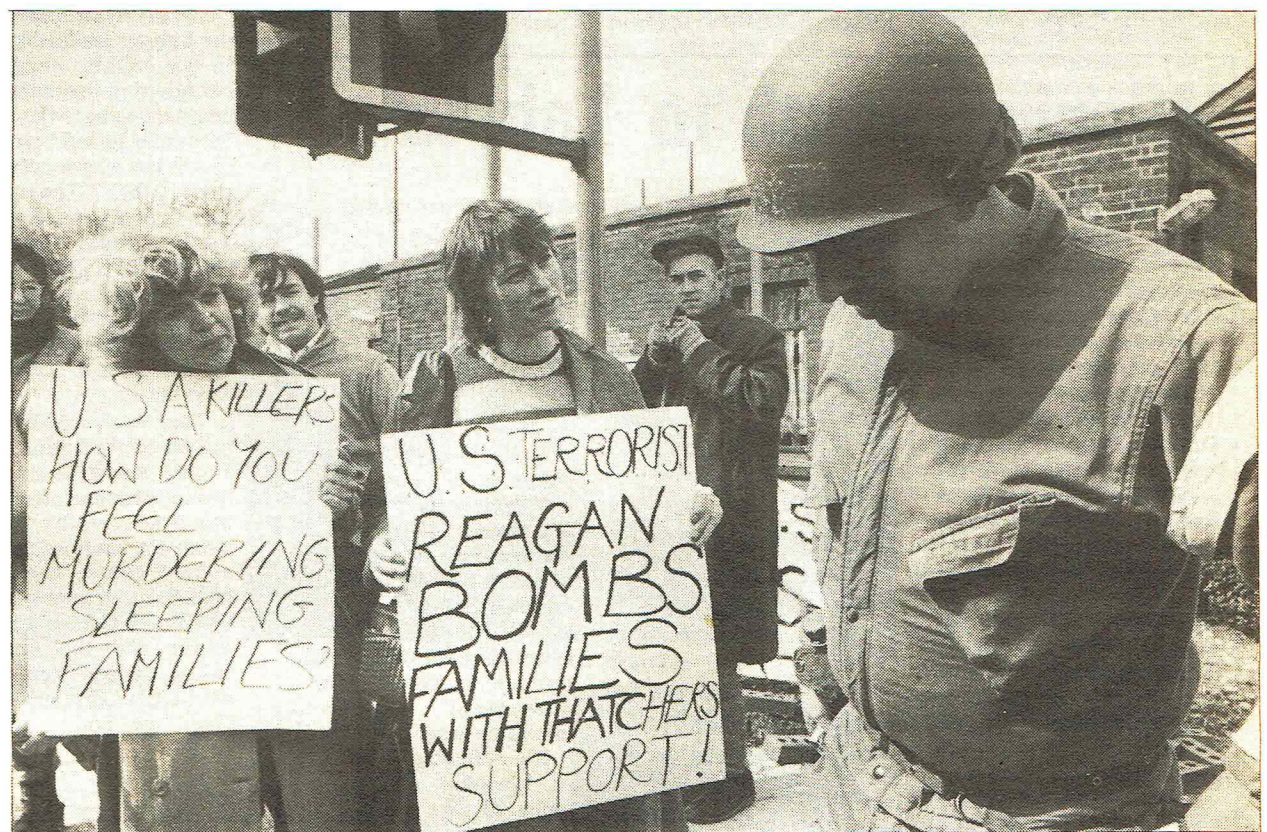
There have been reports of failed coup attempts, the most serious in May 1984 which was followed by a wave

of repression. . Stories also circulated about friction between the "peoples committees"—Gadaffi's main base of support—and the army.

The squeeze on foreign exchange has led to shortages of basic foods and necessities, leading to long queues in the state-owned supermarkets. Given time, it is possible that the small opposition to the regime would have developed. As it is, because of the American bombings, Gadaffi has been strengthened.

This article (below right) by LYNN WALSH, from Militant no 697, 27 April 1984, explains some of the background to Libya. Although Gadaffi has carried through many progressive social and economic policies, he is far from being the "socialist" some claim him to be.

Photos: John Harris (IFL)



Demonstrations outside Upper Heyford base. Top: US flag burning. Above: Women confront an American serviceman.

## The real origins of "terrorism"

THE CAPITALIST press has shown the most sickening hypocrisy in its preoccupation with Middle East "terrorism". Marxists distinguish between the *state terrorism* of British and American imperialism - in the use of the F-111s and the Sixth Fleet against a tiny country - and the *individual terrorism* of Palestinian or other groups in the Middle East.

Gadaffi has frequently declared his support for what he calls the Palestinian revolution, which usually means bank-rolling one or another group within the PLO. He has been linked to the Abu Nidal Group which is alleged to have been behind many attacks, including those at Rome and Vienna airports last year. In a speech at a youth rally in Tripoli in January,

Gadaffi declared that Libya would train, arm and protect Arab guerrillas and other Arab volunteers for "suicide and terrorist missions" and Libya would be made "a base for the Liberation of Palestine."

But despite this, he is not as Reagan would have us believe the originator of individual terror in the Middle East. On the contrary, it has its roots in the social and national contradictions, of the Palestinians especially, and more recently of other oppressed nationalities in Lebanon.

The majority of the Palestinian people are denied their basic national rights and are forced to live an insecure and scattered existence as refugees in half a dozen Arab countries. Until their social and national

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# Then Gaddafi regime



## CIA target on Libya

THE WORD "subversion" trips easily off President Reagan's tongue, particularly about Colonel Gaddafi.

But successive US governments have encouraged opposition groups in Libya, hoping to destabilise Gaddafi. The CIA have backed at least one group.

These activities are not new. After Watergate, many American workers heard of how US agencies had conspired to destabilise, even to assassinate leaders like Castro in Cuba. According to the book



Colonel Gaddafi.

*British intelligence and Covert Action* by Jonathon Black and Patrick Fitzgerald, Britain too has been involved in attempts to overthrow governments in Egypt, South Yemen, Iran and Malaysia.

Gaddafi has been a prime target particularly since falling oil prices have bitten into his health and education reforms and his popularity. US newspapers reported in January that the CIA were "working hard" to overthrow him. Two meetings in the White House on January 6 and 7 were arranged just to discuss that.

The Reagan administration hope to use discontent within the armed force, because support in the army would be essential to overcome Gaddafi's armed supporters.

At the same time, the CIA and Saudi Arabia are believed to back the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL) which is trying to keep armed units in the country. The leader, Muhammad Magarieff, a former Gaddafi aide, now has his base in Iraq. The NFSL led the abortive coup against Gaddafi's barracks in 1984 and Ahmed Ibrahim, leader of the Salvation Corps, the NFSL's military wing, was shot trying to cross the Libyan border.

The US government hoped that the bombings would complete the destabilisation process. But many of Gaddafi's more intelligent opponents fear that Reagan has not helped their case. Magherbi, former PM under Gaddafi, now in opposition has condemned the attack, "Now is not the time to talk about Gaddafi the dictator", he said, "We suffered under him but we should talk about what the Americans did".

MOST OF the economy is undoubtedly controlled by the state. The petroleum industry, the vital source of Libya's wealth, has been nationalised step by step since Gaddafi seized power in 1969. About 30 per cent, mainly new development, is still owned by foreign oil companies.

### By Lynn Walsh

Before oil, there was virtually no industrial sector. Manufactures were imported, paid for by agricultural exports but especially by aid from the US and Britain in return for military bases.

Since the oil boom, Libya's modernisation has been through state development plans, financed from oil revenues. This applies to both the infrastructure (ports, roads, electricity, railways etc) and to new industry (textiles, tanneries, chemicals, tyres, glass, etc).

Compared to the pre-1969 position, industrialisation has been dramatic though non-oil manufacturing still contributes less than 2 per cent to GNP.

Soon after the coup all commercial banks were nationalised. A decade later all importing was transferred to public corporations. Later, shops were banned from selling imported clothes, electrical goods, etc, and steps were taken to concentrate retail trade into state administered supermarkets.

Although the regime's plan may not yet be totally efficient, it is clear that agriculture is the only sector where there is any significant private ownership left.

Libyan capitalism, such as it was—never more than a feeble commercial appendage to foreign capital—has been wiped out. These radical changes have undoubtedly

been directed from above. However, massive, though very uneven, improvements in living standards have aroused popular support, and the "popular committees" have played some role in carrying through social changes.

It is the radical reforms, marking a big advance for most Libyans, which have ensured the regime's underlying stability, contradicting Gaddafi's apparently erratic and unbalanced leadership.

Unlike other regimes moving in a similar direction, Libya has not developed close ties with the Soviet Union. Oil wealth has allowed Gaddafi to pull away from capitalism internationally without being pushed, so far, towards economic dependence on the Stalinist states. In his recent foreign policy, however, Gaddafi has moved closer to the Soviet leadership.

If the exact character of the Libyan regime remains to be decided, at the moment the regime is still moving in a radical direction. A revival of capitalism after a period of rapid modernisation through state intervention, as in Egypt after Nasser or in Algeria after Ben Bella, appears to be ruled out by the international crisis and by the lack of opportunities or points of support for capitalism within Libya.

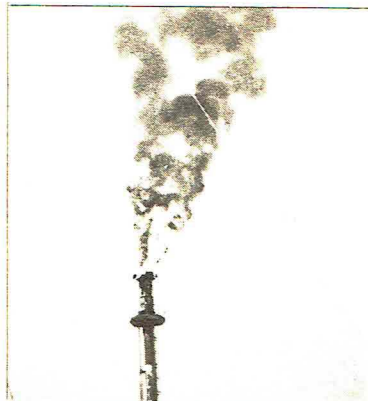
But accepting Gaddafi's claim that Libya is socialist, which for Marxists implies the conscious involvement of the working class in the running of society, is quite a different matter.

Libya is officially a "Socialist Arab Jamahiriya" ("state of the masses") based on Gaddafi's "Third Universal Theory", an Islamic alternative to both capitalism and atheistic Communism.

In theory, control is exercised by the masses through popular con-

gresses. In practice, the regime is run as a police state. Discussion at the base is only tolerated only in so far as it corresponds with the vision at the top.

Significantly, there are no popular committees in either the petroleum industry or the army, originally the



Oil provides the basis of Libya's economy.

real bases of Gaddafi's power. More recently, however, plots within the officer corps led Gaddafi to form the Islamic revolutionary militia base on universal conscription, including women. The militias draw on enthusiastic support from some sections of youth, but are nevertheless firmly controlled from above.

Gaddafi's regime is in reality a form of *bonapartism* which has gained exceptional autonomy and dynamism from the mushrooming of Libya's immense oil wealth. Capitalism had nothing to offer, and therefore Gaddafi has attempted to push beyond the limits of capitalism, forcing the pace of change through the brutal power of the state.

To appeal to the workers and labouring poor of Libya and the Arab lands, Gaddafi has fashioned himself exotic socialist clothes. Yet

because of the country's paucity of resources, oil aside, and the weakness of the working class (60 per cent of the workforce is drawn from abroad because of the shortage of skills at home), the regime progresses through methods which appear barbaric to the workers in countries where the labour movement has won democratic rights.

Ferocious repression, virulent nationalism, and the regime's Islamic complexion rule out any appeal to the working class internationally. This can only accentuate the narrow national limitations and acute contradictions of Libya's position.

Nowhere is this more evident than in Gaddafi's foreign policy. His fervent pursuit of "Arab unity" with attempted mergers with Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, and others, and his intervention in Morocco, Chad, Sudan, and Uganda (supporting the moslem Amin), have brought him into sharp conflict with most of the Arab states, apart from Syria (whose Soviet arms bills Libya has consistently paid). Other Arab rulers regard Gaddafi as a dangerous maverick who could afford adventurist policies because of oil wealth and indulge in implacable struggle against Zionism because of his remoteness from Israel's borders.

Only if the workers and labouring poor of the Middle East and North Africa, on the basis of class unity and Marxist ideas, move to transform society and establish a Socialist Federation of States will the grotesque problems created under capitalism be solved. Peculiar, distorted bonapartist regimes like Gaddafi's arise precisely from the delay of socialist change internationally, particularly in those countries where capitalism has laid the material basis for a higher level of development under socialism.

## Europe trades with Libya

THE COMMON Market foreign ministers have announced sweeping new restrictions on the movement and accreditation of Libyan diplomats and visitors throughout Western Europe. But these sanctions fall well short of the complete boycott of all European-Libyan trade and travel that was being demanded by the United States.

Whatever may be the interests of US imperialism, the European capitalists have their own interests that do not always coincide. European trade with Libya is not insignificant. It now accounts for over 90 per cent of Libyan oil exports and there is considerable bilateral trade, amounting to about \$9b, especially with Southern Europe.

In the first nine months of last year Britain also ex-

ported £172m of goods to Libya and bought in return £248m. Even as US aircraft were flying off from one British base to bomb Libya, a private company, no more than five miles away, was training Libyan pilots to fly!

Despite months of official orders from the White House, instructing US citizens and companies to leave Libya, a number of American companies still trade in Libyan oil. US companies can refuse to take oil, but they cannot prevent the Libyans from pumping it. Reagan is in a dilemma about what exactly to do with the \$1b of US assets still there. It is possible that the smaller US 'independents' involved in Libyan oil—Occidental, Conoco and Marathon—may find a way around the official sanctions as they did in the past.

are fulfilled it is inevitable that impatient the youth will seek answers in assassina-

bombings. ten-year civil war in Lebanon has added its to the cycle of national and social conflicts ably now a greater source of individual ter-

n Palestinian groups. s support the struggles of the Palestinian peoples for their own national and social ion, but do not agree with the policy of in-

rorism. Marxists base themselves on mass on workers' democracy and workers' alism.

answer to individual terrorism will not be rrorism of Reagan but the struggle of the vement to change society and establish a ederation of the Middle East.



Nicaragua

# Nicaragua: Fighting the U.S. threat

REAGAN'S ATTACK on Libya has added new menace to his sabre-rattling against Nicaragua.

Despite defeats, he is still trying to get military backing from the US House of Representatives for the right-wing "Contras" who are fighting the Sandinista government of Nicaragua.

By Soraya Lawrence

Nicaragua is a small country, with only 3.5 million inhabitants, and yet the US has already spent many millions of dollars in its vicious onslaught against the Sandinistas.

Why is the world's most powerful state prepared to go to such lengths to undermine the government of a small Central American country?

The Sandinistas came to power in 1979 at the head of a massive insurrectionary movement which threw out the hated US-backed Somoza dictatorship. The workers of the world hailed the revolution in Nicaragua as a tremendous victory.

American imperialism has seen the enormous potential and power of the masses. It fears the effect of the Nicaraguan revolution on developments in other countries of Central America and Latin America in general.

One look at its gains would explain why the Nicaraguan revolution has had such an impact internationally.

Since the revolution infant mortality has been cut from 33 per cent to 8 per cent. Consumption of corn has risen by 33 per cent, beans by 40 per cent and rice by 30 per cent. Illiteracy has been reduced from 50 per cent to 14 per cent. 1,200 new schools have been con-



Reagan wants the crushing of the Nicaraguan revolution.

structed and 40,000 landless peasants have been given land.

Such gains can only fill other Latin American workers with confidence as they battle to escape from their own poverty and misery.

It is for this reason that the Reagan administration and US imperialism has been so intransigently hostile towards Nicaragua. They do not want the spread of revolution in their own "back-yard", with the risk of influencing the 15 million Latin Americans on US territory and the American workers themselves.

Reagan has so far used the Contras to fight his dirty



Celebrating the fifth anniversary of the revolution in Managua.

war, but they have failed. It is now clear that any serious future attempt to crush the Nicaraguan revolution will depend on direct US intervention.

Although the US has overwhelming military power, invasion of Nicaragua would have serious political consequences. This is understood by sections of the US ruling class, and explains their hesitations.

A US invasion would arouse tremendous hostility in the workers' movement internationally. It could trigger off a movement in the whole of Latin America.

A guerilla war would be waged against the invaders. Eventually a situation similar to Vietnam could emerge—heavy losses and disillusionment setting in among US troops, the initial wave of patriotism in the US evaporating, and pressure building up for withdrawal.

Nevertheless such a struggle could have a devastating impact on Nicaragua, costing tens of thousands of lives.

How can the gains of the struggle in Nicaragua be consolidated and defended?

## Permanent revolution

AN UNDERSTANDING and application of Trotsky's theory of the "Permanent Revolution" is fundamental to the success of the revolution. Trotsky explained that in the colonial countries the national bourgeoisie—extremely weak, and usually tied to imperialism—can play no progressive role in the development of society.

In Nicaragua, the bankruptcy of the local capitalist class was reflected in the enormous concentra-

tion of wealth and power in the hands of Somoza and his family—not in one class but in one family!

The development of industry had come extremely late and depended mainly on foreign investment, particularly from the US.

The national bourgeoisie was incapable of carrying out even the most basic tasks of the bourgeois (democratic) revolution, for example the redistribution of the land. One per cent of the population held 50 per cent of the land!

In the third world it therefore falls to the working class to struggle for state power and completing the remaining tasks of the democratic revolution. The peasants cannot lead the revolution in modern society, although they can be drawn behind the workers.

But once in power, the workers will inevitably overthrow capitalism and proceed without interruption to the tasks of socialist transformation.

In Nicaragua, despite the enormous movement of the peasantry which served to undermine the Somoza regime, it was not until the industrial working class staged a general strike in Managua that the regime finally toppled.

However, the Sandinista leaders (the FSLN) did not orient to building a mass base amongst the working class in the cities. In fact, they did not even have the perspective of building a mass army of the peasants. They based themselves, instead, on a tiny 'party' of 500 people!

It was only through their reputation in the guerilla war, built up over the years, that they were able to gain enormous sympathy amongst the masses.

In 1979 the Sandinistas found themselves in an even more favourable position

than the Bolsheviks in 1917.

With the fall of Somoza the forces of the capitalist state had been destroyed. The national guard had fled.

With the mass support of the workers and peasants the Sandinistas could have expropriated the capitalists and embarked on a programme of socialist transformation.

Instead, they formed a government including anti-Somoza capitalists on a "programme of reconstruc-



Funeral of a young Sandinista killed by Contras.

tion". Their policies flowed from the mistaken perspective of establishing 'national democracy' in cooperation with the 'progressive' national bourgeoisie.

As a result, they have consciously gone out of their way to avoid the development of workers' control over the economy and the state.

Massive support for the revolution is reflected in the Committees for Defence of the Sandinistas (CDS) involving half a million people. Peasants and workers have been armed against the Contras. But these popular bodies have no control over state policy. There can be no healthy workers' state except where the masses, through their own organisations, control the economy and society.

Today, 60 per cent of the



Nicaraguan soldiers about to move into the jungle against Contras.

economy remains in private hands; 72 per cent of cotton production; 53 per cent of coffee; 75 per cent of industrial production.

Attempts were made to integrate the national bourgeoisie into the planning of the economy on the basis of grants, incentives and even cutting tax for company profits.

Unfortunately, the Sandinistas' aspirations did not coincide with the strategies of the bourgeoisie and US imperialism. They were left with the worst of both worlds: threatened with reaction from the bourgeoisie and US imperialism, and with no complete control over the economy they were open to sabotage from the capitalists.

As a result, they have been forced to announce stringent austerity measures. Many of the initial reforms are being eaten into and 1984 was the worst economic year since the revolution.

economic and political crisis, the Sandinistas will be pushed by the masses (as happened in Cuba) into completing the revolution: to nationalise the decisive sectors of the economy and develop a state plan of production.

But, as in Cuba, revolution along these lines would leave power in the hands of a ruling elite. However popular the Sandinistas might be, a military-bureaucratic regime would not be under the control of the working masses. Ultimately it would stand in the way of the thoroughgoing, revolutionary transformation of society that is involved in the transition to real socialism.

Conversely, the longer the revolution remains at the present, unstable 'halfway' stage, the more the burdens of capitalist crisis will weigh down and demoralise the masses. This would eventually open the way to counter-revolution—to splits among the Sandinistas and political crisis that could bring the capitalists back to power.

It is because of the missing element of a marxist workers' party, able to lead the revolution forward, that a question mark hangs over the future of Nicaragua.

Events have already demonstrated that the existing policy of putting brakes on the revolution will not succeed in pacifying US imperialism. Reagan wants nothing less than the crushing of all the gains of the revolution.

The threat of counter-revolution can only be defeated by socialist policies to root out capitalism in Nicaragua, linked to an active appeal to the workers and peasants in the rest of Central America, Mexico, and the US itself.

Only the united strength of the workers throughout the region, mobilised on socialist policies, could head off the threat of US imperialism and mark an end to the remaining military-police dictatorships in Central America.

The march of events in the rest of Latin America—now in ferment across its length and breadth—is creating very favourable conditions for the spread of the revolution. The vital need is the building of working-class organisation and leadership with a revolutionary, internationalist perspective. This is the key to the future of the revolution in Nicaragua and every other country.

## Halfway stage

AT THE moment the revolution has only been carried out half-way, with the capitalist state destroyed but the economy remaining under capitalist control. But it cannot stay in that position for an indefinite period.

In the next four years the economic crisis will worsen. The world recession expected in 1986-87 will have a devastating effect on the Nicaraguan economy. If the regime maintains its present course it will begin to see its support being eroded.

It is not yet clear which direction the revolution will take. It is entirely possible that, with the deepening of



**MALCOLM WITHERS**, a *Sun* journalist, a "scab" at Wapping and the Labour Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Stevenage has consistently supported the expulsions of socialists from the local Labour Party.

But you can never expel ideas, and the ideas of *Militant* reflect the real life and experiences of working class people in the town.

These experiences are reflected here in the following interviews.



Jackie Walsh

Feature by Jackie Walsh  
Photos by Jim Horton  
and Dave Sinclair

"I THINK what Malcolm Withers is doing at Wapping is really disgusting," commented Olwyn Cottham, an old age pensioner. "I told him what Denis Healey promised—he would squeeze the rich until the pips squeaked."

"I think things should be nationalised—but Labour keeps changing its mind. Malcolm Withers said we won't re-nationalise at a meeting I was at. I think that when the Labour Party make their policies for working people they should stick to what they say."

I wrote to Kinnock. I told him 'I was born in Wales and remembered the 1926 General Strike. You can't call yourself a Welshman, otherwise you'd have stuck with the miners'.

"If the other unions had come out in support of the miners and had a general strike we'd have brought this government down by now. But the main reason I wrote was because of the 'witch-hunts' I said, 'never will we get Malcolm Withers elected in Stevenage while all this witch-hunt is going on'."

## Keeping warm is the problem

Olwyn Cottham told *Militant*.

"I HAD this radiator put in but I'll have to pay out more for an extra radiator. My electric bill is £30 and my gas is £40 quarterly and it's only a small flat."

"The only heating



Olwyn Cottham

allowance I get is £1.10 a week. The Citizens' Advice Bureau told me I should be getting £2.20!

"I suffer with arthritis but I don't get any extra for that. I was going crazy with pain the other day and the cold makes it worse. I have to have the warmth I need."

"My daughter says 'bugger the cost, Mum. Put the heating on—whatever you do don't get cold'. But I do worry—because of the bills."

"What we need is a decent pension like in Germany where people get £100. Jack Jones says that German OAPs get concessions on top of that. If you had a decent pension in the first place you wouldn't need special privileges like half-price on the buses so much."

## The Million Pound craving

DRUG ADDICTS in Stevenage spend £1 million a year on heroin. There are at least 200 people hooked. They spend between £5 and £20 a day on their habit.

Geoff, who is unemployed and a drug addict told us:

"THIS TOWN has had a drug problem since the '60s but today it goes on all over the county."

"Most people smoke cannabis. That's a problem in Stevenage because it's the same criminal element involved, and the profit margin on cannabis is minimal, it's more in 'smack'."

"I know kids around here who are still glue-sniffing. If you walk around the woods you'll see loads of little bags all stuck together at the bottom."

"It's not surprising when there's nothing for them to do. The older ones can go out for a drink but the younger ones take to glue."

"The kids all club together for a £10 bag of heroin and then one of them goes off and 'scores it'. If I have to go without 'blow' it's not too bad. But heroin is like a physical craving."

"In one area of Stevenage 17 people were hauled in by the police for organised crime. It was for heroin. The pushers in this town are 'trafficking' and 'supplying'. With 'traffickers' they're supposed to 'bang 'em up' for eight years but really they're just getting away with it."

"The 'traffickers' and 'suppliers' are mainly doing it to pay for their own addiction. A lot of them are working class but they're using their brains the wrong way—to make other working class people pay for their addiction."

# STEVENAGE A planners dream?



## Behind the double glazing

STEVENAGE NEW Town was once heralded as "the planners dream!"

At the end of the war, when a long boom was starting, new towns were seen as providing comfortable, cheap council housing, plenty of jobs, good nursery education and brand new schools.

They were the vision of the future. But today's reality is far different.

Capitalism depends on profit. It does not allow governments and local councils to plan; to fit workers with jobs and families with housing, unless someone can make a profit.

### Unemployment

Stevenage now has the highest unemployment levels in Hertfordshire—officially nearly 5,000 and unofficially a lot more.

Our town may still look relatively "comfortable" but behind all the glossy double-glazed windows and fancy front doors there exists enormous "hidden poverty" and a growing social crisis.

Councillor Bob Fowler, housing vice-chairman on Stevenage council told *Militant*: "After the Tory cuts, there is now a housing waiting list of over 6,000 people with a wait of 3½ to 5½ years. Six years ago you could get low demand housing within a year."

If you live in Stevenage, you need to get involved in the union, the Labour Party and the LPYS. Join the fight for socialism. We all need it.

## What young people want from politics

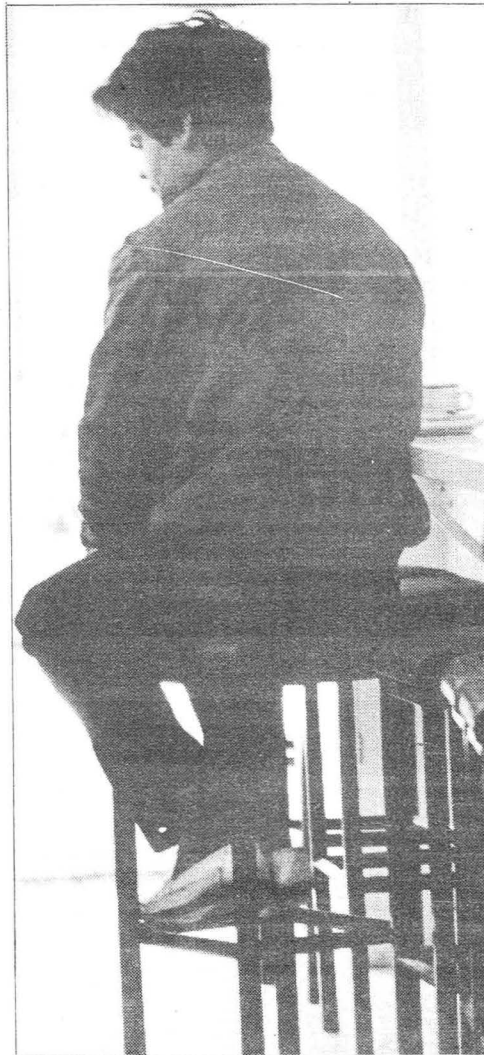
Interview with Ruth, a member of Stevenage LPYS

"MY FE College felt that they should be active in supporting YTURC. By making YTS compulsory, further education will be limited."

"95 per cent of the General Education department came out in support of the school strike last year. Lecturers were saying, 'it was just a gesture', but the next day they had to admit it did work."

"Postmen and people who had kids in the college crèche didn't cross our picket lines. It wasn't a crowd of anarchistic young kids going on a 'vandal-ramble'. We want a decent job, and decent education, not slave labour schemes."

"If you can get 300 kids out on a strike in this so-called apathetic town you can do it anywhere. There is a wave of political thinking going on in young people's minds all over the country."



## Coping on your own

MANDY, A 20 year-old single parent with a 2 year old daughter, Kaya:

"I get £33 a week and £15 child benefit. Out of that I'm expected to buy food and nappies for Kaya—and her clothes."

"Out of this week's money I'm supposed to pay a £118 gas bill, a £36 electric bill, £76 water rates and money to buy Kaya a pair of shoes. They'd come to £10 easy."

"Okay, so they pay my rent, but what's £33! When they say you live on the minimum—you live below the minimum."

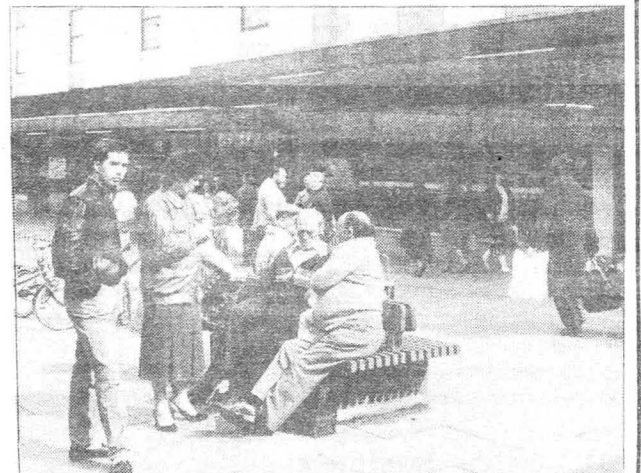
"One book I read said, 'live on rice and berries and porridge for £33' but I bet you the writer didn't cut down on her gas. I'm supposed to get fresh fruit and veg but I can't afford that. 'I've lost weight and I get

depressed. All of Monday I was crying all day because I just didn't have money. They just don't want you to have a social life at all."

"The weekend before you cash your weekly allowance me and Kaya literally have to live on rice and chips. People are always saying to me that Kaya's small—well it's not surprising really, is it?"

"At Christmas time if I hadn't gone to my Mum's I wouldn't have had nothing. I couldn't even afford to buy Kaya a present myself. What will I do in two or three years when she'll start asking me for things?"

"All the playgroups are too expensive—I can't afford to send Kaya. One private one I know is £2.50 an hour. Kaya's an only child, she gets bored. I can't play with her all the time."



The money runs out very quickly in the shops—even faster if you're a single parent.

Another single parent told *Militant*: "This social climate is making people into thieves—like the bosses. Take the huge bus fares for instance."

"I pay for myself but not for the kids. It's women who suffer all the time. I haven't got a car and I haven't got £1.02 to pay one way for me and the kids."

"In the past if someone gave you too much change you would tell them straight away. But not anymore."

"Someone gave me £10 too much recently. When I realised I just grabbed it and ran off. I went out and celebrated!"



## A semi-conscious Marxist?

Dear Militant,

A comrade was in hospital for an operation a week or two ago.

The porters in Southampton General Hospital are operating a work to rule. When Joe's turn came round (after he had had his premed and was really drowsy) he was wheeled to the operating theatre by a doctor and a nurse. On the way down the corridor he saw a group of porters and said: "Hang on, if that's a picket line you can wheel me back, because I'm not crossing it!"

One of the porters explained: "It's all right mate we're just having our tea break."

A marxist even when semi-conscious!

Yours fraternally  
Felix Corcoran  
Southampton

## Marxist policies not so irrelevant

Dear Comrades, I have been selling *Militant* outside a dole office every Thursday for the past three months. I usually sell between 6-12 copies in an hour.

Last Thursday an old lady came up, wanting to buy a copy of the paper and saying that she has been a member of the Labour Party for many years and that she wanted to know what all this fuss about *Militant* was.

Asked about the proposed expulsions of the Liverpool comrades, she said that as far as she could see, all they were doing was to carry out the programme they had been elected on, which is

precisely what Neil Kinnock should be doing. "He should be fighting for us, like they have been doing for the working class in Liverpool."

Just as I left, a young man came running after me. I had given him a copy last time, as he didn't have any money on him. He put a pound into my hand, telling me the *Militant* seemed 'OK' and bought a copy of 'What we stand for'.

And there's Neil Kinnock saying that we are completely irrelevant!

Yours fraternally  
Ellie Stein  
Hendon North  
Labour Party

## Abuse not democracy

Dear Militant,

Our last Labour Party branch meeting passed a resolution supporting the current witch-hunt against *Militant*. Moved by county councillor Hillary Armstrong (PPC for NW Durham) she stated she had no right to do so, being a member of another branch.

Hillary was heard in respectful silence, unlike my own contribution, which was howled down. One member described *Militant* supporters as 'lice'.

I have been a party member for 16 years, serving in various positions and cannot recall anyone prevented from putting a case in this manner.

Who really abuses the rules and constitution of the party, not to mention democratic principles?

Yours fraternally  
Kevin Gent  
Durham

## State of the NHS

Dear Militant,

I have been taking tablets regularly for years and the doctor I was with for 20 years would not put me on the repeat prescription service and only allowed me a month's supply at a time.

My doctor retired a short while ago and his replacement has started to give me two months supply as he said I could not afford to pay the prescription charges.

A doctor of a neighbour-

ing family where one of the parents is unemployed, always makes out prescriptions in the name of one of the children so that they will not have to pay Thatcher's tax on the sick.

This is what our health service has been reduced to after seven years of Thatcherism.

Yours fraternally  
A.R.Emmett  
Southampton Labour Party

## Only eighteen and already too old to work

Dear Militant,

A young comrade told our YS meeting he worked in a furniture shop loading and unloading lorries. After a year, at the age of 17, he was offered a full-time contract which stated he could not join a union and could not go on strike.

He worked for a year, then a week before his 18th birthday he was given a letter that informed him he was an excellent worker, good time-keeper and the company was very satisfied with him, but now that he was 18

he was too old to work for them and was sacked.

This young comrade's experience shows what future the youth have under the Tories - none, consigned to the unemployment scrapheap at 18.

Kinnock you come to Oldham YS and tell us a guaranteed job is impossibility. For this and many other youths it is a necessity.

Yours fraternally  
M.A.Spence  
Oldham LPYS

# Letters

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

## Tiara and Gem Wearers Union

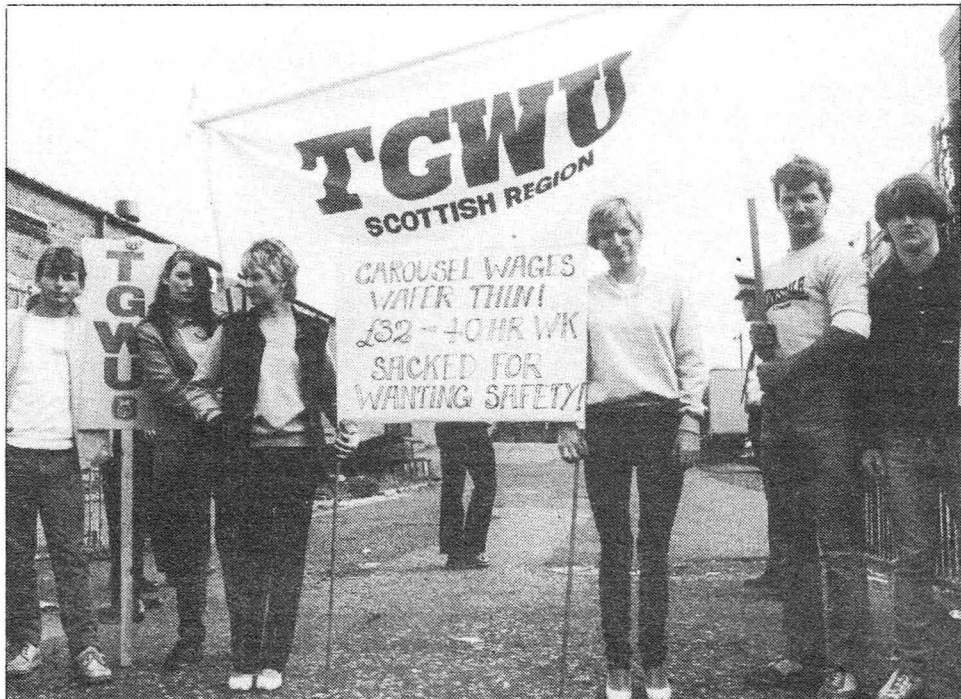
Dear Militant,

I heard on the radio the other day that the queen mother has been made honorary member of the TGWU, following being made an honorary meat porter. I cannot imagine royalty ever humping carcasses around Smithfield.

This seems a strange way to increase trade union membership! On the other hand, activists in Bristol are launching the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign in central Bristol around the 'Declaration of Youth Rights' and hope to win many youth to trade unionism and socialism.

We are of the opinion that working class youth have more to offer the socialist cause than the Royal Family.

Yours fraternally  
Colin Toogood  
Bristol West CLP



Members of the Transport and General Workers Union will wonder what experience the Queen mum has of fighting low pay and poor safety conditions.

## Belfast councillors helped-out by Tories

Dear Comrades,

I was surprised this morning to hear that Liverpool and Lambeth were not the only councils not to set a rate.

In Belfast the Loyalists have been refusing to hold any council meeting in protest at the Anglo-Irish Agreement and therefore they could not set a rate.

So where are the surcharged councillors and outraged media? There are none because the Tory government set a rate for them!

While the money rolls in for a council that doesn't meet to allocate it, Community Centres and Advice Bureaux have already started to close.

If the council does not meet soon the oil for oil-fired council establishments will run out—perhaps then it will receive at least a fraction of the media coverage Liverpool got!

Yours fraternally  
Joanna Slattery  
Nottingham

## LEFT and RIGHT

### Would a fireman's helmet do?

TERRY FIELDS MP has received a very posh invitation from "The Chairman...and Members of the National Committee for the 900th Anniversary of Domesday Book...in the gracious presence" of the Queen mum no less. Terry however, hasn't got a thing to wear since the invite stipulates "Dress: Civic vestments, Decorations, Morning/Military Dress, Academic Robes."

### Having a ball

LAST TUESDAY saw the first conference for ambitious Tory women, the *High Flyers*. An opportunity to discuss the vital issues facing women such as low pay and the erosion of the NHS you'd think. One delegate, Melinda Libby, Tory candidate for St Helens North explained the vital purpose of the conference: "We can chat about our jobs and our boyfriends and husbands". By the end of the day instead of being armed with political policies, each delegate received an invite to a summer ball.

## Poisoning our food

Dear Comrades,

Helen Gasking's analysis of food production under capitalism was interesting (*Militant* 793).

It is clear that many food additives cause cancer in laboratory animals yet continue to be used in foods to cut costs and boost profits. An artificial flavour enhancer is cheaper than putting in the real thing.

Under capitalism food production is cynically manipulated to protect the interests of the food bosses. For example, the EEC

restricts food production to maintain price levels, yet millions die of malnutrition because they cannot afford to pay.

However, Helen Gasking failed to explain that workers can buy healthier, non-refined foods but at a higher price. To charge more for not adulterating food must be one of the most impertinent methods of profiteering ever conceived. Happy eating!

Yours fraternally  
R.S.Bishop  
Middlesex

## Artificial sugars

Dear Militant,

As a result of reading "Additives cause allergies" particularly the part about ASPARTAME, I thought I had better check the ingredients listed on the container of a brand of artificial sweetener I have been using in an effort to lose weight.

Imagine my consternation when I found that this quite expensive "Revolutionary low calorie sweetener" CANDEREL contains

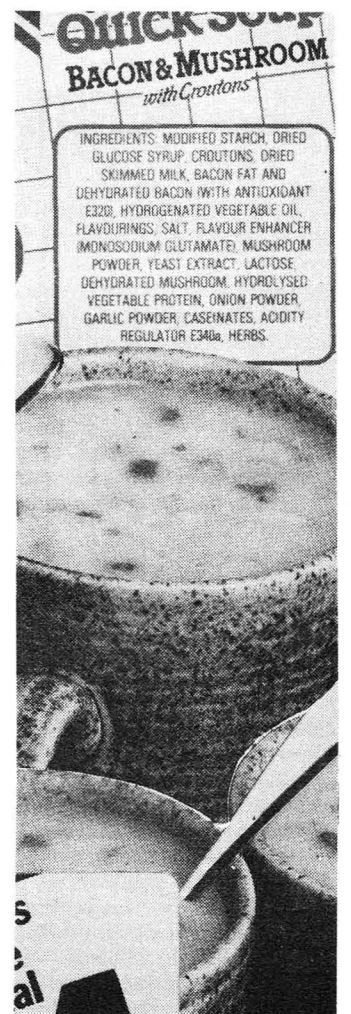
Aspartame 17 per cent, especially as during the last year I must have used over 1,000 tablets!

It may be of interest to readers to know that in spite of cutting out all sugar in my tea and coffee and replacing it with Canderel, I failed to lose an ounce of weight. In fact in one year, I have put on a stone and a half and try as I may cannot get rid of it. Also I find I have very little energy in spite of the fact that I eat "all the right

foods" like fruit, salads etc.

I am not saying that the Aspartame in the Canderel is the cause of the way I feel but I can assure you I won't be buying any more artificial sweeteners of any kind from now on. Thank you, *Militant* for drawing my attention to it.

Yours fraternally  
Norma Michael  
West Glamorgan





# Officials' TV attack on Liverpool GMBATU

THE RECENT attack against the General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trades Union's Liverpool Branch Five in Channel Four's *Union World* programme has confirmed activists' worst fears about the developing witch-hunt in the union.

The programme's presenter repeated many of the false allegations contained in Labour's inquiry report—underlining how this report has damaged the party and the union by providing all Labour's enemies with a pretext to attack it.

He claimed that Branch Five had secured extra delegates to the District Labour Party by 'fiddling' membership figures. This argument, used as a pretext to suspend the entire GMBATU delegation from Liverpool's six constituencies, is a complete fallacy. The branch sends the maximum five delegates to the District Labour Party.

Any trade union branch with at least 500 members is entitled to a maximum of five delegates. Branch Five has 1,200 members. The dishonesty of these accusations is shown by the fact that all the union delegations are agreed with the North West regional office. Therefore if the allegations of malpractice have any substance, it is against the

regional office not the branch that criticisms should be directed.

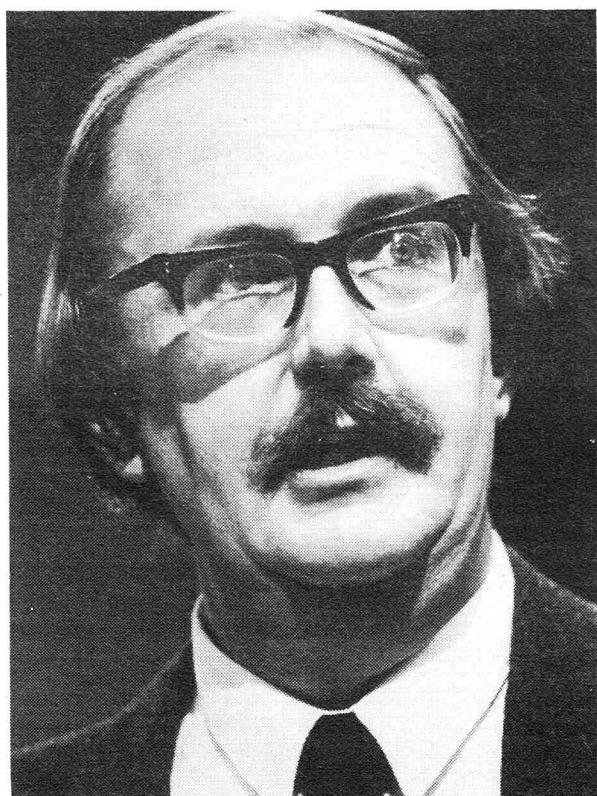
Instead of defending the magnificent fighting role of GMBATU's members on Liverpool City Council, the General Secretary, John Edmonds, and regional official, Andrew Davis, both used the programme to attack the leadership of Branch Five and *Militant* supporters in the union.

John Edmonds spoke of the need to deal with "small groups of extremists", arguing that "the best way of ensuring that they don't get unreasonable control is to give the rest of the members opportunity to express their opinion".

This argument stands reality on its head. It is precisely because of the full democratic involvement of the branch membership that supporters of *Militant* have won an increasing influence. The record of the branch with its present leadership deserves examination.

In a secret ballot during September 1985, 76 per cent of branch members voted against the advice of the national leadership and on the recommendations of their stewards to take indefinite all-out strike in support of the city council.

A month later, despite the personal intervention of John Edmonds, at a mass



John Edmonds, GMBATU general secretary.

meeting of over 1,000, the members voted to reject the notorious Stonefrost Report, with only one vote against.

Whenever the members have been given "the opportunity to express their opinions", the position of the branch leadership has been vindicated overwhelmingly. This nails the lie of a small

group exercising unreasonable control.

On the contrary this is a more accurate description of the methods now being employed by the opponents of *Militant*. As if to make a mockery of John Edmond's call to the membership to be consulted, the union's unelected regional officials



GMBATU members march in support of Liverpool City Council.

are currently pressing ahead with restructuring of the city council's branches in spite of the unanimous opposition of the membership.

Andrew Davis revealed the real aim of the union's investigation in Liverpool, when he warned that *Militant* supporters "would certainly not be able to continue to hold office within the union". He added: "It would be totally wrong to talk about expulsion from the union at this stage..."

It seems that a section of the union officials are preparing their own purge, waiting first for Labour's right-wing to succeed in expelling the Liverpool 12 from the Labour Party.

Any attempt to extend the witch-hunt into the ranks of GMBATU will meet with a storm of opposition. The



Ian Lowes, convenor of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee.

union's rank and file will no more accept attempts by unelected full-time officials to veto or remove elected stewards and Labour representatives, than the movement as a whole will accept the right of unelected judges to remove elected councillors.

## Bureaucrats' strange bedfellow

PERHAPS the saddest and most surprising feature of the *Union World* programme was the comments of GMB Education Branch Convenor Peter Lennard, who is now supporting the right wing's witch hunt against *Militant* supporters.

Lennard's own branch committee have actually suspended one member, Mick Hogan, for writing an article (in a personal capacity) for *Mersey Militant*.

Lennard claims that regional office's intention to split his own branch of 4,000 members into small branches would "make it easier for *Militant* Tendency to infiltrate."

"I don't believe you could actually shuffle a pack with the jokers in and change the pack; you have to get rid of the jokers", he added. The evidence cited by Peter Lennard to justify his wild claims is ludicrous. He claims that *Militant* put people on full time facilities into his branch; the individual concerned is not a *Militant* supporter and is in fact a member of the Orange



Lennard (centre), flanked by *Militant* supporters Jimmy Hollinshead (left) and Ian Lowes (right).

Lodge and the full time facilities were negotiated by Peter Lennard himself.

The interview has left local GMBATU activists scratching their heads in disbelief. Is this the same Peter Lennard who only six months ago described local NALGO

they would be 'visited' and 'sorted out'?

Is this the same GMB convenor who travelled around Liverpool in a taxi to personally hand out redundancy notices to his members?

All these actions which were reported to Labour's

**The pressures of a retreat test out workers as much as the heat of the battle**

leaders and other white-collar trade union leaders as 'rats' and 'wimps'?

Is this the same individual who informed members of his ward Labour Party that

NEC inquiry team have quite falsely been attributed to supporters of *Militant*. It is therefore vital that the record is set straight once and for all.

Peter Lennard's accusations have undoubtedly sown confusion amongst GMBATU members outside Liverpool. The union's right wing will no doubt attempt to make political capital out of his hostility to *Militant*. GMBATU members in Liverpool however, will be asking their questions about Lennard's role.

The GMBATU reps committee on Liverpool City Council are demanding an investigation of Peter Lennard on the regional committee, after it emerged that he passed written documents on to a Liberal councillor in order to get a fellow GMBATU member sacked.

He wrote to shop stewards

at Ford Halewood claiming to be Chairman of the Senior Reps Committee, a position, from which he had resigned several weeks earlier, in order to get information that could be used against the member concerned.

Lennard has completed his political somersault by accepting appointment as the sole lay representative of the union's 9,000 members on the new Trade Union Forum.

This body, comprised of one trade union official and one trade union representative for each local authority union, was established in the wake of last November's defeat of the city council campaign as a conscious move to cut across support for the more democratic and representative Shop Stewards Committee.

Indeed, Andrew Davis admitted that the aim of the new body is to "smash the Joint Shop Stewards Committee". So much for giving the membership a say.

The GMBATU Senior Reps committee is demanding the right to elect its representatives. Again Peter Lennard is now opposing those fighting for democracy in the union, a position he supported in the past. In 1980, he and Ian Lowes moved a resolution to the GMWU congress calling for the election and re-election every five years of the General Secretary, and the regular election of all officials.

Questions are now being raised about his motives for

opposing the splitting of Education Branch 80. Under union rules, branch secretaries receive 10 per cent commission on all members' subscriptions. In the education branch with its 4,000 members, this commission could amount to over £10,000 a year for the branch secretary.

Peter Lennard is convenor and also now branch secretary-elect. Many members of the branch will rightly be demanding that following the example of GMBATU Branch Five, every penny of this commission is paid into branch funds, whereupon any lay official can submit a claim for legitimate expenses to be vetted by the branch committee.

GMBATU members in Liverpool and elsewhere want their union to mount an effective fight against the real threat to jobs and conditions. They don't want witch-hunts which only divide the workforce and weaken the union.

The North West Regional GMBATU has lost a third of its members in private industry since 1979. It is on that front that union officials should concentrate their efforts, not on attacking the left.

The fight for democracy and accountability within GMBATU will continue to gain ground despite the attempts of the media and the right-wing to conduct a smear campaign against those who are waging that fight.



# Industrial Reports

**Setback  
for IMI  
strike**

## Shopworkers fight low pay

THE STRIKE by 280 AUEW members at IMI Radiators, Shipley has ended in defeat.

The six week long fight for the reinstatement of AUEW Deputy Convenor Bill Clarkson reached its turning point with the failure of strike pay to arrive as promised in the fourth week. Strike Committee members who went down to the AUEW headquarters in London were turned away with nothing.

Local negotiations were started but the union was further weakened when management refused to let the chairman of the strike committee take part. The resulting management letter promised flexibility and lied about non-victimisation. A meeting following in the fifth week saw two-thirds of union members still on strike but the narrowness of the vote to stay out, persuaded more to go back.

Strike activists have been victimised. The chair of the strike committee wasn't allowed to clock in but had to report to management and was then sacked. Another activist was sacked for "abusing a car" although management wouldn't define "abuse". Others have been suspended.

Company bosses won't recognise the AUEW "or any other other union". In place of unions the management have established a "steering committee" picked by them which will organise elections to a new "works council". Management then want to set up a no-strike deal with this scab works council. If they don't get what they want from this body within 12 months, management will alter the "representation arrangements".

28 activists have refused to go back or have resigned rather than be subject to the new conditions. Having picked off the AUEW at the Shipley factory, where will the bosses of this multinational company aim next? The answer to them is the re-establishing of the union and the development of a national combine committee within IMI. This together with the building of the Broad left within the union will transform the AUEW.

By Steve Wilkinson  
(Shipley Labour Party,  
personal capacity)

SHOPWORKERS everywhere will be relieved at the defeat of the government's plans to deregulate retail distribution and introduce seven-day, twenty four hour trading contained in the Shops Bill. Had this bill passed into law, the working conditions of hundreds of thousands of workers in the retail distributive industry would have been immeasurably worsened.

The feeling of relief will undoubtedly be expressed by the membership at the USDAW Annual Delegate Meeting taking place in Eastbourne from 27-30 April. Whilst the government have been defeated on the Shops' Bill, there is no room for complacency by shopworkers and USDAW members generally. The proposals contained in another bill which is working its way through Parliament, the Wages Bill, are actually in many respects even worse. Moreover, USDAW cannot rely on the opposition of Tory backwoodsmen and Ulster Unionists to defeat the Wages Bill, as it could

By George Williamson  
(Eastern Divisional  
Councillor,  
personal capacity)

with the Shops Bill.

The Wages Bill proposes to curtail the effectiveness of Wages Councils (already ineffective in ensuring decent living standards for the workers they cover) in particular by removing all workers aged under 21 from their scope. They also repeal the Truck Acts, introduced to safeguard the employees' rights and to prevent employers interfering with their payment of wages.

The union will have to mobilise as never before to defeat this bill. The bill will not be defeated merely by winning 'public opinion'.

This year's conference will also discuss the continual problem of low pay among USDAW members. There are nine propositions on pay. Under Thatcher's government, all the general problems facing USDAW members have been compounded by low pay. Pro-



position 140 from Newcastle branch, which calls for a national low-pay campaign to achieve a national minimum wage of £120 for all USDAW members should be

supported. £120 per week still falls below two-thirds of the national average wage. USDAW this year has a new leadership, but the old problems remain. It is up to the

new leadership to measure up to the needs of USDAW members and give a fighting lead to eradicate the many problems facing all workers in retail distribution.



Miners march in Mansfield in 1984.

## NUM rank and file fight on

"ONE YEAR ON" was the title of the meeting held in Kiveton, a pit village in South Yorkshire last Friday. Thirty-five people attended.

Albert Bournes, secretary of Kiveton NUM chaired the meeting, Mick McGinty, vice-president Notts Area was the first speaker. He described the battle of the Notts NUM, the attempt of Lynk and Prendergast to have the strikers declared unfinancial members of the union at the end of the strike, the victory in June 1985 in many of the branch elections, the ballot for a breakaway UDM and the rebuilding of the NUM from scratch.

Today, the UDM claim 24,000 members in Notts, yet 6,500 have joined the NUM, despite intimidation from management. The UDM is slipping away in North Derbyshire where they have at most 100 members.

### Back to NUM

As UDM members have gone back to the NUM, management have tried to drive the NUM underground. Now NUM officials have been told by management that as they are not in a recognised union, no leaflets, papers or talking can be done on threat of dismissal.

At Bevercotes Paul Whetton has been sacked for putting up a notice for an NUM meeting.

The second speaker was John Dunn, from Markham Colliery in North Derbyshire.

He spoke of the failure of the Tories' attempt to smash the NUM and said that the strike was not a crushing defeat as the union had survived intact, in spite of a deterioration in working conditions.

John explained that the Tories fought as a class and the main lesson from the strike was that the workers have to fight as a class too.

## GEC workers are 'Determined to win'

EARLIER THIS year, management at GEC Openshaw, Manchester, announced their intention to make 300 of the 1,000 workforce redundant. The site unions rejected compulsory redundancy and put forward work sharing and a willingness to look at volunteers. To date 83 have volunteered for redundancy, with little better than the Government's minimal terms.

On Tuesday 8 April the union full-time officials were brought into the report back mass meeting.

### Vote for action

After discussion, including the ramifications of Wapping, the mass meeting voted overwhelmingly for industrial action to oppose compulsory redundancy. In the secret ballot that followed 570 (83%) voted for action with 115 (17%) against.

Next day management issued 120 redundancy notices, with another 100 to come before the end of the year. The way the notices were handed out was really provocative. Management were just walking around

handing out notices to people while they were working. One foreman with 40 years service was handed his notice in the middle of the shop while he was talking to a group of workers on his section.

The first notices expire in June so we have a little time to prepare for action and to contact other GEC factories. We have already been in touch with local Labour MP's, MEP's and City Councils with a view to a lobby/delegation going to GEC's headquarters at Stanhope Gate, in London.

The Openshaw factory has been producing Switchgear since 1911, yet over the past 3-4 years there has been a continual turnover in senior management.

Unlike management, the workforce are determined to be around for many years to come. We have a proud record of united action on the site and of helping others in their struggles. We are determined to win.

By John Byrne  
(Shop steward,  
GEC Openshaw)

## Support Silentnight strikers March and Rally

Saturday 17 May, 12.00 Keighley.  
Speakers include:- Dennis Skinner MP  
Derek Hatton (Deputy Leader Liverpool City Council)  
Ben Rubner (FTAT General Secretary)

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

## Strikers will not be taken to cleaners

WITH THE attack on the wages councils, contract cleaners in Huyton DHSS offices were threatened last year with wage reductions, a cut in numbers and fewer hours. So the women decided to fight back by joining the TGWU. They won their dispute and wages were increased to the trade union rate of £1.86 an hour.

This year the contract came under tender. Provincial, their contractors, did

not apply so the contract went to Donway who want women to work under the same conditions as last year. Letters were sent informing the women they would not be needed from 4 April. But on Friday 21 March, they were told they were finished. So the women went out on strike.

Donway advertised the jobs in the local job centre - appropriately on the 1 April! The cleaners picketed the

door while management hovered anxiously. Several women turned away when they realised they would be taking someone else's job.

### Scabs sneak in

Unfortunately scabs have been found and have started going into work or rather sneaking in, 45 minutes before the normal time, to avoid the pickets.

Discussions are taking

place between the TGWU and the CPSA/SCPS over support for the women. Solidarity action is essential for a quick end to the strike.

by Tricia Jockins  
(a striker's daughter)

and Lesley Holt  
(NW regional LP Women's Committee)



# Industrial Reports

## SOGAT must give national lead

AS THE national dispute with News International enters its fourth months the apparent lack of success of the SOGAT '82 leadership's strategy is showing its effect in the turn toward mass picketing of the Bemrose plant, part of Murdoch's empire, which prints the *Sunday Times* colour magazine.

As reported in *Militant* last week we believe it is vital that all Murdoch's products are boycotted and blacked. The decision of the Bemrose workforce to reject industrial action is a blow to our campaign against Murdoch.

It is necessary, however, to examine the reasons for the ballot result. The main factor is the fear of many workers in the plant that industrial action would lead to the plant being closed. And this is an area of appallingly high unemployment.

### No campaign

They have watched the conduct of the dispute closely and can see that without a massive escalation the chance of victory recedes. At the same time they have been distanced from the dispute by the total lack of any campaign by the union to inform

## Journalists conference

AT LAST week's conference of the National Union of Journalists delegates voted by a small majority to institute disciplinary proceedings against those NUJ members who have been crossing picket lines at Wapping.

Conference had also passed other parts of a motion on Wapping which called for the proper picketing of the News International fight by official NUJ pickets, the reinstatement of all those sacked by News International, no handling of copy or the sending of material to News International and full support for mass pickets outside Wapping. However it rejected calls for wider solidarity action throughout Fleet Street in support of News International workers.

An important motion was also passed agreeing to open talks with other unions in the print industry with a view to amalgamating as soon as

By Dave Power  
(Bemrose SOGAT)

and involve the provincial membership—even the vital ones in Murdoch's empire. Indeed, we were instructed earlier to keep working.

The frustration of London printers with the apparent lack of progress at Wapping has unfortunately been turned towards the Bemrose workers. London Machine Branch members picketing the plant have been commendably patient with fellow union members working normally on a scab publication. But there are dangers unless careful tactics are adopted.

Three of us who refused to cross the picket line were becoming increasingly vulnerable to victimisation by the company. After discussions with the pickets it was agreed

to allow us to go into the plant.

We agreed this was the correct decision in view of the crucial work that needs to be done on behalf of the strikers inside the plant. It would be wrong also to unnecessarily split pro-strike union activists off from the mass of the workers. We were applauded through the picket line by the pickets.

Eight hours later, however, coming off shift we had to run a virtual gauntlet as the less disciplined pickets, who had been drinking, hurled abuse and curses at all those leaving the plant.

### Frustration

Whilst we understand the sense of frustration experienced by those involved in the London strike, indeed we are also extremely frustrated at the slow progress of the dispute and the problems we have encountered in our own plant, these kind of actions will only be counterproductive.

The tactic of attempting to picket the Bemrose members into action without a sustained campaign from the

Murdoch for refusing to go to Fortress Wapping, told the meeting that the scabs were undermining every worker in the print, not just those in the front-line at Wapping.

Carmell Bedford, a SOGAT Clerical steward, who before the strike was employed at *The Times* pointed out that a large proportion of those sacked by Murdoch were women.

The best-received platform speech came from John Bloom, a member of the Casuals' Strike Committee, elected by casuals belonging to SOGAT's London Central Branch.

John thought the key to winning the dispute, and stopping the wave of attacks by print bosses on print union members' jobs and conditions, was solidarity action throughout Fleet Street and at distribution depots up and down the country.

## Express

THE CARROT and stick method has just been used in the 'great cause' of maximising profits at *Express Newspapers*.

The company wrote to each employee offering inducements to abandon their jobs, with the underlying threat that all offers would be withdrawn on 31 March, with hints of a shut-down if agreement wasn't reached.

This threat, or the 'stick' part of the offer was eventually delivered through the post on 27 March in the



Unless the SOGAT leadership dispel rumours about purging their contempt and give a decisive national lead they will allow dissension to spread.

leadership will not work. The situation is also made worse by the failure to involve the activists within the plant who are arguing for solidarity action and the secretive way in which the picket organisers are operating.

The real task, and the only way to win the dispute, is

for Fleet Street and provincial members to force our leadership to widen the dispute. A mass campaign must be mounted to stop Fleet Street and stage a national print strike. The future of all print workers is at stake.

## N Derby miners in dispute

LAST WEEK saw the lifting of the area overtime ban in North Derbyshire over a bonus scheme thrust upon them by the Coal Board.

The ban has been lifted whilst negotiations take place. However, peace has not descended on North Derbyshire. Management seem determined to inflame what are already bitter relations.

Strike action has taken place at Marham and High Moor. At High Moor the men have refused to work with two UDM men, both area borers.

On Monday morning the day shift turned back followed by the afters and the night men. The strike was 100 per cent solid. At a mass meeting on Wednesday it was decided to return to work this Monday; to impose an overtime ban and work to rule until all UDM at the pit are removed.

Two UDM surface workers helped the process by being caught in the pub when they should have been working. Both were sacked.

By Pete Darby  
(High Moor NUM, personal capacity)



NUJ conference for disciplinary action against Wapping scabs.

form of a letter from chief executive Roger Bowes, stating that if agreement wasn't reached by all chapels by 31 March the Express building in Fleet Street would be closed down. As usual the stick comes much larger than the carrot.

The EETPU chapel has agreed to a cut in numbers of 64, to be followed by a further loss of 16 jobs on 31 August. This agreement was reached because of the climate of fear and apprehension felt by the majority of workers in Express Newspapers.

What of the executive of the EETPU? Having been justly found guilty by the TUC over its role in Murdoch's operation at Wapping and in Glasgow we have not

heard a single word of condemnation from their own members in Fleet Street.

The answer to all of these problems is simple—its achievement hard—an active rank and file, a principled set of leaders and last, but not least, a truly socialist government.

Finally, get on down to Wapping, see the barbed wire, the massive police presence, ask the local people what this government's policies have done to their quality of life. If we allow it, Murdoch's fortress will be the inspiration for carbon copies to be set up all over the country.

By Derek Spencer  
(Daily Express, EETPU)

## Old realism in TASS

THIS YEAR'S conference of the engineering union TASS, will begin by discussing its future. First the dissolution of the link with the AUEW and secondly the endorsement of the amalgamation of the National Society of Metal Mechanics.

The agenda as a whole seems to contain no support for any of the right wing new realist ideas which have been advocated by some of the leadership in the trade unions. The agenda shows the total opposition to Tory policies on a whole range of issues.

A resolution from the Metal Mechanics calls for the nationalisation under workers control and management of Westland. After the debacle of the last few months this call

should not only be confined to Westland but to the whole aerospace industry which has been decimated by the Tories and their friends.

Another resolution on Liverpool City Council lays the blame firmly where it belongs on this Tory government and the previous Liberal administration.

There are also resolutions for discussion on South Africa, Grenada, Nicaragua.

There are calls for a Labour government to enact legislation to renationalise privatised industries, reinstate sacked miners and reimburse sequestered NUM funds, and not to attempt any wage restraint which it points out will spell electoral disaster and prevent Labour winning back the votes of millions of skilled workers.

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

continued from back

aiding the struggle, undermines the confidence of the strikers.

If SOGAT bends the knee to the judge over the present injunction, there are still six outstanding. Even the picketing at Wapping is illegal, so there is no legal way to avoid the maze of anti-union laws. Nothing is guaranteed by this course. The judge ruled that the NGA has issued an 'instruction' by the "nod and wink" method.

This dispute will not be won by retreating. It can only be won through the leadership recognising their mistakes, especially not calling out Fleet Street. The demand for this is finding a growing echo among the rank and file members. The leaders must respond.



# Militant

**Liverpool mass Militant rally**

Sunday 4 May 7.30pm.

The Philharmonic Hall,  
Hope Street, Liverpool

**Speakers: Peter Taaffe, Derek Hatton  
and Addenbrookes speaker.**

## Workers

# back Labour

**THE COUNCIL elections on 8 May are Labour's chance to humiliate the Tories and crush the Alliance. In Liverpool, a decent future for working people depends on keeping the City Council Labour with socialist policies.**

At last weekend's BLOC conference, Deputy Leader of the council Derek Hatton outlined the council's record: "We refused to implement the 1,000 redundancies in the Liberal/Tory budget we inherited. We went on to create 2,000 jobs.

"We will have 4,000 council houses built by the end of this year, proper semi-detached houses with gardens at front and back. While other councils have been cutting, six new nurseries have been built. All this has been done without a penny on the rents.

"What we have done since

**By Peter Grue  
(Garston North LPYS)**

our election is exactly what we said we would do. If after all that we are found guilty by some capitalist court or some district auditor of wilful misconduct, we will say 'Yes, we are guilty and proud to be guilty'."

### Guaranteed job

In Liverpool, at a public meeting of 150 organised by Netherley, Valley and Woolton Labour Parties, councillor Paul Astbury added to the list of the council's

other achievements: "Many of the 2,000 new jobs have been for young people, and 200 YTS trainees have been taken on with trade union rights and rates of pay and a guaranteed job at the end of their training.

"£400,000 has been invested and 26 new bin lorries bought to win the battle to get back to a weekly refuse collection."

"Over ten years of Tory and Liberal control" he said, "they allowed the services in the city to be diminished. The waiting list for homes grew to 22,000, yet no homes were built between 1978 and 1983. Rents went from the lowest in Britain to the highest outside London. The Liberals even expressed pride that they cut 5,000 jobs."

Unemployment in Liverpool now stands at 64,000, 51,000 private sector jobs

have gone since 1979. £560 million of grants and subsidies has been withheld from the council by the government.

Even more severe cuts this year mean that the council will be £37 million down on what is needed to defend jobs and services. But Derek Hatton is determined that cuts will not be imposed: "We will be making a call again to other local authorities. We cannot go down the road of doing Thatcher's dirty work for her."

On its record of socialist policies, the Liverpool Labour council is confident that it will win the support of the city's voters to continue its defence of jobs, house-building and essential services.

## There's got to be a big change

**LYNNE FAULKES, Labour candidate for the Kingspark ward in Hackney in the 8 May elections has met with tremendous response on the doorsteps:**

"Not surprisingly, given that the ward has 35.6 per cent male unemployment and 96 per cent council housing, the majority of those canvassed have been determined to vote Labour, 'to show that woman'. There have been very few Tories or Liberals but a large number of 'don't knows' and much of our time has been spent on them.

"Well, what has Labour done for us? Look at this dump/We wait for months for repairs/The streets are always filthy" are typical comments from desperate families cramped in high-rise flats and slums with no hope of getting out with 23,000 on the council's list.

"We have been encouraging people to join the Labour Party and help us make it in-

to a real party of Labour. 'Yeah, that's what we want'. 'The City and those that already have, they've been given more and we've had to pay for it all'. 'The rich—that's where the trouble lies. We want someone to speak for us'. 'There's got to be a big change or something will snap' said a 63-year old woman who originally didn't think she'd be voting but ended taking a poster, buying a paper and wishing she could do more to help.

"Far from Militant putting people off, we've found the opposite. Even those who first say 'No, I'm not really interested in politics' end up having a real go at Thatcher.

"Sales of the paper and the Charter for Women Workers have soared and we have been inundated with names to join the Labour Party and LPYS. The main problem is finding the time to talk to everyone who's interested!"

## All out on 3 May!

THE JOINT clerical chapels of the print unions at the Murdoch newspapers have called for a 24 hour stoppage on 3 May to coincide with arrival of sacked print workers marching from Scotland and the North East. It will be the biggest picket so far at Fort Murdoch.

**By Peter Jarvis  
(NGA London Region)**

The call must be clear and loud for every trade union member to be at this mass picket. By the sheer number of bodies, the police must be forced to apologise to their Mr Murdoch for failing to clear a path for his scab papers.

Shutting down Fleet Street on that day would give a massive boost to the turnout. It should be enthusiastically adopted by the union tops. At this most critical stage of the strike, it would help to overcome their apparent inactivity.

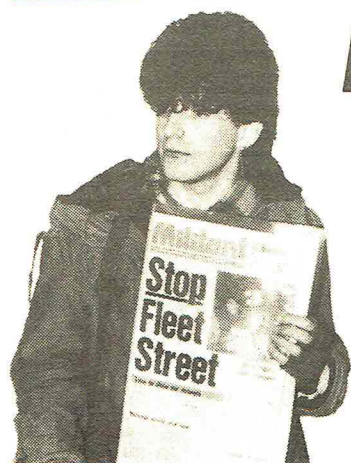
Their only initiative, if it could be described as such, is the ballot at Waford and Liverpool (see article on Page 15) and the attempt by some officials to get the union to purge its contempt. The National Executive did not vote on the issue, leaving it on the table. But Brenda Dean has agreed that "to get rid of the sequestration order would mean that we can give added support to our members."

Any such talk rather than Continued on page 15



Photo: Dave Sinclair

Children playing in Everton inner city park, created by Liverpool City Council



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