

# Militant

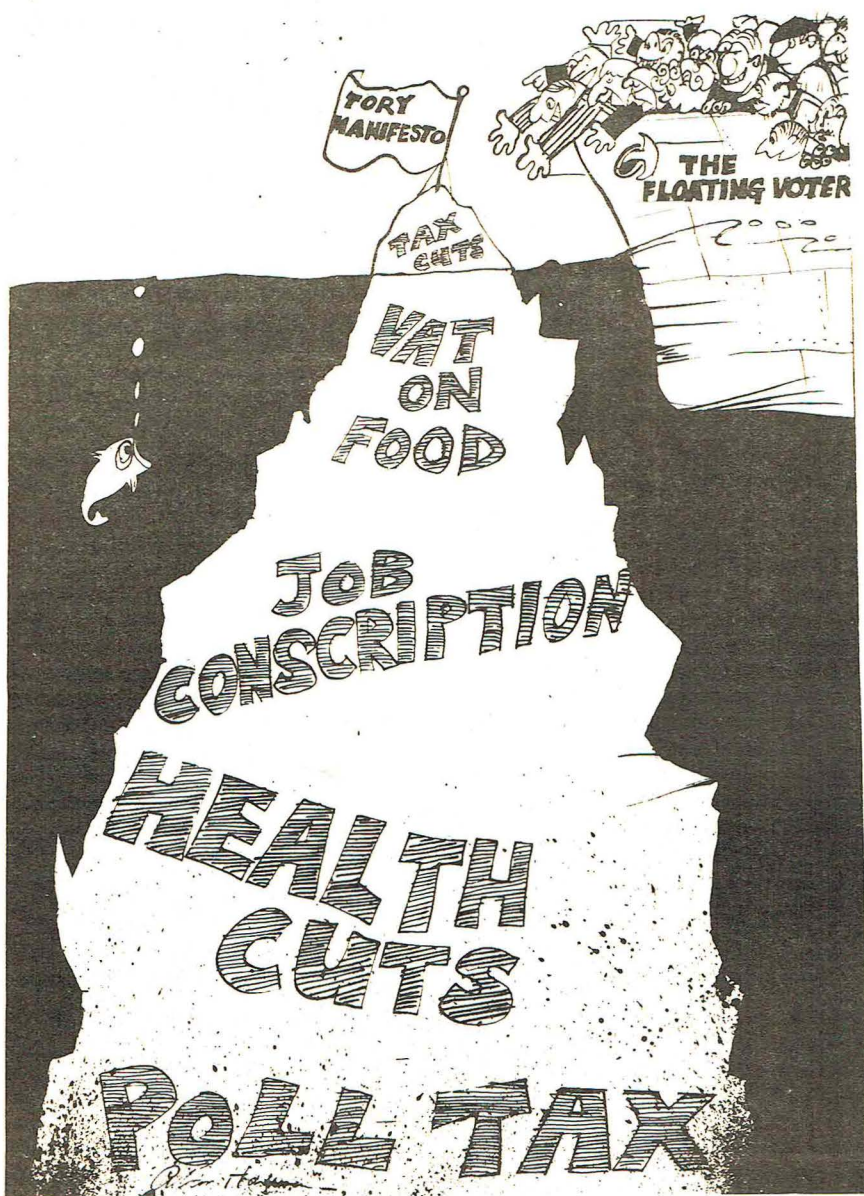
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Labour to  
power on a  
socialist  
programme

# How to beat Thatcher



IF THATCHER is returned for a third term she will be out to complete her counter revolution for the rich. The three million unemployed will become four or five million. The 9 million workers, 40 per cent of the workforce, forced to exist on poverty wages will become 50 or 60 per cent.

The sight of beggars on the streets of London, many of them young unemployed or among the capital's 30,000 squatters, will become common. This is what Thatcher means by a return to Victorian values. She will implement her 'hidden agenda' of tax increases even for the very poorest.

She must be stopped. Labour must act urgently. It must prove that it is the party that defends the unemployed, the poor and the sick. But more than that, it must show it is the party that will protect those in work who will lose their job if Thatcher gets back. Of those with their own home who will be thrown out if the Tories win again.

A new general election is not just about electing a few MPs, it is the future of working people that is at stake. But the question on every workers' mind is how can the Tories be defeated?

For two thirds of the

population are opposed to Thatcherism. Every ordinary household has been touched by unemployment—amongst their friends, relatives and of most concern to them, amongst their children.

This is the most hated government in living memory. But millions of ordinary voters are waiting to be convinced that Labour can transform their lives, and guarantee employment and a future, for themselves and their families.

They do not want slick posters and glossy symbols, but policies they can believe in, and a determined Labour leadership confident it can win. As TGWU leader, Ron Todd, has told the leadership: "We have to fight standing on our feet, with a belief in what we are about."

He and other union leaders have desperately urged Neil Kinnock to campaign on the basic issues of jobs and housing, which are hitting Labour voters. Then the lag in the opinion polls could be made up in the election period itself.

This is not 1979. Then the

By Peter Taaffe  
Editor *Militant*

## A programme for victory.

- ★ Fighting for jobs—a massive increase in public spending, giving useful work to the unemployed.
- ★ Fighting for youth—a guaranteed job for all school and college leavers.
- ★ Fighting low pay—a national minimum wage of at least £120 per week.
- ★ Fighting for homes—a pledge to build a million homes a year.
- ★ For a socialist programme—nationalise the commanding heights of the economy under workers' control and management.

record of the right wing Callaghan Labour government, culminating in the strikes of the low paid against its wages' norm, paved the way for the Tories.

Nor is this 1983, when Thatcher could bask in her Falklands 'triumph', reviving the memory of Britain's lost might. Then the election result was set before the campaign started.

Now, in the few weeks of an election campaign, if the Labour leaders go on the offensive against capitalism in decline, against the myth of the 'property owning democracy', they could inspire their traditional basis of support to turn out.

With a socialist programme, to plan production under the democratic control of the majority, the Labour leaders could provide the resources to meet workers' needs. A fighting socialist campaign for victory can stop the Thatcher bandwagon in its tracks.

## Inside...

### South Africa

The battle for COSATU House.  
—page 8,9.



### MI5:

Security services threaten labour movement rights—page 6.

### NHS Feature:

The rich-poor health divide—page 11.



## Fighting fund

*Militant* fighting fund update—£37,000. See page 7.

The *Militant* Editorial Board apologises for errors in this week's issue, which are due to technical difficulties.

# Militant

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

## Victimisation

THE LABOUR PARTY national executive's decision to replace the democratically selected and constitutionally endorsed parliamentary candidate, Sharon Atkin, is a threatening escalation of the Party right wing's preparedness to arbitrarily victimise those they disagree with. It must be opposed by every Labour activist.

This witch-hunting atmosphere was primarily created by the right's continuing attack upon *Militant*, the expulsion of the paper's Editorial Board, the attacks upon Liverpool councillors and the expulsion of a number of individual Party members who support Marxist policies.

The right have only been restrained from wider purges of *Militant* supporters, by the paper's determined but sober campaign against expulsions, and its ability to win the sympathy of ordinary Party members.

This paper warned that if the right were allowed to succeed against *Militant*, they would come for others on the hard left next. The imposition of right wing parliamentary candidates is part of this process.

Shallow political commentators, like Peter Kellner of the *New Statesman*, argued that "*Militant* bashing wins votes." But after four years of expulsions, enquiries and threats, Labour is in the same position in the polls as it was at the last general election.

Kinnock at the Welsh TUC, raised again the charge of "bringing the Party into disrepute." Sharon Atkin, he judged, was guilty. But where is his public repudiation of Sir James Callaghan, who has chosen this pre-election period to again bring Labour's defence policy into disrepute?

Is a new candidate to be imposed in Birkenhead, in place of right winger Frank Field? He is urging electors to tactically vote Alliance rather than Labour in some seats. The local SPD have produced a leaflet announcing that Field backs their candidate for the council elections, as he has told Labour voters not to support a Marxist Labour candidate standing in one of the wards.

Is Stuart Weir, editor of the Party magazine, *New Socialist*, to be removed? Just before an election he publicly wrote to the press that Labour has only a "remote chance of being returned as a majority government." To ordinary Party workers, preparing themselves for the hard slog of an election campaign, that is treachery.

*Militant* does not agree with the views in question of Sharon Atkin, nor the manner in which they were expressed. Labour is not a "racist party", although Labour governments have enacted racist legislation, like immigration controls, which the left opposes and demands are repealed.

The labour and trade union movement are the only organisations in capitalist society, which embody the ideas of workers' unity, solidarity and equality. Black and white workers must fight side by side within the labour movement, to ensure its leaders are fully committed to policies that will meet the needs of the entire working class. That means a Labour Party pledged to full socialism.

*Militant* opposes the creation of Black Sections, because they would not assist the building of that unity in action. Nor will a mere organisational change encourage the influx of black workers, that the Party must work for.

The attack on Sharon Atkin, however, could further damage the Party's image amongst some black voters. It may further disillusion rank and file members. They will have seen the overtly racist pressure on Kinnock from the press, to deal with Sharon Atkin. The *Star* described her as "Chief of the spear-carriers" for Black Sections. The *Daily Mirror* called her Labour's "black sheep."

What Kellner and the Labour leaders are unable to grasp, is that elections are not determined by the Party's appreciation by the press nor by the opinion polls. Victory depends on the enthusiasm of the Labour workers and solid supporters, who then galvanise the rest of the Party's vote. The leadership seem intent on demoralising their own key supporters. The results could be potentially disastrous.

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# Militant bashing will lose votes

"I THINK Neil's speech was of historic importance... We shall look back on this day as the moment when Labour won the next election." (Denis Healey).

By Peter Taaffe

Perhaps Healey was referring to an effective demolition job on the Tories or a searing indictment of capitalism? No, it was Neil Kinnock's infamous denunciation of Liverpool City Council and *Militant* supporters at the 1985 Party conference.

Healey's incredible statement and similar ones by Hattersley are lovingly recorded in Michael Leapman's "semi-official" biography of Neil Kinnock just published. Leapman has virtually acted as a ghost writer in this apologia for the Kinnock brand of leadership, closely collaborating with his staff and actually submitting the text to Kinnock before publication.

This accounts for the jaundiced and inaccurate account of Kinnock's attack on *Militant* and the many errors of fact.

## Outnumbered

Thus Leapman, commenting on a highly successful *Militant* anti-witch-hunt rally in Kinnock's constituency of Islwyn, claims that "Busloads of supporters came from as far away as Liverpool, but were afforded some of their own treatment when Kinnock loyalists paraded outside with placards".

There were no "busloads" from Liverpool. There were at least 150 local people at the 500 strong rally addressed by Derek Hatton and Peter Taaffe. Moreover the

ten Kinnock "loyalists" with placards were heavily outnumbered and were invited into the meeting to put their case, though they refused.

Leapman has also swallowed the legend that David Blunkett initiated the famous incident at the 1985 conference when Derek Hatton withdrew his resolution in the interests of 'unity' in favour of another resolution which effectively made the same points. The initiative came from Derek Hatton and *Militant* supporters. Blunkett eagerly seized on it as a "masterly strategy".

Leapman's book does however have one merit; it shows in some detail that Kinnock and his advisors are absolutely obsessed with *Militant*. The book is not so much a 'biography' as an account—a very one-sided one—of the right-wing Labour leadership's war against *Militant*.

It accepts the totally false analysis that '*Militant*-bashing' wins Labour votes. On the contrary, Kinnock's assault on his own party members—not just *Militant*, but others like Leslie Huckfield and Sharon Atkin—has been at the behest of the Tories and big business.

The book records his slavish response to the editorials in the capitalist press to distance himself from the miners and ham-

mer Liverpool. While it tells how close he feels to the miners and how much he "likes to wake up in the modest terrace house he keeps as a pied-a-terre" in his constituency, it also lauds his absence from the miners' picket lines during the strike.

When he did venture along, "Kinnock spent 90 minutes there and said afterwards: 'At 5 am the repertoire of jokes was astounding'".

## Dancing

We also learn that after expelling Tony Mulhearn and other Liverpool *Militant* supporters, "Kinnock and Hattersley both had to miss Prime Minister's Question Time... Kinnock was forced to cancel a speech at a Savoy hotel dinner... but Neil and Glenys Kinnock did get there by 11, in time to join in the dancing at the end. Always an energetic dancer, that night he jived with special abandon".

Leapman also shows that the attempt to undermine *Militant*'s influence in Liverpool began long before the 'redundancy notices' clash in late 1985. He shows that "Charles Clarke visited Liverpool in February 1985 to liaise with people who might form the nucleus of an anti-*Militant* faction".

Leapman also gives an account of Kinnock's growing contempt for the socialist foundations which the Labour Party rests on. He

was determined to ditch the allegedly electorally unpopular "ideological baggage" such as opposition to the sale of council houses and proposals to nationalise some industries.

The result of all this has been a slump in Labour's electoral fortunes. On the book's jacket, Leapman writes: "By the beginning of 1987, Labour was regularly achieving 38 per cent in opinion polls". Yet now Labour stands at about six per cent below that.

Leapman, echoing Kinnock, describes the miners' strike as "the wasted year". But the real 'wasted four years' have been those when the right wing Labour leadership have criminally and irresponsibly concentrated their fire not on the Tories and the capitalist enemy, but on the left within the Labour Party. The result? A slide in Labour support.

However, we are probably four to five weeks away from the election. The last 'four wasted years' can be made up for if Labour now puts forward a fighting socialist programme. Victory over the Tory/Liberal/SDP axis can be achieved, but only if the Labour leadership throws overboard the totally false concept that a 'war on the left' is the way to win an election.

## Morrell defeated

THE EX-LEFT leader of the Inner London Education Authority, Frances Morrell, was removed at the AGM of the Labour Group. Her replacement by Neil Fletcher is seen as a swing to the left.

Her defeat, by a majority of just one, represents a vote against Labour local authorities implementing Tory government cuts. It is a vote against the national Labour leadership's strategy of the *dented shield*—stay in office, do not confront the government, try to prevent the worst of the Tory attacks.

The ILEA under Morrell has compulsorily redeployed teachers, not filled vacancies and enraged teachers, parents and school students.

## Merseyside Militant Rally

Sunday 17 May, 7pm  
Philharmonic Hall, Hope Street,  
Liverpool  
Speakers: Peter Taaffe, Nimrod  
Sejake

# Workers' day of defiance

**AROUND THE world, May Day has been a focal point for workers in struggle.**

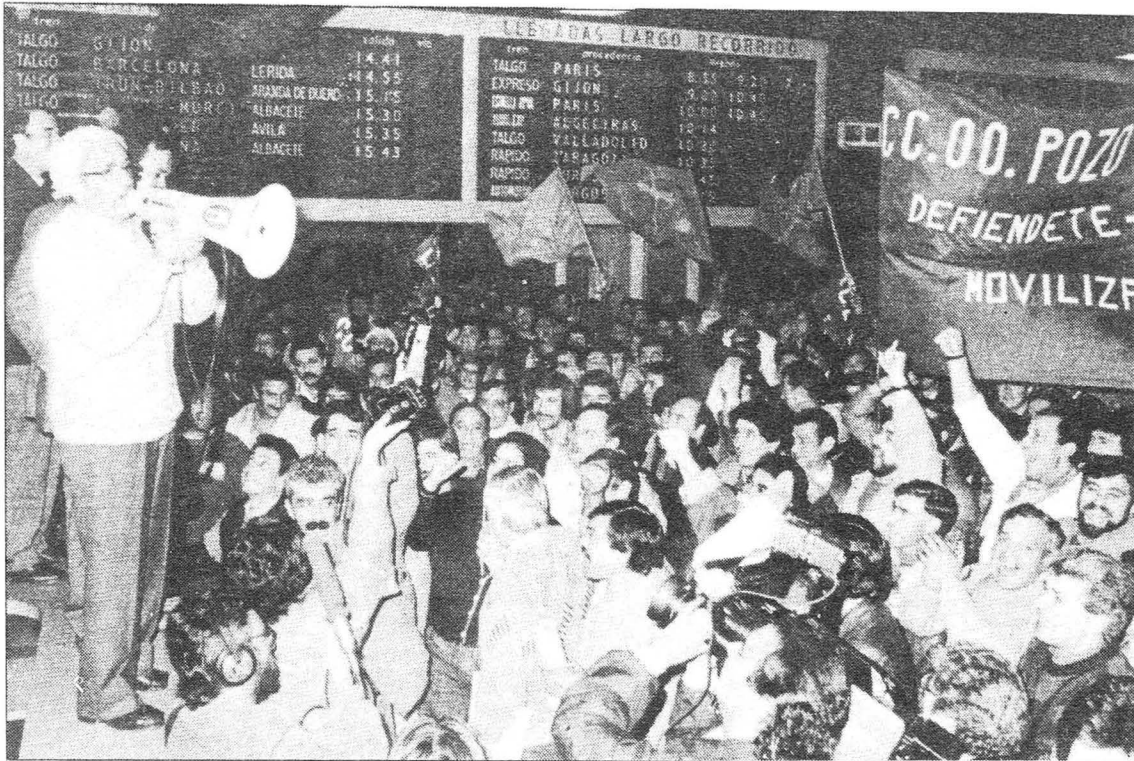
In South Africa, all outdoor May Day rallies were banned. Nevertheless, rallies by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) went ahead in a number of centres.

Particularly significant were rallies in Natal, despite the terror by *Inkatha* vigilantes. There were 1,000 workers in jubilant mood at the Umlazi rally (one of three in Durban), where local COSATU officials stressed the importance of the national minimum wage campaign.

In Cape Town 11,000 gathered, with far more Coloured workers joining their African brothers and sisters than last year. The mood was combative. Though this was not reflected in the platform speeches, the singing was of the struggle for socialism.

In an important new development, May Day was celebrated by 8,000 workers in Katutura township in Windhoek, Namibia's capital. They passed a resolution in solidarity with the struggle of South African workers and condemned the police attack on COSATU House (see centre pages).

In Sri Lanka too, the right-wing Jayawardena regime imposed a ban on May Day meetings. This was defied by the Marxist Nava Sama Samaja Party, raising the banner of working-class solidarity against the background of massacres and escalating communal violence between the state forces and armed groups of the Tamil national minority. Other opposition party leaders were forced to follow the example of the NSSP. At least one death was reported as 7,000 police



Striking Spanish railway workers being addressed by miners' leader, Camacho.

attacked the workers' rallies with batons, tear gas and bullets.

In Spain, the unprecedented wave of youth and industrial struggle against the austerity policies of the Socialist government was reflected in a huge rally in Madrid called by the UGT (Socialist trade union federation). While UGT leader Redondo denounced the government's policies, Socialist prime minister Gonzalez was nowhere to be seen.

In Eastern Europe, May Day was 'celebrated' in ritual official displays by the Stalinist regimes. (The exception was Romania, where the desperate economic crisis resulting from the regime's mismanagement forced it to cancel

the holiday).

But in Poland a series of unofficial May Day rallies showed the widespread mood of opposition to bureaucratic rule, despite five years of state clampdown against the independent workers' movement.

In many towns, church masses—in effect opposition rallies—were followed by demonstrations. In Warsaw, demonstrators hoisted the slogan coined by Soviet leader Gorbachev: "We need democracy like fresh air". This did not prevent the police from breaking up the rally; as a government spokesman explained, the demonstrators were "making fun" of the slogan!

In the USSR itself, *perestroika*

(reorganisation) was the theme of the May Day parades. But, significantly, when the official Communist youth paper asked its readers to describe any changes in their own situation resulting from Gorbachev's reforms, most reported: "I have noticed no changes whatsoever".

Change is what working men and women are demanding. Economic crises, worsening misery and savage repression will force growing numbers into struggle in the coming year, and emphasise the message of May Day with increasing clarity: working-class solidarity, on a programme of socialist transformation, to rid the world of exploitation and tyranny.

## Leicester takes on the racists

**A NOISY and lively demonstration against racism was held by the Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS) in Leicester on Saturday. Many black and white young people joined the march en route.**

Eight Dunlop shop stewards honoured the demonstration by carrying their TGWU banner for the first time in Leicester. The Inland Revenue Staffs Federation banner was also there. A few *Militant* supporters raised £66 from other IRSF members and one person joined the union on the strength of the demonstration.

In all £200 was raised on the demo (plus £50 in one night with rattling tins), 50 copies of *Militant* were sold and seven names for the LPYS were collected.

It was not all blue skies, however. A heavy cloud appeared over the other side of the city when it was discovered a few days earlier that the British National Party (BNP) had booked a multi-racial school for an 'election' meeting on the same afternoon as the demonstration.

The meeting had been opposed by most pupils and teachers and they tried to prevent it taking place. LPYS members leafleted the school and called for the students to walk out on the Friday afternoon and attend a rally against racism on the park opposite.

This was widely supported, but the students were prevented by the headmaster, some teachers and an intimidating presence of police at the school gates. They informed LPYS members that "the heavies are round the corner" and if the rally took place they would be charged with incitement to riot.

Yet some students were able to escape and demonstrate their opposition to fascism. Those pupils who stayed inside discussed with sym-



Police arresting anti-fascist demonstrator in Leicester on Saturday.

Photo: Mark Salmon

pathetic teachers what they could do and spent the rest of the afternoon making placards and banners opposing the BNP, with slogans like *Black and White Unite* and *No to Racists*, which were put up around the school for the fascists to see.

After the Saturday demonstration, anti-fascists were encouraged to make their way to the school to oppose the BNP. About 20-30 fascists, protected by about 300 police, held their rally. They were blatantly carrying iron bars and billiard cues, which the police allowed. 150 anti-fascists were also allowed in, but a

police barrier kept the two sides apart. There were a few skirmishes and arrests.

That night, under cover of darkness, a family of *Militant* supporters with two small children had their house attacked and the doors and windows paint-sprayed.

The labour movement must take up this racist threat and the LPYS will continue the campaign.

- ★ Black and white workers unite to fight racism
- ★ No platform for fascists

By a Militant reporter

## Sharon Atkin tried in her absence

**AT ITS April meeting, Labour's national executive committee (NEC) for once started off with its priorities right—it discussed the general election as the first item on the agenda. There was full agreement that the party would not allow itself to be distracted from the main task of winning.**

It was also agreed that the election slogan *Crying out for a Change* was too SPDish and had to be changed for a pro-Labour slogan.

Linda Douglas moved a statement about the racist policies of Tower Hamlets Liberal council which was passed *unanimously*.

The meeting could not keep this up however, and in the end the majority of the time was yet again spent on disciplinary proceedings.

Most was devoted to Sharon Atkin, Labour candidate for Nottingham East, who had been accused of calling the Labour Party "racist" and saying she didn't give a damn if she was not the Labour candidate at the next general election. It was obvious that minds were already made up about what was to come out of the discussion.

Comrade Atkin was unable to attend because of family illness, and was represented by Keva Coombes. By 19 votes to 6, it was agreed to proceed to discuss the matter without her and by the same margin to discuss disciplining her, refer the case to the National Constitutional Committee (NCC), suspend her until they have dealt with her case and impose Mohammed Aslam as the prospective parliamentary candidate for Nottingham East.



This was done despite Keva Coombes on her behalf withdrawing every word the party found offensive and giving a pledge that she would stick completely to the constitution.

The only thing she did not withdraw was her support for black sections, but even Roy Hattersley conceded that there is nothing wrong with supporting a minority view like black sections.

### Six opposed

The six opposed to all this were Linda Douglas, Tony Benn, Joan Maynard, Dennis Skinner, Jo Richardson and Audrey Wise. Tom Sawyer, Eric Clarke, David Blunkett, Tam Dalyell and Michael Meacher all voted with the right.

When the left tried to get Neil Kinnock to demand that Frank Field MP announce publicly that every voter should back Labour, next business was successfully moved and all that was promised was that the Chief Whip would see him and report back to the general secretary.

Again the setting up of Liverpool District Labour Party was raised, after Liverpool MPs had complained to the NEC. It was reported that once the city council Labour group and Broadgreen constituency party had been officially set up again, the district party would be set up in time for the general election.

Josie Aitman and Elaine Bannister, of Broadgreen Labour Party, were referred to the NCC after a report of an 'investigation' by the general secretary, Larry Whitty, was put to the meeting. Whitty has never met the two accused to hear their cases and the 'report' consisted of copied pages from the investigation into Broadgreen Labour Party. The only new material put forward was that they wrote for *Mersey Militant*.

# Tories plan more misery

**TORY PLANS** to increase the misery of working class people have been revealed in a recently published Labour Party document. In *The Real Conservative Manifesto*, Labour shows that the Tories will increase VAT, adding £10.75 to the average family's cost of living, increase council rents by £12 per week, introduce a poll tax, which will mean pensioners paying £6.68 per week, privatise nationalised industries such as steel, water and electricity, and force local authorities to sell off all their services.

Labour's revelations have hit a raw nerve and given an idea of how the party should be campaigning. Tory Party chairman, Norman

Tebbit, accused Labour of "cheating, lies and deceit". But despite Tebbit's protests, everyone of the initiatives has been taken from statements of Tory cabinet ministers themselves.

In the last two elections, the Tories have concealed the vast majority of their anti-working class proposals. In 1979, the Tories denied they intended doubling VAT. It has gone up from 8 to 15 per cent.

After the 1983 election, Piers Wooley, a former research assistant at Conservative central office, admitted: "Mrs. Thatcher essentially misled the electorate. The facts weren't put before the electorate and therefore no adequate judge-

ment of the Government's record or its future policies could be made."

Since 1983, the Tories have confirmed charges made at the time by abolishing the death grant, axing the maternity grant, removing heating help for 2 million pensioners and cutting housing rent and mortgage relief for the unemployed and low-paid.

The only one of Labour's pre-1983 predictions that hasn't come true is the claim that there would be a standard rate of income tax of 45p in the pound. Income tax has been cut so as to induce a pre-election spending boom.

Thatcher's aim to eradicate socialism in her third term is not a

simple ideological notion. It means removing absolutely any form of state assistance to the underprivileged for ever.

After riots, the miners' strike and the quadrupling of unemployment, Thatcher's infamous speech on the steps of 10, Downing Street should now read:

"Where there is discord, may we increase disharmony; where there is error, may we change the way of calculating the figures; where there is doubt, may we bring despair; where there is despair, may we bring the rope."

By Ken Smith

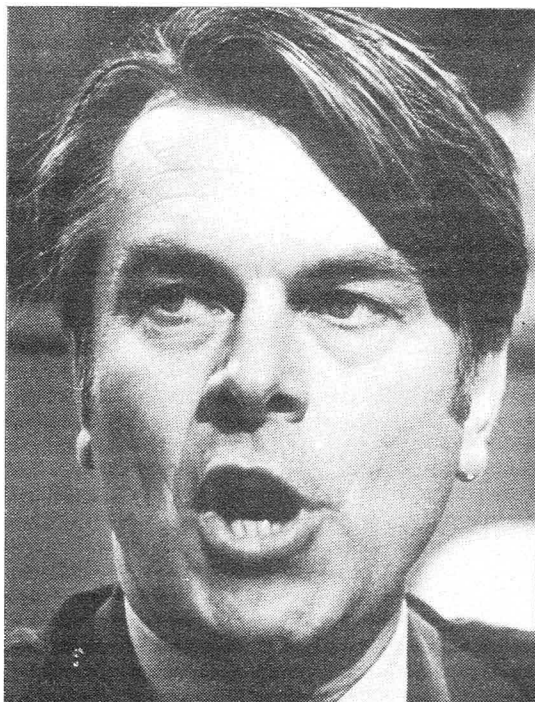
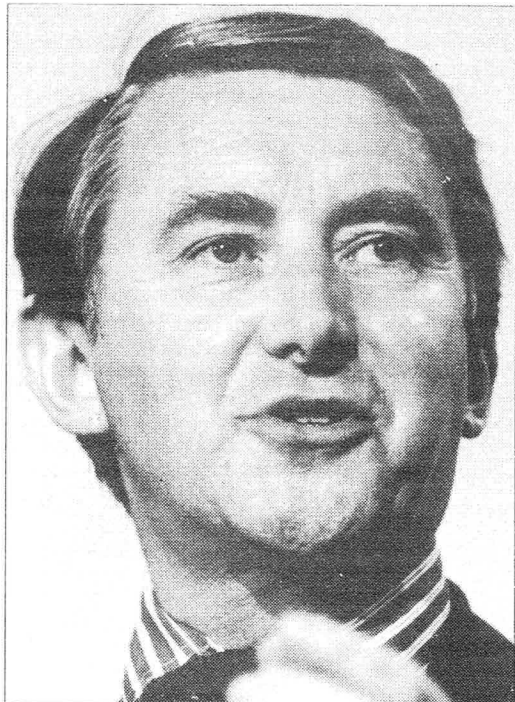
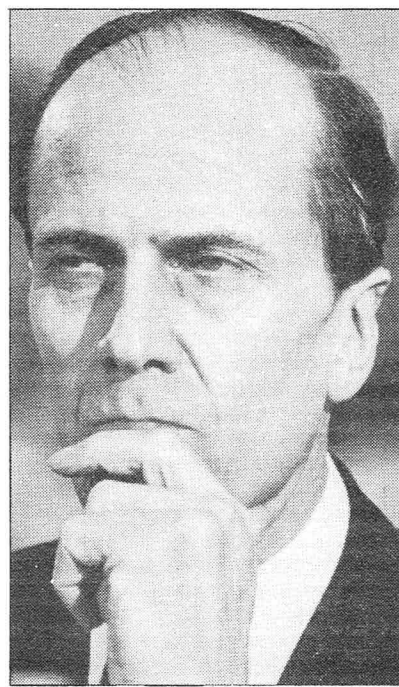


Photo: Ana Gonzalez (Reflex)

## Foolish Gould

"WE ARE the party for yuppies," Bryan Gould, Labour's campaigns director, told the *Daily Express* last week.

A graduate of no less than three universities himself, he went on to say that Labour must appeal to "the high-flying (and) well-educated".

Gould is MP for Dagenham. The Borough of Barking and Dagenham has the lowest figure for entry to higher education in the country. Labour's majority in Dagenham was 21,000 in 1974 but fell to 3,000 in 1983, when Gould first stood there. Plenty of people there are not flying very high thanks to the Tories and surely Gould should be addressing himself to them.

On the TV programme *The Week in*

*Politics*, Gould repeated his foolish remarks. The Labour leaders have gone along with the totally false analysis, repeated on this programme, that the decline of British manufacturing industry has reduced the size of the working class. As evidence they point out that the manufacturing workforce has shrunk by four million since 1945. They conveniently forget that this is the number of unemployed who, far from being "yuppies", find themselves in the most desperate circumstances of the whole working class.

### Class policies

Many of those white-collar and technical workers that Gould and his ilk believe to be upwardly mobile, are in fact today's militant trade unionists. At this very moment, teachers and civil servants are involved in industrial action, and being told off by Labour spokesman because of it!

Labour will win if it campaigns on class policies. Education as a right for all, including Bryan Gould's constituents, should be one of them!

By Maggie McGinley  
Barking Labour Party

# In the pay of the bosses

THE LIBERAL/SDP ALLIANCE pretend to be independent of bosses and unions. At an Alliance rally in February, Liberal leader David Steel said it was against the interests of democracy that the Tories should be so dependent on donations from the City of London.

The Alliance are now doing what they can to put this right—by persuading some of the Tories' backers to finance them instead! Last year big business financed the Alliance to the tune of £60,186, 42 per cent more than the year before. Meanwhile the poor old Tories' donations fell by £30,000 to a mere £1.85 million.

Former Liberal MP, John Pardoe, wound up the rally Steel had addressed with an appeal to big business to finance the "mould-breakers". If the bosses did not help the Alliance to replace Labour, they might suffer the consequences, he said.

The next day, Steel appeared on a radio phone-in programme. A caller asked him if, in the light of his remarks, the Alliance would return donations made to it by the Norwich

## How the Alliance is funded

Union and Commercial Union insurance giants, the British School of Motoring, and Tate and Lyle. His immediate response was to be less than truthful.

### Corrupt

"To my certain knowledge, I'm sure that we haven't had anything from Tate and Lyle...I know for certain they've never given us anything," he said.

The caller told Steel that the company report said they had given £2,500 in 1983-84 and asked him if that money would be given back.

"You say it's £2,500," Steel replied, "I don't feel, really, that's somehow corrupting the party, sums of that sort."

Steel might feel that the sum of £188,000 is enough to corrupt

a party. It is probably the largest ever donation from a company to a political party. It was given by the British School of Motoring to...the Liberal Party.

Some companies donate both to the Tories and the Alliance, since both are deserving causes from a capitalist point of view. Marks and Spencer gave £5,000 to a Liberal/SDP commission on employment and industrial relations. These benevolent employers recently abolished paid tea breaks for their workers. Was this one of the commission's recommendations? Marks and Spencer justified the donation as "being in line with our policy of supporting organisations with a strong free-enterprise approach."

So, next time you hear the Alliance attack Labour for being "in the pay of the unions", remember that they are funded by some of the country's biggest capitalist concerns. You might also remember the old saying, "He who pays the piper, calls the tune".

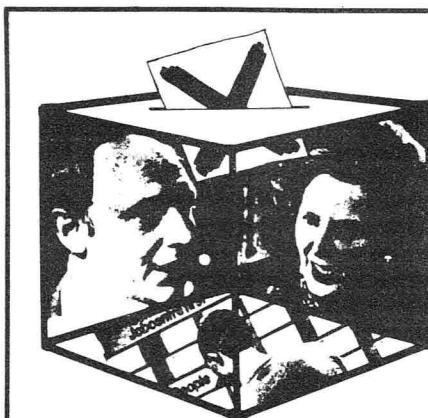
By Kevin Ramage

# Peek Freans deserts Bermondsey

ON FRIDAY, as workers at Peek Freans in Bermondsey were leaving for the bank holiday weekend, the management announced that the factory was to close with the loss of over 1,000 jobs. This came as a bolt from the blue. Only two months ago they had been told that their jobs were 100 per cent safe. Many have worked for the firm for 30 years or more.

In the last few years Metal Box, Molins, Courage brewery and many

firms in the food industry have closed down. Thousands of jobs have been lost on the docks. Unemployment now stands at 26 per cent in the area. Peak Freans was the last big private employer. The workers had better fight for the only jobs they are likely to have—the ones they have got now. Labour parliamentary candidate, John Bryan, has pledged to support the workers in any struggle they undertake to save their jobs.



## ELECTION COUNTDOWN

LABOUR HAS drawn up a list of "key performers" for TV appearances. The five who are expected to make the vast majority of appearances are Roy Hattersley, John Smith, Denis Healey, Gerald Kaufman and Jack Cunningham. Every one of these is a member of the misnamed "Solidarity" group, showing once again that the cam-

paign will be completely dominated by the Party's right-wing.

SOME LOCAL parties have started general election preparations in a much more inspired spirit than the national leadership.

In the North-East, Blyth Labour Party is circulating a letter to young voters (see below). Their candidate, Ronnie Campbell, an ex-miner, promises to live on a miner's wage if elected.

Bermondsey Labour Party mobilised 220 people on a canvass last Sunday. They have a 5,000 Liberal majority to demolish, but splits are beginning to appear in the Liberals' ranks.

In Rotherhithe, reports Willie Griffin, a former Liberal Party member expressed interest in joining the Labour Party. He felt he had been conned into believing there were magic wands that could be waved to solve the problems on the estates. But as soon as the Liberals had won the council seats, their level of activity had plummeted, just like the old Labour right-wing whom they had criticised.

Bermondsey Labour Party has issued a leaflet publicising Owen and Steel's willingness to support Thatcher in a hung parliament. John Bryan, Labour's candidate, has written to the Liberal MP, Simon Hughes, to ask if he agrees with this plan. So far, he has received no reply!

THE VILE Sun has printed the findings of another "exclusive" poll from its friends in Audience Selection. Strangely enough, this one did not get the front page headlines afforded to the outfit's previous offering, reported in Election Countdown two weeks ago.

In fact, it occupies about a sixth of the space at the bottom of page two. Could this possibly be because it reports that the Tories have dropped three points and the Alliance two, while Labour has risen five?

### A Message from Labour's Candidate

Dear  
I'm introducing myself. Ronnie Campbell, the Labour Party's Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Blyth Valley. The next General Election will give you, for the first time, an opportunity to deliver your verdict on Thatcher's Government, and to vote for the Socialist alternative.

The Tories have been a disaster. Since 1979, they have added 1,000 people to the queue for every DAY in office. For every job, they have taken away 10 jobs. There are 600,000 people looking for work.

**LABOUR'S POLICY:**

- Creating a million new jobs in their first two years in office
- Introducing a legal minimum wage to eradicate poverty pay
- Introducing a real training scheme, paying at least £16.00 a week, with a top-up, required for the Trade Unions
- Spending higher Education students a living grant
- Spending £100 million to give young people over 18 the right to a place in higher Education
- Spending £10 million on training and spending the money on worthwhile jobs

**THE TORIES:**

- They have added 1,000 people to the queue for every DAY in office
- They have taken away 10 jobs for every job
- They have spent £100 million on training and spending the money on worthless jobs
- They have spent £10 million on training and spending the money on worthless jobs

**LABOUR'S POLICY:**

- Creating a million new jobs in their first two years in office
- Introducing a legal minimum wage to eradicate poverty pay
- Introducing a real training scheme, paying at least £16.00 a week, with a top-up, required for the Trade Unions
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Vote for me on your ballot paper and help in my campaign. Young people please put up with another year of the Tories.

Yours Sincerely  
Ronnie Campbell

# School students take on the Tories

**THE BRITISH education system is crumbling. Under the Tories' capitalist system, working-class school students will only end up on the dole or a YTS scheme, so the government see no need to spend money on their education.**

In state schools, the buildings are crumbling and students often have to play 'hunt the chair' before lessons because the schools are so short of such basic equipment.

Yet Kenneth Baker accuses the teachers working in this environment of damaging children's education because they have had to

## Save our schools

fight a two-year battle for a decent wage; and all the Tories have given them is the removal of their negotiating rights.

Now the Tories are expected to include several more 'reforms' of the education and training system in their election manifesto. They aim to force school leavers into low-paid jobs or their YTS schemes to create a pool of cheap labour for big business.

Together with the plan for compulsory Job Training Schemes, this will be a way

of fiddling the unemployment figures even more, as young workers are forced from scheme to scheme.

The Tories and the capitalist system offer nothing to working-class youth—no education, no job, no future.

But schools students in London, Manchester and Brighton have shown that they are not prepared to sit back. Now the School Students' Union (SSU) has launched a national day of action for 14 May to mobilise the young against

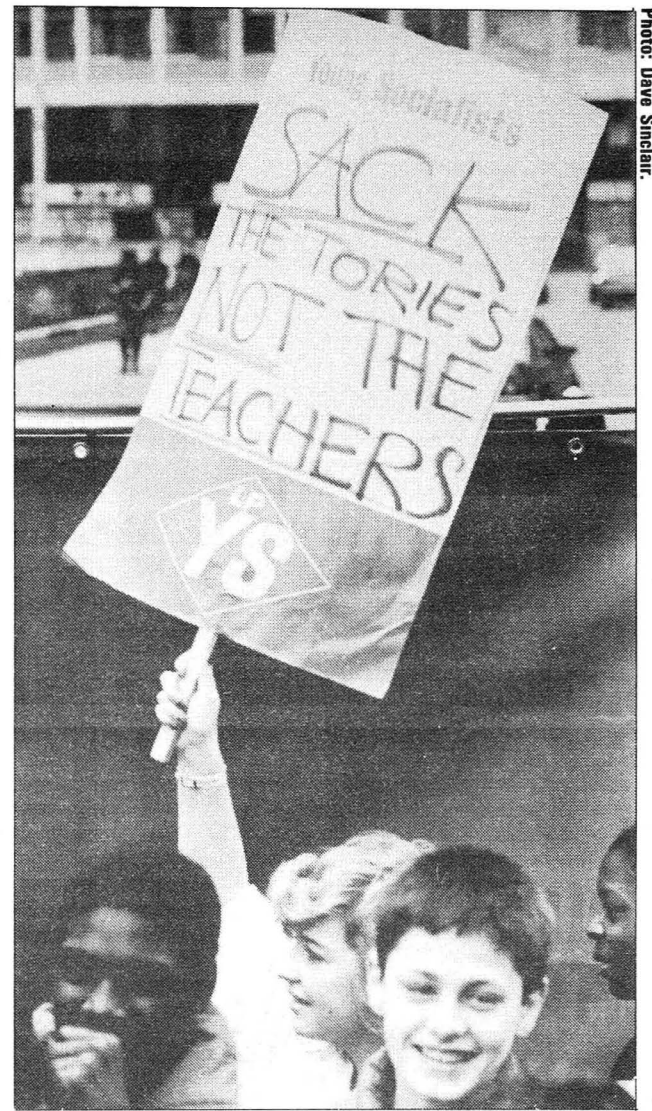
the Tories' dead-end plans.

They are demanding a say in how the schools are run, what they are taught and what choices they have when they leave.

The SSU is fighting to get the Tories out and for a Labour government which will put an end to YTS exploitation, give a grant of at least £27 a week to school students over 16 and provide real jobs for school leavers.

These measures would be a step towards a socialist system of education that can provide decent education, real training and jobs for working-class people.

By Dave Sirokin  
(Secretary SSU)



London school students demonstrate in support of teachers.

Photo: Dave Sinclair

## Bunsen burner heating

OUR SCHOOL was so cold in the winter we had to light all the bunsen burners to keep the classroom warm. In the maths corridor the ceiling kept falling down because of the leaky roof. In the end they just left it with the rafters showing. We have to do sponsored events to buy paper and books every year. My mate's English teacher bought 30 new books out of his wages because the school couldn't afford to.

We had nearly 70 staff in our school when I was in the first year; now we've got 51, and all of them try to leave every year because they have to work in their preparation time to cover for the shortages. The school's budget has been cut and they can't afford to fill the vacancies.

Gavin Tommey, Watford school leaver.



OUR SCHOOL is in a mess; they closed half the school, with the best sports hall, canteen and workshops, to make educational offices, while the school students now have to work in a building built before World War II.

The courses are ridiculous; there is one history book between three of us and there are 32 in my English class. A cookery teacher was ill for a year and no replacement was found, so half the class couldn't take the O-level and had to do CSE cookery instead. Even then they didn't have the course work for the exam; it was a sham.

Caroline Austin, Bexleyheath school student.

## National action 14 May

**THE DAY of action on 14 May is being taken up all over England and Wales. Most areas are holding lobbies and rallies, whilst many are taking half-day strike action.**

In Middlesbrough a rally with bands in the middle of the town is planned. Brighton School Students Union are planning a Brighton-wide strike for 14 May and are approaching the Technical College YTS trainees for support. They also plan a youth festival, with local bands, for the evening.

School students in Dudley are using a questionnaire and leaflets in their schools to show their mates just what the Tories are planning. In the Potteries they are using a petition to raise money for the union.

In Wales the message is being taken to the Tories with a lobby of the Tory Club in Neath town centre and a dinner-time lobby of the Swansea Job Centre.

Lobbies and demonstrations are also taking place in Gloucester, Salford, Rochdale and throughout London, and strikes are

planned all over Manchester. In Liverpool, the *Echo* has already publicised the day of action.

School students are preparing to tell Thatcher and Co exactly what they think of YTS conscription. What is your school organising? The LPYS calls upon all its members to throw its forces behind the school students. What has your branch organised?

For more information, contact the SSU, 102 St Pancras Way, London NW1, or telephone (01) 485 6352 and leave a message.

## "This is not just a laugh, but a fight for our future"

AT THE Labour Party Young Socialists conference there was a School Students Union meeting. This was the first I had ever heard of the SSU. I was really impressed when I heard the comrades talking about the SSU demonstrations in London and Brighton, where hundreds of school students turned up.

They found out that this was not just a laugh, but a fight for their future.

When I arrived home I found out that there was a National Union of Teachers conference. I was invited to come and speak at the *Militant* meeting about the SSU demonstration on 14 May. This is what I said:

"We know the Tories plan to abolish the supplementary benefit for under-18s. So this will mean YTS conscription. This is the first step. If we don't defeat these proposals then the new Job Training Scheme for 18-25 year olds will also be made compulsory. This means no work, no dole.

"The Tories have made big cuts in education since they have been in power. They have abolished the teachers' right to negotiate and plan to hand over the entire running of the schools to the headmasters and big business. They have imposed the new GCSE exams on us without the extra money needed for books and equipment.

### 'Compulsory JTS means no work, no dole'

"Now they plan to introduce exams at 7, 11 and 14 years old, creating City Technology Colleges only open to an elite. State schools will be left to rot, only to be used to prepare us for slave labour schemes.

"University and Polytechnic student grants are going to be

abolished, closing down higher education to all but a super-rich elite.

"In the coming general election we have no say on these attacks on our rights and our future. That is why we must act now.

"The School Students Union demands:

- ★ No to YTS conscription; for trade union rights and rates of pay and guaranteed jobs at the end of the schemes;
- ★ No education cuts; for a £35 a week grant for all 16 year olds who want to study;
- ★ No attacks on the teachers' unions;
- ★ The right of school students to organise in every school and the right to a say in the running of the schools;
- ★ The right to vote at 16.

"So, comrades, please try and support us on Thursday 14 May, the SSU day of action, as we will support you!"

By Johanna Segal  
(member of SSU, aged 12)

## Three weeks left—defend the LPYS

JOHN MANN is the co-author of the Fabian pamphlet *Youth—the Missing Generation*, written to attack the Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS) and provide ammunition for the right wing in the consultation process currently taking place over proposals for its reorganisation.

Yet incredibly, at the general management committee of Norwood Labour Party, he voted against even discussing these proposals. Now Mann's own Labour Party will not be replying, as the consultation ends on 22 May.

Among those Labour Parties which have discussed the proposals, Glasgow Pollok, Ealing North, Basildon, Bristol East and North Bedfordshire have voted in favour of the LPYS's democratic proposals.

Wokingham backed the LPYS unanimously; at Ealing Southall, where Linda Douglas debated with Mann's co-author Phil Woolas, there was only one vote against.

ASTMS divisional council (region 5) has voted to support the YS's position.

Headcorne and Leeds in Maidstone and Stonehaven in North East Scotland felt that cutting the age limit to 21 would be detrimental: "To cast young people into the vast spectrum of the Labour Party at 21 would only add to the alienation many of the youth feel towards the Labour Party".

Most importantly, the youth of the labour movement themselves are ensuring that their voice is heard. Isle of Wight LPYS and Glasgow College of Technology Labour Club have come out in support of the LPYS position.

The Scottish GMBATU youth conference significantly voted against cutting the age limit to 21.

With only three weeks to go for the consultation exercise, it is essential that every Party and trade union organisation, and the youth of the party above all, pass resolutions in support of the LPYS proposals in order to ensure a proper voice inside the Labour Party after the election.

Rush in resolutions by 22 May to Joyce Gould, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.

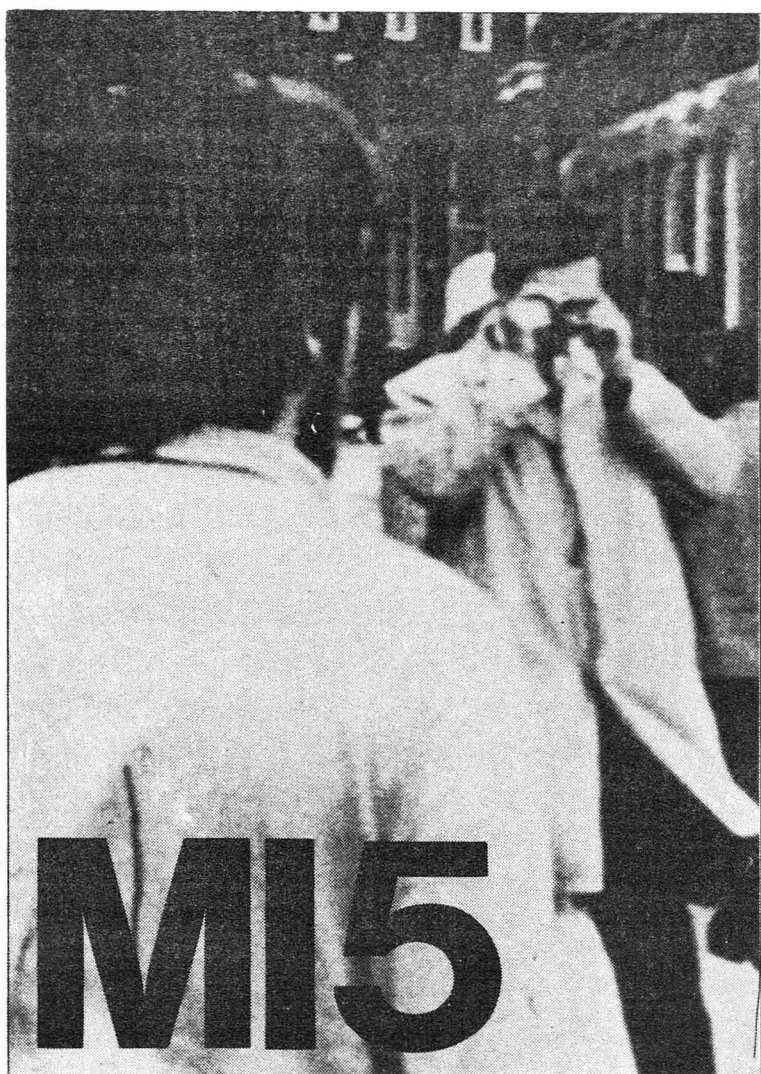
## SOCIALIST YOUTH

5p  
MAY 1987 SPECIAL BROADSHEET

### SCHOOL STUDENTS FIGHT TORY CUTS

Socialist Youth talked to Dave Sirokin, secretary of London School Students' Union about the present movement of school students.  
The article was triggered by the decision of the Labour Party to cut the age limit to 21.

STOP PRESS\*STOP PRESS  
CALLING ON ALL SCHOOL STUDENTS  
The School Students' Union (SSU) has



## Irish connection

**TWO DISENCHANTED security service officers who served in Northern Ireland, Colin Wallace and Fred Holroyd, have recorded a disturbing catalogue of illegal abuses by the service in the province.**

By Jeremy Birch

MI5 in co-operation with sections of the army and of the RUC, had its own independent strategy for Ireland. It operated beyond virtually any control of the British government. And through a variety of underhand and illegal methods sought to subvert government policy and remove Westminster politicians that stood in its way.

Wallace worked for an army information unit that operated in close co-operation with MI5 in the North. He was involved in the early seventies in its smear campaign against leading British government ministers considered "soft" on terrorism. These included both Tory Irish secretary, Willie Whitelaw, and his Labour successor, Merlin Rees. Tory Prime Minister, Ted Heath, was also a target.

### Military solutions

Wallace maintains that particularly after the election of the Labour government in February 1974 his instructions were changed—from "disorienting" the terrorists, to "disorienting" the government.

He was also involved in feeding material to Airey Neave, who became Tory opposition Irish spokesman, which was used in speeches to attack Labour's Irish policy. Neave particularly wanted from MI5 "inside information" on Labour's hard left.

Neave was a close confidant of Thatcher, and acted as her cam-

paign manager for the Tory leadership contest in 1975. Wallace exposes that through the black propaganda activities, MI5 was committed to undermining Labour and removing it from government, while securing a new tougher leadership for the Tory Party.

Wallace reveals that MI5 was set on an all out military solution in Ireland, whatever the view of the government to which it was supposedly responsible. Here it even clashed with MI6 which worked along with the bipartisan approach of the two major British political parties, to apparently seek some political solution.

MI6 helped arrange covert funding and support for the non-sectarian parties of the centre. It also helped set up meetings between prominent IRA members and Westminster politicians. Meanwhile MI5 was planning the assassination of those very same IRA leaders.

MI6 also played a major part in arranging the IRA ceasefire in 1975. This was deliberately wrecked by a campaign of assassinations of Catholics by Protestant paramilitaries, working with the security services. Wallace has linked 30 assassinations to Protestant paramilitaries operating as proxies in this way.

Holroyd alleges security service agents supported the 1974 Protestant UWC strike, which brought down the power sharing executive negotiated by Whitelaw and Heath. He also discloses that the three car bombs let off in Dublin in May 1974 killing 26 people, were the work of Protestant paramilitaries engaged by the security services. Their aim was to force the Dublin government also into tougher security measures.

Wallace believes that MI5's activities in Ireland were "part of the wider MI5 operation against Harold Wilson and other political personalities."

# A threat to workers' rights

WHY DID the Tory government spend £1 million in an Australian courtroom, unsuccessfully fighting to bloc publication of a book by former MI5 agent, Peter Wright? Why did the Tories take out injunctions against the *Guardian* and *Observer* last year to stop them reporting his revelations? Why now are they similarly restricting *The Independent*, *Daily News* and *Evening Standard*?

Peter Wright revealed just a glimpse of the subversive and threatening activities of the security services. His disclosures confirm that they owe no allegiance to the elected governments they claim to serve, far less to the defence of democracy.

They are an arm of the capitalist state, committed to the defence of the ruling class and its system from any threat from the working class majority. They represent a direct threat to the labour movement and its democratic rights. On their files they have three million names, many of them Labour and trade union activists.

★ Wright provides details of MI5's plot to undermine the 1974 Harold Wilson Labour government, involving up to 30 senior MI5 officers. Tory MP, Jonathan Aitken (himself a former MI5 officer), told the Commons: "It is inconceivable (that this) could have been carried out on a completely unauthorised, freelance basis."

★ Wright testified: "I have referred to a great many acts by officers of MI5, including myself, which constituted breaches of the law. Our operations were officially authorised, illegal and deniable."

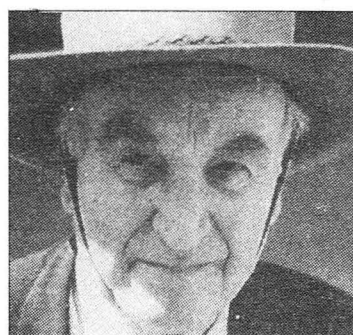
★ Labour's deputy leader in the seventies, Ted Short, charges MI5 with forging documents which purported to show he held secret Swiss bank accounts. These were leaked to the Tory press just before the October 1974 general election.

★ Former MI5 agent, Cathy Massiter, revealed on TV that MI5 tapped the phones of CND and the National Council for Civil Liberties. This included the latter's senior officers: Harriet Harman (now a Labour MP) and Patricia Hewitt (now Neil Kinnock's press secretary).

★ They also revealed MI5's phone tapping of Ford shop stewards during their strike in 1978. Cabinet Secretary, Sir Robert Armstrong, testified for the government in court in Australia: "I regard it as within the business of MI5 to seek to discover the extent of the possibility of the use of industrial means to undermine parliamentary democracy..." On his terms that justifies tapping trade unionists in any dispute.

★ Dale Campbell Savours has raised in the Commons that an MI5 officer lectured army units on "subversion in the trade unions." They were also addressed by a spokesman from the right wing Economic League.

★ Former MI6 officer, Lee Tracy, alleged that "violent action to stop Tony Benn becoming a Labour Prime Minister was secretly discussed between former MI6 employees and the late Airey Neave". Benn now intends to raise this question again himself.



Peter Wright.

THE CAPITALIST'S elaborate security services do not come cheap. The GCHQ communications centre, with its 11,000 staff, costs anything between £300 and £600 million. Expenditure on MI5 (the internal security service) and MI6 (external security) rose by a record 13.6 per cent in the 1986-7 Treasury estimates, to £92 million. But this probably only covers salaries and staff expenditure.

Journalist Duncan Campbell talks of a total secret intelligence budget of £1 billion.



James Callaghan—no investigation.

Disgracefully, Harold Wilson having raised the original complaint about the plot against his government, now denies the need for an inquiry. Jim Callaghan, who apparently held a limited inquiry just into the bugging of Number 10, has also not responded to the demands for an investigation. The only people who have an interest in maintaining the cover up are the Tories, MI5 and the capitalists they serve. Apart from anything else the Labour leaders could use this issue as a powerful weapon in the general election campaign.

But it is the working class who are being kept in the dark. The Labour leaders have a responsibility to expose the security services as a threat to the labour movement, and warn workers to be vigilant in their defence of their democratic rights.

## Sell Militant

OUR FEATURE on Vosper Thornycroft in Southampton was enthusiastically received by local workers. 29 copies were sold on the first morning outside the shipyard gates. The management were so shaken by the article, they broadcast a reply over the tannoy system!

Militant sellers had distributed leaflets beforehand advertising the article, and announcing when and where they would be selling. On the day they used blackboards to promote the contents of the paper, and a huge poster that they claim could be seen for miles around.

That issue of the paper sold well in the rest of Southampton. 19 were sold on the Friday tea-time in the precinct, 15 of them by three school students who had bought their first copy that evening. 27 more papers were sold in the precinct the next day, and then the estates where the Vosper workers mainly live were covered too.

Our Swansea correspondent reports that sellers have been out capitalising on the publicity from the local right wing's witch-hunting activities. Over 20 papers were sold in the city centre last Saturday, and £4 collected for the fighting fund. "Passers-by commented that *Militant* was everywhere", he writes.

A young mother in Liverpool, who has only just started to take the paper has also written in, to say how difficult it is to find the time to read it. "I ended up reading it at 2.30 this morning, holding the baby crying in one hand and the *Militant* in the other. But I really enjoyed some of the articles."

When we can reach women like this on every estate, we will be well on the way to the twice weekly paper.

By Ruth Campbell

★ An urgent labour movement inquiry into the secret service, inviting all those with expert knowledge and those who feel they have been among its victims, to give evidence. The security services are vehemently opposed to any publicity which could then restrain their activities. Labour has a duty to expose their methods, to reveal all the facts and to warn ordinary workers of the real threat to their democratic rights posed by the security services.

★ The disbandment by the next Labour government of MI5, MI6 and the other sections of the security services which threaten the labour movement and the destruction of all their political files.

★ The restoration of trade union rights in GCHQ, and their extension to all the armed forces.

# Herald disaster inquiry

## Free Enterprise guilty

**THERE HAVE** been few public acts of cynical cruelty more grotesque, than the attempt by the government and the owners of Townsend Thoreson, to lay the blame for the two hundred deaths on the Herald of Free Enterprise onto the ship's assistant bosun.

Phil Frampton  
Manchester

Not many workers will be taken in by the scapegoating activities of big business, so anxious to hide their responsibility for the horrendous tragedy of 5 March.

If such great shipping disasters can occur on the basis of just one young worker falling asleep while lying on his bed "on call," then there is not one ferry which it is safe to travel on.

Indeed, the public inquiry began with the survivors, and deceased relatives', representative declaring, that no-one would have set foot on the Herald if they had known how it was run.

But the facts show that the same could be said for the hundreds of roll-on, roll-off ferries (ro-ro's) now operating around the world. Competition for profit has reduced these ships to what a Royal Navy Officer called "floating death traps."

The government hopes to use the inquiry as a means to appease the anger of workers by rapping a few knuckles in the business establishments and blame some of the crew and company staff. In this way they hope to minimise the damage to the themselves and the ferry owners.

As Terry Fields, MP said at a memorial meeting in Manchester for crew member and disaster victim Geoff Haney: "P&O, the ultimate owners of the Townsend fleet, are painting the ferries blue to try and erase the bitter memories of Zeebrugge. But we can have neither a white-wash nor a blue-wash".

One and a half million workers sail on Townsend ships each year. Hardly a family does not know someone who uses the ferries. The Labour leaders could use this enquiry to turn the angry talk about the disaster

in pubs, trains and buses to put an end to Tory rule and take the ferries out of the hands of the profiteers.

Militant supporter, Sue Haney, Geoff's sister, at the meeting in Manchester denounced the current enquiry as an elaborate charade. Townsend owners have already attempted to draw the sting out of it by upping their compensation offer and accepting responsibility.

Against Townsend, we are told, is the government determined to root out the cause of the disaster. Yet it only took Transport Secretary, John Moore, four days to declare that he considered the cause to be human error, ie the crew.

The Ministry of Defence, judging by the Royal Navy attitude to ships like the Herald, obviously suggests that the government was fully aware of the real causes. The facts show that both Townsend and the government, as Sue Haney said, should be in the dock.

However, one only has to look behind the scenes at the principal characters in the inquiry to get a clue as to its limitations. Townsend Thoreson is part of European Ferries, these were taken over by P&O. In 1985 European Ferries were one of the biggest contributors to Tory Party funds, donating £33,500. In 1986 P&O also donated £20,000. P&O Chairman, Sir Jeffrey Sterling, is himself a special advisor to the Secretary of State for Industry, who is responsible for the transport ministry.

NUMAST, the ships officers' union has already exposed how they had to threaten to strike in 1981, to get an extra officer installed on the ferry to allow the checking that the bow doors were shut. Water rushing through the bow doors is believed to have been the start of the events which led to the capsizing.

That officer was withdrawn from the Herald later on by the employers. Three ferry captains have also revealed that their demand for an electronic indicator to check the doors were shut was turned down by the employers. Townsend's orders to the captains



Carol Haney speaking at a memorial meeting for her brother Geoff, who died in the disaster. Her sister, Sue, (left) and her mother are with her on the platform. 175 people turned out to honour Geoff. £400 was collected for the Chilean Socialist Defence Campaign with which he had been associated.

were to assume the doors were shut unless told otherwise.

In addition, as *Militant* previously revealed, the pressure for speed in turnaround meant that the Herald was full of ballast as it went into open sea, meeting the higher waves.

One year previously, in April 1986, 193 Filipinos lost their lives on a similar ferry as it capsized in perfect weather.

If this or the Herald sinking had been an aircraft disaster of similar proportions, then all planes of that design would be grounded until the fault had been repaired. Instead, the government sat back while European Ferries boasted of commissioning bigger ro-ro's and doubling the capacity of the current models.

It has been claimed that the use of ro-ro's was vindicated in the Falklands War when used by the Royal

Navy. It is now known that the Navy only used ships such as the Rangatira after it had been fitted with the crucial bulk heads. After the war the Rangatira's bulk heads were removed and it was returned to commercial use.

35 ro-ro's have now been lost in the last 20 years. Over the last five years there have been eight accidents killing 440 passengers and crew. What was unacceptable to the Ministry of Defence was clearly acceptable to the Ministry of Transport. Even a marine institute in London had in its exam paper, a question asking students to show how the ship could sink in under one inch of water. Why did the government connive in this horrific disregard of safety?

At bottom is the crisis facing the shipping industry, the slow down in the world economy and cut back in world trade, which has left

shipping companies with a huge surplus capacity of ships.

In addition, ever expanding and faster air travel has cut back the sea-borne market. In the cross-channel trade, air travel now accounts for over half of all passenger trips. Ferry owners are forced to accept low tariff rates to keep their share of the market.

Ro-ro owners argue that introducing safety measures would cost up to 18 per cent of freight carrying capacity. Townsend even told union officials demanding just one extra officer that: "It was a question of balancing safety and economy." And that even an extra officer, "erred too much towards safety".

The Tories have accepted the owners' argument that introducing bulk heads under legal instruction, would put British ships at a crucial disadvantage in the world market. Townsend

have been allowed to continue to build two ships bigger than the Herald without bulk heads since the Herald disaster.

All this shows why the nationalisation of the whole shipping industry under democratic workers' control and management is a burning necessity. If the owners cannot afford to protect workers' lives then they should be expropriated. Then P&O's profit could be reinvested into safety and efficiency.

Action on British shipping should be led by the NUS. If they put out a call for international action via a democratic conference of maritime workers, they could organise a global fight to secure workers' control and safety at sea. The real lesson of Zeebrugge is that not one aspect of workers lives can safely be left in the hands of capital.

## Fighting Fund This week £3348

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 South East	1394		2250
2 London	4619		9350
3 Eastern	1298		3200
4 East Midlands	707		1900
5 South West	1176		3250
6 Southern	1038		3050
7 Wales	1638		4800
8 Manchester/Lancs	791		3850
9 Northern	956		4600
10 Yorkshire	1754		8300
11 Scotland East	558		2800
12 Merseyside	1456		7500
13 West Midlands	921		4750
14 Scotland West	262		3500
Others	14674		6900
<b>Total</b>	<b>33242</b>		<b>70000</b>

"TEN DAYS that shook the rattling tins", one comrade called it. Just by shaking a few tins and asking for the £1 solidarity price, sellers in West London raised £70 last week, as part of the £4,126 raised in the week up to Saturday morning.

With all the May Day fund raising events around the country, we can expect a big boost to our fighting fund by the deadline. All the examples below show the possibilities for raising money every week of the new quarter.

The new *Militant* 'Kick out the Tories' stickers are being snapped up wherever they are sold. Ignore the opinion polls, these stickers catch the mood. Sticker sales raised £10 in an hour in Maesteg market, £20 at a Kent Red

Wedge concert and £10 on the Hangers' march in Putney.

Order your supplies of the new stickers for workplace collections and estate sales as well as on the streets.

Our thanks to all the readers who gave donations this week. Julie Donovan, a low paid worker from Bermondsey has sent £100 towards the £400 pledged at LPYS conference and Helen Redwood of East London has donated £150 pledged at the same event.

CPSA delegates to the Scottish TUC conference Kenny McKay, Willie Barnes and Gary Stevenson donated £32 each from their expenses. Mr Edwards, a full time NALGO official from Not-

tingham, one of the winners of our Winter Draw donated £25 and Dave Gorton, an NCU member from Peckham gave £100.

A new tradition of pub collections for *Militant* has been started. In Leeds, £20 was donated by the landlord himself! Finally, as a sign of *Militant's* support in the unions, £512 was raised at USDAW conference and £280 at TASS conference.

See next week's *Militant* for the final chart and details of the last minute rush.

THANKS TO: Amanda Twohey, Leicester £6. Colin Jones, Blackwood AEU £50, Bell College *Militant* supporters £10. P Johnson £31. Alec Thraves Swansea £50 for TV appearance.

**'The real majority spoke today'**

**SOUTH AFRICA, 5 May:**

In his last speech of the whites-only election, P.W.Botha said he would allow whites to decide what changes there needed to be in South Africa. Hours later a massive general strike against the elections and in defence of COSATU began, showing that black workers are determined to run this country.

Workers told our correspondent: "We don't just want to send telexes of protest. We want to do something stronger. Two days loss of pay is not important but the struggle is. Why can't we have elections? We want

one parliament and votes for all. We are going to defend COSATU in the factories because it is COSATU that helped us join the union."

In different parts of the country, 12 supporters of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress were arrested while mobilising support for May Day demonstrations and the two-day strike. They may face serious charges.

At 7.45am today in central Johannesburg the power of COSATU was there for all to see. Commissioner Street, normally teeming with workers going to work, was empty. In the West Street. Diagonal Street

area, where h taxis from the correspondent 8.15am. Soweto: no-one mo

In Cape Town black township industrial area: people were cc a time when th dreds. Cape deserted excep whose gun-h under their Bit

In Natal, you of organising trade union ac

**Exclusive eye-witness report from inside**

# Battle of COSATU

**THIS REPORT, sent by our correspondent in Johannesburg on 25 April, reveals the extent to which the workers' movement in South Africa has recovered, despite the harsh blows of state repression under the State of Emergency.**

In response to the police assault on the railway workers and on its headquarters, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) together with the United Democratic Front has, since the report was written, called a two-day general strike for 5 and 6 May, the second day being that of the white general election.

The strike call is in protest both at state repression and the racist white elections: one demand is for one-person-one-vote in a unitary state.

The apartheid regime is not only stepping up its propaganda offensive against COSATU, but has launched another police attack on COSATU House on the pretext—denied by the COSATU leaders—that the killers of four railway scabs were in the building.

The Nationalist Party will undoubtedly be returned to government in the white election. But the massive response of the working class in the general strike to Botha's repressive actions shows his predicament in trying to push repression too far.

Yet, while the working class remains undefeated, neither is the ruling class and the state going to give way. After the general strike, the task for the COSATU leadership will be to mobilise the combativity of the workers and the youth in united campaigns and actions around the burning issues of the day: the struggle for a national minimum wage, and the organisation of self-defence against Buthelezi's Inkatha and other vigilantes, and against state attacks.

All the hatred and bitter racial and class tensions of South Africa's six-week long strike of railway workers exploded onto the streets of Johannesburg on Wednesday 22 April.

At the end of a day of street battles, besides scores injured, eight railway workers were shot dead by police and at least three policemen hovered on the verge of death in hospital; the trade union headquarters COSATU House was smashed to smithereens after an eight-hour police siege; and the intransigent management of South African Transport Services (SATS)

sacked 16,000 railway workers in a desperate bid to halt the tide of unionisation in the industry.

This was no accidental outrage, but the planned exercise of the iron heel to force striking workers back to work at gunpoint.

From the start, the SATS management has refused to negotiate directly with the South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union (SARHWU). Instead, since then, thousands of extra police have been drafted into the city and billeted in marquee tents at a railway recreation club in preparation for an armed showdown to smash the strike.

The strike began in the middle of March when the 500 workers at City Deep depot in Joburg walked out in protest at the sacking of a driver. By 13 April, 11,000 railway workers were on strike, and in the next three days the numbers rose to 25,000, with Orange Free State and Natal railway workers joining in. 7,000 black postal workers came out in solidarity.

The main demand had become recognition of their union in a bid to end centuries of racial degradation and vicious class oppression.

Historically, the ruling class in South Africa has considered the railways, along with the mines, absolutely crucial in maintaining capitalism and the prisonhouse apartheid system on which it is based, and has fought against unionisation of black railway workers.

Now, in 1987, despite generations of beatings and torture of those who tried to organise, despite the most militarised regime of any industry in South Africa and the constant threat of mass dismissal and deportation, the railway workers have risen. The days of being spat on and called 'kaffir' are beginning to end for them.

The mood building up amongst workers on the Witwatersrand through the strike was electrifying. SARHWU's meetings were attracting 8,000 railway workers at any one time. When the union called a meeting of 300 leading activists, 4,000 workers turned up.

The organisation of the strike was under the firm control of the rank-and-file. Even seasoned union activists marvelled at the militancy of this layer drawn freshly into struggle. An activist of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union com-



COSATU House on the night of the first police attack.

mented: 'we are having to run to keep up with the pace being set by the railway workers.'

Those trains still running became centres of political discussion, as union members explained the issues of the strike. The mood has been an inspiration to black youth on the Witwatersrand, who have taken the brunt of repression under the State of Emergency.

## Racist repression

Against the vicious racist repression meted out to them by the bosses, combined with the State of Emergency, this revolt by one of the most downtrodden sections of South African workers shows enormous boldness.

As one old railway worker said, who took part in the battles of Wednesday 22nd, he would mourn his fallen brothers but he felt proud about what the workers had done on that day. 'We stood up to the so-called masters at last', he said.

The dramatic events of the day began in Germiston, an industrial city to the east of Johannesburg. A meeting of railway workers

assembled at the COSATU offices in a shopping centre there, at about 9am, to discuss the next step in the strike, given management's ultimatum that all those not at work on Wednesday 22 April would be dismissed.

At least 200 workers were attending the meeting. Many others were standing in groups outside the hall which was packed to overflowing.

Then, about 11.30am, a huge contingent of police moved in. They gave no warning to disperse nor made any attempt to speak to the union leaders holding the meeting but instead began whipping and sjambokking workers outside the hall before rushing into the hall where the workers were massed.

Teargas was fired into the hall and police assaulted workers with ferocity. The teargassing and onrush of the police had the effect of creating a human explosion inside the hall as the workers tried to flee.

Seeing their way barred by the police in front they burst through the plate-glass windows at the rear of the hall, only to be met there by

further detachments of police with whips, guns and dogs.

An eye-witness reported that as other workers tried to escape from the front of the hall, the police opened fire and three workers fell fatally wounded.

## Whips and guns

The police action was over in minutes but it created a scene reminiscent of a bomb explosion. Pools of blood seeped through the paving stones of the shopping concourse and shattered glass seemed to be everywhere. Groups of dazed and shocked workers sifted through the debris. Wooden benches were snapped in two, dozens of shoes seemed to be lying all around with jerseys and jackets, and numerous paperbags and plastic containers were scattered, containing lunches that would never be eaten.

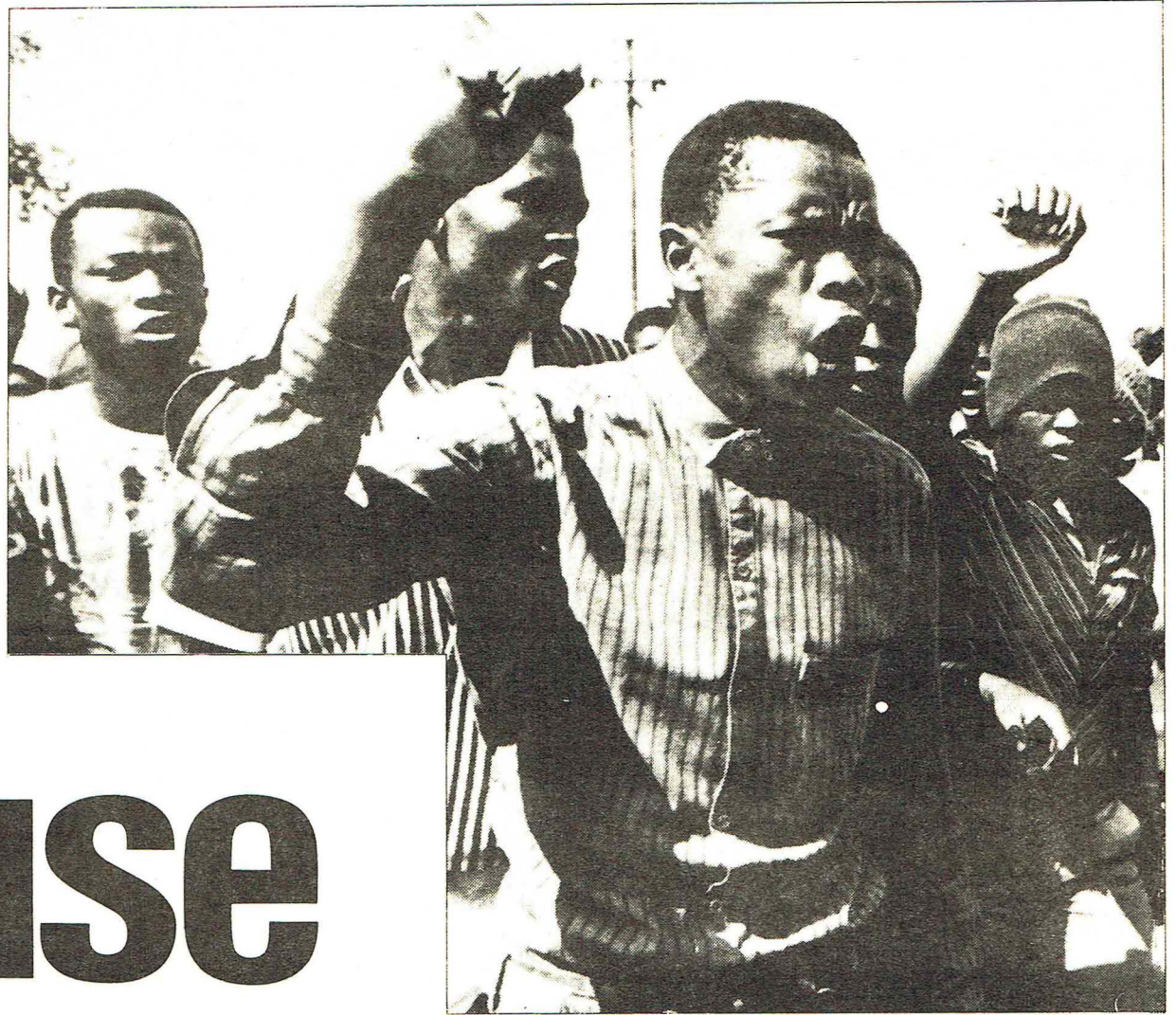
This was premeditated slaughter—a brutal, merciless assault on unarmed workers, which was the catalyst for what followed in central Joburg.

When a mass meeting of railway workers at COSATU House heard

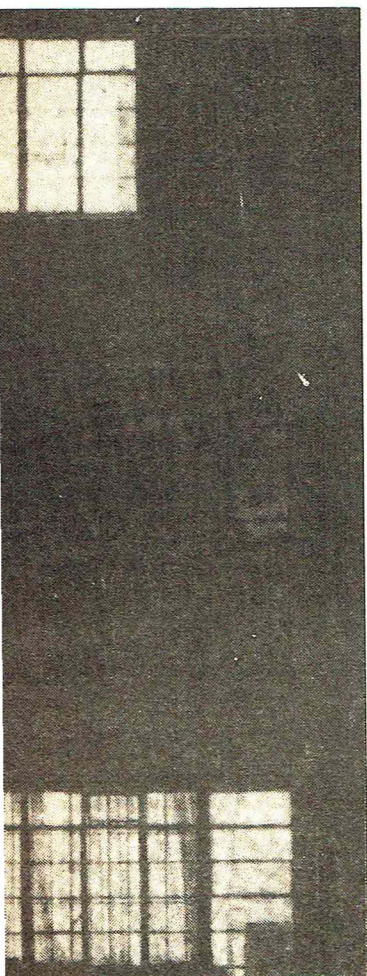


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y for a long time.

The strike was 60 per cent effective in Maritzburg and 50 per cent in Durban.  
With 100 per cent support in the Eastern Cape, the strike was estimated to be 70-80 per cent effective nation-wide. Students boycotted many black schools, as well as white universities.  
The leaders of COSATU predict more action tomorrow, especially on the mines. White electors go to the polls then, but the real majority in South Africa spoke today. Their power is the future.



# South Africa TU house



The *New Nation* of 23 April reported: "on the corner of Rocky and Davies Streets the corpse of a worker lay twisted, half on the road and half on the sidewalk...His orange socks and worn-out shoes protruded from behind the lamp-post next to where he fell. The back of his light-coloured shirt was covered in blood."

The workers then retreated to the union building with their wounded comrades, leaving trails of blood. In minutes, a mass mobilisation of police and army sealed off the building. The siege of COSATU House began.

## Telephones cut

The building was besieged from about 1.30 until 8.30pm. A black *Weekly Mail* reporter in the building at the time described how "a message came through the intercom 'the police have surrounded the building comrades. Please remain calm.' About 30 minutes later the telephones and the telex machines in the building were cut....A delegation of union office workers tried to leave the building to talk to the officer in charge. They were ordered back into the building...From the top windows I could see a whole contingent of SADF troops gathered in Kerk Street..."

"By this time a large group was gathered in the foyer on the ground floor...The delegation again indicated that they wanted to talk, but were told there would be no talks....At 5pm an officer announced over a loudhailer that certain people were believed to be in hiding in the building and were believed to be in possession of weapons. He ordered the occupants to vacate the building in 10 minutes....But when people tried to leave the building they were stopped from doing so." (24 April)

At about 5pm the police moved into the building and arrested more than 400 people. The *Weekly Mail* reporter saw several people seriously injured by police: "I saw a badly injured and handcuffed man pushed down the stairs...After hitting the bottom of the stairs head first with a dull thud, he lay still....A young policeman moved up to him and hit him once on the ribs with a rubber pick-handle. The man didn't stir...He was dragged on the ground to a police truck before being thrown in head first."

He describes how a senior policeman was heard to shout "Werk hulle" (work them over) as battered workers emerged in handcuffs from the building, and another worker was told "Put your

hands on the truck, you communist black kaffir."

As even the capitalist paper *Business Day* (23 April) conceded, the police systematically smashed the trade union offices to smithereens: "COSATU House yesterday morning looked as if a whirlwind had swept through it. Scores of doors had been smashed open, cupboards ransacked, telephone wires cut, documents strewn around offices, thrown out of windows and brief cases ripped open."

In a statement issued on Thursday 23rd, the SAP Directorate of Public Relations said: "Police had reasonable grounds to believe a number of trained terrorists were in COSATU House...It was understood violent action against SAP members and their families was being planned in COSATU House."

In their search for 'terrorists' police must have thought they would be hiding behind noticeboards for almost every noticeboard was pulled off the wall. Evidently the police also thought they were thirsty terrorists because they took time to put curry powder in the coffee supply in the MAWU offices and salt in the milkpowder supply of another union.

A trade unionist described the siege: "Then the police started arriving. There were hundreds of them. Literally hundreds. The whole place was sealed off."

"The first feeling I got was that I was really in serious trouble. I mean I have never been involved in serious trouble in my life. I was scared, really scared. We are all flesh and blood, m'fo (brother). "From where I was you could see them taking the railway workers out. Everyone felt helpless. There were all these soldiers and police with crowbars and batons and machine guns. They brutalised us. But there was nothing we could do. Those people were armed and we were not. It was as simple as that."

"When people were watching them, they were saying 'Where is MK? We are for it.' You feel like, man if only I had a gun to get those bastards."

"They bashed through and laid the whole place to waste. 'Hands on the wall!' I was bashed against the wall. My head was bashed against the wall, but you cannot hit back. They are going to kill you if you do. I did not get my revenge, but one day... I can tell you, after yesterday, two thousand million times there will never be a negotiated settlement here. How do you talk to someone who is carrying a gun in his hand?"

Extract from affidavit by a police officer, explaining why the state wanted to ban COSATU's rallies at the launch of the campaign for a national minimum wage. The document, which also refers explicitly to the ideas of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC, shows the regime's clear awareness that the struggle for democracy and a living wage is a struggle to end capitalism.

1. The undersigned, GABRIEL SMIT hereby declare under oath:
2. I am a captain of police.
3. I confirm the contents of my declaration received 1 and 2.
4. The planned 2000th meeting 22nd March 1987 in the Johannesburg Stadium, SOWETO, serves primarily as a launch meeting for 'National Wage Campaign'.
5. The latter campaign includes various facets which has the goal to mobilise workers to overthrow the free enterprise system in the R.A.S. and to replace it with a system where workers have control of the means of production and which will lead down to socialism.
6. I have reason to believe that those who will attend the meeting will be treated and encouraged to be actively involved in the campaign in all its facets as indicated and as such to implement the establishment of socialism.
7. Those present will be encouraged to go over the establishment of national, regional or local co-ordinating committees to implement the campaign nationally according to the C.I.C. I have reason to believe that aforementioned implementation will be executed by using street committees as well as youth and community organisations.

## Ivin Malaza — martyr

"I WILL not tell my people not to defend themselves", said Gatsha Buthelezi — leader of the reactionary *Inkatha* organisation — on British TV on 24 April.

Buthelezi's "defence" has included the cold-blooded murder of BTR strike leaders, the wives and children of United Democratic Front activists, and dozens of Youth Congress leaders by *Inkatha* death squads.

Ivin Malaza is one of the martyrs of the South African workers' movement, shot in the back by *Inkatha* thugs.

Donations and pledges to the memory of comrade Malaza, to help support his family and continue his work, now total £1,500, including £300 promised by *Militant* supporters in East Anglia and a further £170 pledged by labour activists in Harlow.

Nearly £300 was raised from delegates and visitors to the LPYS conference at Easter.

Posters and appeal sheets to assist in raising money are now available. Appeal sheets should be taken into workplaces, trade union branches and Labour parties.

Donations should be rushed to: Cllr L. Faulkes, 143B Amhurst Road, London E8 2AW. Cheques payable to "Ivin Malaza Memorial Fund".

On sale now:

Issue 23 of *Inqaba ya Basebenzi*, Journal of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress.

Order from: *Inqaba*, BM Box 1719, London WC1N 3XX.

Price 75c

**inqaba YA BASEBENZI**

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

WE DEMAND A LIVING WAGE

S'KHOKHELE COSATU!

CAMPAIGN FOR A SPECIFIC NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE

Also: NUM Congress • White election • Youth interviews • Armed struggle • Stalinism—Russia and SA • Reply to comrade Steve • Botswana • etc.

of the carnage at Germiston, one hundred years of oppression, of racial taunts and injustice, of lives lived in bitter poverty, boiled over in minutes.

About 200 railway workers, seething with rage, spilled out of the trade union headquarters to make their way to Doornfontein station, so as to get to Germiston and come to the aid of their comrades.

According to an eyewitness, nothing like it has ever been seen even in South Africa's tortured history. Workers armed themselves with whatever was at hand, and as they poured from the building it looked as though the clashes from colonial history were to be re-enacted on the concrete streets of Johannesburg.

A huge phalanx of heavily-armed police met the workers on the way to the station. The workers were teagassed but to the astonishment of the police they kept surging forward. The workers used knives, sticks, bottles and chairlegs against the police guns, and in the hand-to-hand battle several policemen were severely injured and five workers shot dead.

# PLO 'unity'

## What does it mean?

**THE EIGHTEENTH session of the Palestine National Council, meeting in Algiers, has re-established, at least on paper, a greater unity within the movement than at any time since 1983. But the PNC is no nearer than before to a programme or a strategy that can solve the plight of the four million Palestinian people.**

By John Pickard

It was the siege of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon that created the pressure for unity within the Palestine Liberation Organisation, expressed in its governing body the PNC. The bombardment of Chatila and Bourj al-Barajneh and the suffering and starvation of the 25,000 trapped inside, horrified workers everywhere.

The 'war of the camps' has been sparked off by the attempt of the PLO to re-establish itself as a military force in Lebanon for the first time since the Israeli invasion forced its withdrawal in 1982. The Lebanese Shi'ite militia, Amal, which became the largest and most powerful militia as a result, has been bitterly opposed to the PLO returning in any strength.

The Shi'ites believe that it was the presence and activities of the Palestinian militias that provoked the Israeli invasion in the first place and they are not prepared to suffer reprisals all over again because of renewed actions by the PLO. As if to underline their fears, the Israeli air force has been dropping leaflets, warning the Shi'ites against allowing the PLO back:

'Don't forget the calamities brought upon you by the Palestinians, who cared nothing for your welfare....the Israeli Defence Force does not want to bring destruction upon you....'

Despite the raising of the siege, it seems as if the Amal has succeeded in limiting the PLO military presence to a level far less than it was prior to 1982. Syria, because of its own strategic ambitions in Lebanon, is also opposed to the PLO's resurrection, and up to the point when the international odium of the bloody siege became too great to bear, supported the Amal.

The bloodletting in the camps, which in the last two years has claimed 3,000 Palestinian lives, reached a crescendo over the last six months. Under these circumstances there was enormous pressure on the various Palestinian guerrilla groups to sink their differences in the face of a common threat.

The Palestine National Council, the so-called 'Parliament in exile' of the Palestinian nation, is made up of delegates from various cultural, political and other organisations. But, in practice, the majority are aligned to one or another of the guerrilla groups, of which Yasser Arafat's *Al Fatah* is by far the largest.

Now, on paper, the divisions in the PLO created by the defeat in Lebanon have been overcome. By bringing back into its ranks the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front (DFLP), the PLO encompasses 80 to 90 per cent of all the guerrilla groups, leaving only a minority of dissidents, mostly based in Damascus.

But what does the new-found unity of the PLO mean in concrete



Beirut in ruins (top) and Lebanon hopelessly divided (top right)—grim proof of the futility of seeking a military solution against Israel. Above: food truck stopped and Palestinians shot down by Amal gunmen during the siege of Chatila and Bourj al-Barajneh. Inside the camps men, women and children were mercilessly bombarded, killed and maimed (above right). Thousands were reduced to eating dogs, cats and rats.

terms? If the Palestinian leadership sought to unify the movement on the basis of a socialist strategy of mass mobilisation of Palestinians in Lebanon and in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, the PNC could have been a springboard for genuine revolutionary struggle for Palestinian rights.

### Israel divided

Israeli society is deeply divided, not least over its continued military occupation of over one and a half million Palestinian Arabs. Even at the top of the ruling coalition splits are visible in the decision of the Labour Foreign Minister, Peres, to send an envoy to Washington in support of the idea of a US-sponsored peace conference (on Israel's terms) while his boss, Prime Minister Shamir, sends his own representative to argue against!

A movement that based itself firmly on Marxist ideas and workers' internationalism, advancing the programme of socialist revolution and a Socialist Federa-

tion of Middle East States, could draw to its side the mass of Palestinians, finding an echo also among other Arab and Israeli workers.

But, unfortunately, these are not the policies of the PLO. The leadership is still bound hand and foot by the old, failed and discredited policies of the past, which have led the Palestinian people from one debacle to the next.

The policy of the leading group around Arafat is to push the PLO towards participation in some form of internationally-sponsored 'peace' conference, in the hope of negotiating a settlement that would include an independent Palestinian homeland on the West Bank and Gaza.

Such a conference is being widely floated, most recently by EEC leaders, anxious to broker some 'settlement' of the Palestinian question. Despite his previous failure to come to a common position with the key 'moderate' Arab leader, King Hussein of Jordan, some form of a 'negotiated settlement' still remains Arafat's policy.

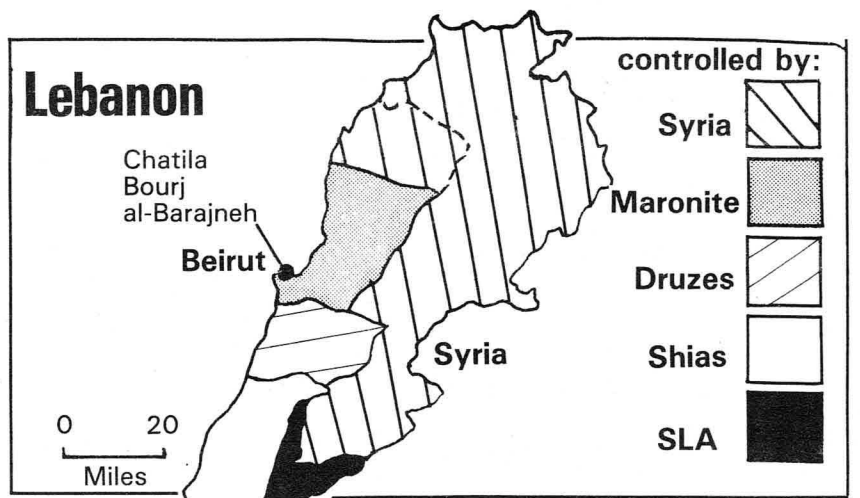
Temporarily, in order to draw

the more 'radical' groups back into the fold, Arafat has been forced to adopt positions, in words at least, that appear to rule out such a conference. The PNC not only condemned Jordan but also Egypt - for its peace-treaty with Israel - which Arafat was hoping to use as a go-between with the United States. But the PNC is unlikely to shift Arafat from his basic strategy.

### Unprincipled alliances

His whole political method is based on unprincipled alliances with other Palestinian groups and with Arab leaders, ever shifting and changing, breaking off links, re- cementing them, breaking off again, only to pave the way for a new reconciliation. The PLO is united...until the next split, and Arafat is estranged from Egypt and Jordan only...until the next reconciliation.

There can be no question of a military victory over Israel, either by the PLO or any combination of Arab states. After their expulsion from Lebanon, the PLO no longer



is a major force there. Even the *Sunni* Muslim militia in control of Sidon warned the PLO against the resumption of any 'military' operations in southern Lebanon:

"(The Palestinians) must not carry weapons outside the camp. It is absolutely forbidden."

The PLO has also lost its most powerful ally in Lebanon, the Shi'ite Hezbollah, a radical breakaway from Amal.

It is this position of *impotence* that is pushing the PLO leaders towards seeking participation in some form of international conference sponsored by the superpowers. Even at the risk of once again alienating minority factions within the PLO, Arafat will probably move as soon as possible to restore links with Egypt, Jordan, and, if it were possible, even with Syria, so as not to be left out of any bargaining that may take place.

But what this strategy misses out is the fact that every player in the drama, except the PLO, is dead against any form of genuine independent Palestinian state, even one limited to the West Bank and Gaza. Neither of the superpowers, none of the Arab states and least of all Israel would agree to the creation of an independent Palestinian state.

### Powder-keg

Given the national divisions, the economic weakness of the new 'state' and its political instability, it would inevitably be a powder-keg, almost a finished recipe for social revolution.

The very 'best' that could be achieved through such a conference would be some new 'arrangement' whereby the areas currently occupied by the Israeli army would be turned over to the Jordanian army or a joint occupation force of both. In either case, it would mean the continued oppression of the Palestinian people, storing up revolutionary explosions for the future.

But even that kind of agreement would seem unlikely, given Israel's imperialist policy, with its West Bank settlements and the gradual absorption of the Arab economy.

The orientation of the PLO leadership, therefore, towards some form of settlement sponsored by the superpowers, is an illusion and a trap. Arafat and the leadership around him have never based themselves on a socialist perspective or on the mass mobilisation of the Palestinian workers as a whole, preferring instead the patronage of various and ever-changing combinations of reactionary Arab leaders. The only policies that offer a way out of the impasse facing the Palestinian masses are alien to the PLO leadership.

The eighteenth session of the Palestine National Council has come to an end and delegates have dispersed, often to comfortable jobs as doctors, professors or engineers in exile. The speeches and resolutions of 'struggle' still ring in their ears.

But it will not be the delegates who will carry the burden for the lack of a clear leadership and a strategy. It will be the homeless and impoverished in Lebanon, the landless and unemployed in the West Bank and Gaza and the millions of other Palestinians. When the noise dies down in Algiers, they will still be waiting for an answer.

## Where the money goes

MORE THAN 160,000 people have been on hospital waiting lists for over a year, some for four or five years, the current national waiting list is 681,000.

£100 million would totally clear up these misnamed "non urgent" cases, which are a prison sentence, and in some cases a death sentence for the vast majority who can not afford to go private. The technology is there but the £10,000 million wasted on the Trident scrap metal project shows Tory priorities.

Tory claims that more has been spent on the NHS 'in real terms' do not stand up to close scrutiny. The amount going to improving services has gone down.

**LAST MONTH'S** prescription charges rise to £2.40 an item was the ninth since 1979, when charges were 20p. This could deter many patients who need more than one item on a prescription.

The day the increase was announced, Fisons, who make drugs for asthma and hay fever among other things, announced that their pharmaceutical division's profits were up by £10 million, by coincidence the amount the prescription rise will provide. All prescriptions should be free; nationalising the drug companies would more than cover the bill.

A parliamentary committee said last summer that hospital and community health service ought to have grown by 2 per cent a year in volume terms, in reality it has been one per cent, with a cumulative underfunding of £1.3 billion in the previous six years.

Most increased spending has gone into capital projects such as new hospitals to slowly replace the many outdated Victorian institutions. That accounted for £800 million out of £920 million. Many of these replacements were planned ten years or more ago.

And even that holds dangers. Just as investment in the coal board's superpits is preparing the ground for privatisation, so with the brand new hospital buildings in the NHS.

The remainder for spending on services has largely gone in increased prices. Drugs and equipment have gone up far quicker than other prices. So have such government determined rises as electricity, gas and rates which take a large proportion of NHS funds.

Health Authorities have had to find extra money to fund pay awards from what are called cost efficiency savings, or value for money developments. To ordinary people they are better known as cuts.

Thatcher appointed Lord Rayner in 1979 to look for cuts in the civil service. In the last few years, most health authorities have outstripped central government cutback targets. They presumably want to inherit Rayner's knighthood for services to Tory economics.

# Two nations in health care

THE FINAL report of the Health Education Council before it is disbanded shows how Tory cuts, poverty and unemployment have added to health inequalities.

A third of children in Britain live on or below the poverty line. Children living in deprived parts of Glasgow are nine times more likely to be admitted to hospital; the main factors in this ill health are overcrowding and the unemployment of their parents.

Children of the long term unemployed are significantly shorter than children of the employed, and

height gives a general indication of health. The report finds links between design and construction faults in high density housing estates and respiratory diseases, headaches, infestations and depression. One study of 4000 blocks of flats in London concludes that the bad design "makes it difficult for normal people to cope."

It's a shame some such study wasn't written before the flats were built. Cuts in public sector housing investment and repair and the suspension of the Parker Morris standards for council housing have

widened the gap.

11 per cent of children in one poor area of London were found to be poorly nourished. In Milton Keynes, a supposedly affluent town, 51 per cent of lone parents and 30 per cent of low income families went without food because of lack of money. Experts calculate that a healthy diet for a pregnant woman would take up 28 per cent of the income of a couple on supplementary benefit.

If you are in work, industrial conditions are worsening. There has been a 23 per cent increase in serious industrial accidents in the '80s. Half

Britain's workforce have no access to even basic occupational health services other than first aid.

If you are out of work, mental health can suffer. Long term unemployed men are 19 times as likely to attempt suicide than men at work.

Health service workers and users should get involved with politics and fight for a healthy socialist system which puts people before profits.

By Diane Simcox  
(ex NHS worker,  
Wolverhampton)



## Unsafe in Tory hands

### Your voice

SALLY, A NURSE and a NUPE member at Groby Road hospital, Leicester said of the Tories' pre election pay rise. "It makes about £4 a week difference before tax. Thatcher doesn't need nurses, she needs slaves. If she gets in again there won't be an NHS, never mind another pay rise."

An ambulance worker in Liverpool told Militant: "This job is very stressful. A lot of staff have ulcers and a survey shows that their heart rate goes very high when they are called out on an emergency."

The health service will be a major issue at the coming election. If you are an NHS worker, Militant is your voice. Keep people informed of what's really happening, become a correspondent for Militant.

# NHS



## The new bosses

THE TORIES knew that if they wanted to undermine the effectiveness of state provided health care they had to replace those administrators who were committed to the principle of the NHS. Roy Griffiths, a director of Sainsbury's made recommendations to reorganise management structures on lines used in the USA. Tory stooges are now in major decision making positions on 3 year fixed term contracts, so they will be able to privatise services at a later stage.

This new breed, many with no health experience are on performance bonuses of up to an extra 20 per cent on salaries from £25,000 to £35,000. If you perform badly, ie don't carry out Tory dictates you will get no bonus and will probably get the push.

### Tory attacks

Tony Newton a Tory MP is chairman of the NHS Management Board. Other members of this board include management director Ian Mills, seconded in 1985 from none other than Price Waterhouse, Tory heroes for their sequestration of NUM funds. He was a senior partner there, and will be responsible for financial planning and control in the NHS. Many other members are equally 'reliable.'

Anyone who votes Tory or their Alliance second eleven, will be voting for the completion of the Dracula plan for bleeding and dismembering the NHS.

And Labour too, whatever its good intentions will need to fight for a bold socialist programme to make sure the capitalists don't insist on health service cuts to restore health to their geriatric system. The NHS needs the finance to maintain and improve health standards.

By Kevin Mullins, CONSE

- ★ Workers' democratic control and management of the NHS
- ★ Nationalisation under democratic workers' control and management of the pharmaceutical and equipment supply industries
- ★ Abolition of all profiteering through private health care
- ★ Massive injection of funds to the NHS to restore the cuts and allow for progressive planning to take place
- ★ A statutory minimum wage of £125 per week for the lowest paid health worker linked to a 35 hour week

# The return of the private parasites

THE HEALTH service is labour intensive and the biggest 'savings' would be in staffing. NHS workers' morale has been hard hit by the threat of privatisation.

The Tories like privatisation because it reduces manpower costs. Over 50,000 jobs in cleaning, laundry and catering have gone since 1983, saving £41.9 million last year.

It also reduces the effectiveness of the unions by tying them in lengthy negotiations over contracts. This usually leads to union officials recommending a programme of cuts to maintain the in house tender. £23.7 million has been stolen from workers' wages and conditions in 396 in house tenders so

far. The bosses also hope to get rid of some of the most militant workers.

At the same time it opens up the NHS workforce to exploitation for profit. 15 Tory MPs have declared a direct interest in firms procuring NHS contracts. More money awaits them, they hope, by driving demoralised NHS users and workers into the private sector.

### Reactionary ideas

The government have tried to hide some of their cuts as community care. But such care needs extra resources, and none has been forthcoming. Peo-

ple have been dumped in private residential and nursing homes. The DHSS had to pick up the tabs for grants for private homes amounting to £500million in 1986, nearly eighty times as much as in 1978. But some people are making a fast private buck out of it.

Many more dependent people are foisted on to caring relatives, usually women, who usefully for government statistics are forced off the dole figures. The chronically mentally ill are joining the homeless in major city centres, around railway stations and bus depots sleeping rough and begging for survival.

# No hope under the Tories

Dear Comrades,  
In *The London Evening Standard* this week I read of yet another tragic suicide. Kelvin Wright, a 23 year old father hurled his 16 month old son from the 19th floor of a tower block in South London, and then jumped to his own death.  
One of his neighbours said Kelvin dreamed of the day he would move off the dilapidated council estate in Stockwell and buy his own home.  
Another neighbour described him as a young man 'desperately wanting to make

something of himself, but easily upset by failure'.  
The suicide rate in Britain is now reaching record levels with one young person under 25 taking their life every day.  
What future exists under capitalism for young people? It's up to us to go to estates like Kelvin's and show people there is a future if we fight for it—socialism.  
Yours fraternally  
Ruth Williams  
Hackney North Labour Party  
Young Socialists

# Discounting politics

Dear Comrades,  
At the last branch meeting of my union, UCATT, a motion was passed rejecting the NEC proposals regarding the LPYS and accepting the LPYS' proposals instead.  
On a lighter note, at Poole Constituency Labour Party's last executive meeting, a proposal was made that we take advantage of discount red roses at a local florist and wear them when canvassing!

This didn't get a vast amount of support, so I've to go out and see how much Liverpool FC rosettes cost, the Labour Party ones being vastly overpriced. (A 'vote Labour' sticker is being stuck over Liverpool FC - I'm a Leeds fan myself!).  
Yours fraternally  
J Hayes  
Poole Labour Party  
(UCATT)

# Fowler

Dear Comrades,  
I have recently become a regular reader of *Militant*. As an expectant mother I found the articles on maternity grant cuts excellent.  
As an unemployed family, Fowler and friends' latest act of spite means extra financial worry in a blatant attack on unborn children.  
Yours fraternally  
Jacquelyn Bill  
Swansea

# Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

Militant,  
3-13 Hepscoth Road,  
London E9 5HB



# Indebted

Dear Comrades,  
While canvassing last week I spoke to a woman who said that she would be voting Tory for the first time in the local elections.  
Her reason was that she was better off with a Tory government. I talked about poverty, low wages, slum housing, unemployment and the state of the economy. She agreed with everything I said but her job was always safe under the Tories.  
I asked what made her special, as no-one could consider their job safe nowadays. She answered that she was a debt-collector and business was booming. I had to agree!  
Yours fraternally  
Gordon Ross  
Stockport

# Taxing time

Dear Comrades,  
Workers may not have noticed that we have just started a new tax year but big business has. At the beginning of this month over £200 million worth of gold came into the country from South Africa. This gold is now being stored near Gatwick airport.  
Capitalists can earn more money by leaving it in a bank vault than by investing in industry. We need houses, schools, factories and jobs not gold stores.  
Yours fraternally  
Bob Excell  
Heathrow worker

# Horror inside Palestinian camps

Dear Comrades,  
Workers around the world will have been moved by press reports of the conditions in the Palestinian refugee camps of Bourj-al-Barajneh and Shatila, under siege and bombardment for the past six months by the Amal militia.  
The British surgeon, Pauline Cutting, described how two

children died in her arms for want of antibiotics. Such was the shortage of medical supplies that camp surgeons had to share a saw to amputate limbs, only pausing to clean it and pass it along.  
Syria has cynically cast itself in a 'peace making' role in the Lebanese conflict. In fact Syria has a shameful record as far as

both the Palestinian question and intervention in the Lebanon are concerned. As a deformed workers' state, not remotely interested in having a socialist state on its borders, Syria invaded Lebanon in 1976 to defuse a revolutionary crisis. More recently Syria was guilty of bombing the Tel-al Zafaar refugee camp.

To many workers, the Middle East situation is very confusing with no obvious solution. In reality, it is only the programme of Marxism that can offer both an analysis and a way forward.  
Yours fraternally  
Jean Thorpe  
Nottingham

## Classified ads

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 first post on Friday, the week before publication.

- ☐ EETPU members public meeting. Wednesday 13 May 7pm. Hear John Aitkin - Broad Left candidate in General Secretary election. At St Brides Hall, Bride Lane EC4 (near Blackfriars tube). Hear the other voice!
- **Offensiv** camp in Sweden. Monday 6 - Saturday 12 July 1987. Camp takes place close to Gothenburg in the middle of a forest beside a lake. Political seminars, swimming, football, canoeing, walking etc. Bring a tent or stay in the houses. Translation to English arranged. For information write to: *Offensiv* Brahegatan 2, S-415 01 Göteborg, Sweden. Tel 031 844162.
- **Cassette tapes** with two issues of *Militant* (one each side). Available fortnightly. Tapes £3.50 per quarter, £13 per year. To be returned or send blank C-90 tapes. Contact Dave: 14 Harrowby Road, West Park, Leeds 16. Tel: 0532 624917.
- **Paper sellers** plastic sleeves. Minimum order 10, £2 inc postage to Militant, 8 Woodside Court, Woodside Rd, Portswood, Southampton SO2 1GR.
- **ANY READERS** interested in computers, with access to computers and/or modems who would be interested in a Marxist Computer Club, please contact Box No 3, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd.
- **New stickers** "Kick out the Tories" and "No slave labour on YTS". Now available. Cost £1 per 100 plus 25p p&p. Available from 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.

THE Sri Lankan Summer Dance has been cancelled.

## The Good Life!

Dear Comrades,  
Recently on visiting my local DHSS offices, I had a long wait until my turn. Looking round for something to read, my eyes fell on a copy of *Country Life*, advertising country houses and country attire.  
The magazine next to it was *Boats Monthly* the publication for yacht and cruiser enthusiasts. All the magazines in the room were of this type.  
I came to the conclusion that Thatcher and Tebbit must be right. The unemployed and those on supplementary benefit must be living a life of luxury at the State's expense!  
Yours fraternally  
Dave Pollock  
Scarborough

## Zina: Trotsky's daughter

Dear Comrades,  
Zina (Channel 4, Monday 27 April) gave a glimpse of the life of Trotsky's eldest daughter. The film detailed the psychological problems she faced towards the end of her life, a result of years of pressure leading the life of a revolutionist.  
She became one of her father's correspondents in Berlin, during the rise of the Nazis. But eventually, unable to cope with political and personal crises she committed suicide.  
The film, whilst slightly

abstract in its approach, showed the isolation and pressure on a 'young revolutionary. Depicted through the eyes of a psychiatrist who saw Zina in 1932, it had cynical moments but on the whole presented a favourable picture of Trotsky's struggle, as well as providing a little insight into his ideas and method.  
Yours fraternally  
Darren Summers  
Canterbury Labour Party  
Young Socialists  
(What did other readers think of the film?—Ed)

## MAY DAY Greetings

Eileen Short and Terry Sullivan have a daughter, Rosie. May Day greetings from all of us.

Workers' unity and socialist greetings from Militant supporters on Southampton Women's Council

Greetings from Lincolnshire Militant supporters. Tories out in '87

TGWU Militant supporters send May Day Greetings to all bus workers who are fighting the cut in wages and the lengthening of the working day. Only the return of a socialist Labour government can repeal the Tory Transport Acts in the interests of the travelling public.

# CPSA

## conference

CPSA CONFERENCE meets in the week starting 11 May, following one of the most eventful and tumultuous years in the union's history. Last year's Annual Conference saw the Broad Left's challenge for the positions of General Secretary and General Treasurer following the defection of Alistair Graham to the Industrial Society for a salary of £50,000 a year. That campaign resulted in the election of John Macreadie as General Secretary; a result which the right wing National Executive Committee immediately set aside.

Following hasty and dubious changes to the rules together with an hysterical campaign by Fleet Street the election was re-run and the original loser, John Ellis, was installed as General Secretary.

**By Steve Dunk**  
(Chair Inland Revenue CPSA, personal capacity)

Conference this year must deal with the anti-democratic changes which have been introduced into CPSA's electoral procedures by the right wing.

It is only through the pressure of *Militant* supporters and the Broad Left in general that there has been a

pay campaign at all. There certainly would have been no joint campaign if it had been left to the right wing leadership who favoured a go it alone approach.

*Militant* favoured a joint campaign involving a period of short sharp action leading up to the all-out strike which members know will be essential to win this dispute. Members up and down the country have shown their willingness to fight and are looking to Conference for a lead. Conference must therefore vote in favour of the Broad Left model motion which calls for continued unity with the SCPS but makes it clear that the

union must campaign for the all-out strike and conduct a ballot which allows that strike to begin no later than 8 June. Any other course would be a betrayal of members' interests.

Another issue which has forced itself back on to the union agenda is the question of emergency payments centres when members in the DHSS and DE are on strike. Many people will have seen the sickening sight of Lord Young and other Tory ministers complaining that the dispute is hurting the most vulnerable in society. The complaints of Tory ministers should worry nobody. However there is



DHSS Newcastle Central Office CPSA delegates celebrate Doreen Purvis being elected vice-president at last year's CPSA conference.

ample evidence from all quarters that the lack of emergency payments is damaging our support from claimants and placing some Nalgo members in intolerable circumstances.

The union must review its policy in the light of experience and carry the Emergency Motion from *Militant* supporters which lays out clearly that CPSA members should be prepared to staff emergency payments centres under union control rather than let management proceed on the basis of scab labour.

The major theme on the main conference agenda is union democracy. Nothing could more graphically illustrate the rottenness at the top of the union than the pay off to John Raywood, the defeated right wing candidate in the General Treasurer election (See left). Conference must support the Emergency Motions calling for this pay out to be frozen and an investigation carried out with a report back to 1988 Conference.

With regard to the electoral changes Conference must resist the push towards postal balloting and restore to Branch Committees the right to make recommendations in all elections.

Equally important it must plug the gaps in the constitution identified by the courts last summer. The right wing in the union have consistently used the courts to try to whittle down the sovereignty of Conference. Motion

1119 and other associated motions offer the opportunity once and for all to restore power to where it rightfully belongs: to the members through Conference.

**Conference must be the springboard for a vote for all out strike to see the pay campaign to a successful conclusion.**

Support must also be given to motion 1174 which would force the NEC to agree the date on which a successful candidate will take up office, prior to the election being held, rather than continuing the present corrupt practice where the NEC waits to see if the membership's choice is acceptable to them before deciding the date of appointment.

Motion 1221 gives Conference the right to decide on election procedure rather than simply the President and General Secretary and should be supported.

Conference must carry motion 501 censuring the

NEC for its conduct of GS/GT elections. The motion is not as strongly worded as we would wish, but given the fear shown by the right wing and the bureaucracy in refusing to even print many of the motions received, this motion must be given full support.

Motion 557 deals with bringing the salaries of senior full time officials in line with members' pay. Given the antics of the last year and the lead offered by John Macreadie in the General Secretary election this motion should also be carried if Conference reflects the will of the members.

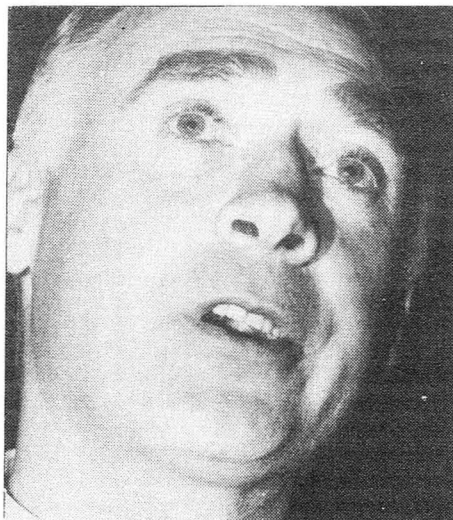
There is also a debate on nuclear energy. The lessons of Chernobyl must be learnt. The NEC should be censured for their support of the British Nuclear Industry which is one of the most notoriously secretive and accident prone in the world. Conference should support motion 890 which details the only sane way forward.

Conference must be used as the spring board for a vote for an all-out strike to see the pay campaign through to a successful conclusion. It must also be used to make a clear call to all CPSA members to vote Labour in the forthcoming General Election. The only solution for the problems faced by Civil Servants is the election of a Labour government committed to a socialist programme. CPSA members must play their part in bringing that about.

## Raywood's pay-off rip-off

THIS YEAR John Raywood will earn £127,000 for losing the elections as CPSA General Treasurer twice! He receives a £90,000 golden handshake, a £12,000 year pension and a new job with the "Unity Trust" banking firm which nets him £25,000.

Challenged about the generosity of this football pools type pay off from his political bedmates—the ruling CPSA right wing NEC he dismissed them as "... the politics of envy". "I'm worth every penny," he told the *Daily Express* of 27 April. Some would argue that a General Treasurer who leaves his union about £1 million in the red is worth less than nothing, certainly not £127,000. CPSA members will renew calls for the enormous salaries of full time officials to be immediately brought into line with the low paid members they represent.



John Raywood.

This scandal will mark the end of the road for CPSA's senior full time officials free loading at the union's expense. Emergency motions to the unions conference already call for an enquiry into the Raywood scandal. This must be held with proper representation from rank and file members of the union whose subscriptions pay for Raywood's extravagant lifestyle.

No amount of arrogant, ignorant and self-righteous self defence on the part of Raywood will hide the facts—the right wing delayed offering him redundancy pay so that he would benefit from revised Civil Service procedures introduced on 1 April.

Raywood has only been Treasurer for 5 years, not 30 as he says in the *Observer*. He could have stayed on as an Assistant Secretary on a salary of about £19,000. For leaving voluntarily he is paid off £90,000 and goes straight to another job at £25,000!

CPSA members on strike at present will be repulsed by this episode and will demand that the right wing NEC who lavishly treat their friends to huge pay-offs are brought to book. If Mr Raywood had any trade union principles left he would give back the money unasked.

### Gravy train derailed

Raywood should have received no compensation at all since he refused continued employment with CPSA. One of his fellow full time officials made this quite clear (in a letter to the General Secretary). He also points out "To be blunt, the future pay and conditions of the rest of us could be placed in jeopardy by such a rash set of proposals."

Very perceptive! Very true! Raywood has taken the union gravy train right over the edge of the precipice and now endangers "perks" and "expenses" for all officials.

Mr Raywood also decided the democratic principles by which he was defeated. In the *Sunday Observer* he is quoted as saying "... If you have had a job for 30 years and you are suddenly thrown out, not for incompetence and not because anybody has made a national judgement that you cannot do the job, but simply because of the whims of political election machines, what compensation would you expect?"

Our answer is—none! Unlike 4 million unemployed he has a phenomenally well paid job and will end his "working" life with two pensions and money in the bank.

## Why civil servants are fighting

CIVIL SERVICE trade unionists have given their loyal backing to the programme of regional strikes. The report below from Hanley in the Potteries shows the potential for a well organised national strike.

At the Unemployment Benefit Office, the vast majority of the 45 workers were out. A few, mainly supervisors and managers went in.

Pickets explained that the strike was not just about pay, but better staffing to give a better service to the public was also a concern.

Nick Hackney, the CPSA

area coordinator has worked there for six years and only takes home £110. Many take home as little as £70 a week.

Milkmen, bin workers and postmen have refused to cross the picket lines and the pickets want their thanks to be recorded in print. The claimants were not hostile; they all took the leaflet: "We're on the same side."

The strikers want a 35 hour week and 30 days leave. They know that demands like that, coupled with the proper use of new technology would mean more staff and less unemployment.

At the DHSS office in Hanley three quarters of the 240 workforce were out, most of the rest were non union members and some higher grades. Pickets told us that several workers had joined the union over the dispute.

One picket explained that when he started work in 1978, they handled 9000 claims; now they dealt with 20,000 but they did not have anywhere near a proportionate increase in staffing. The strikers are determined to win decent pay and vastly improved conditions for themselves and the public.

# Industrial Reports

## USDAW shows mood of union conferences

**THIS YEAR'S** Usdaw Annual Delegate Meeting took place against the background of the coming general election. The conference mood was dominated by the necessity of returning a Labour government.

Most activists felt that a Labour victory was entirely possible and that the opinion polls were not telling the whole story about the parties' standing.

Neil Kinnock addressed the conference. His speech was long on condemnation of the effects of eight years of Tory government, and short on what a Labour government will do to eradicate them. Nevertheless, he received a tumultuous ovation. The delegates cheered and clapped on their feet for ten minutes.

They sang 'Here we go' for another five minutes. After this died down Neil Kinnock asked them all to stand up and hold hands. He then led the singing of 'We shall overcome', which was followed by another standing ovation. Even Kinnock was surprised!

There was less of a witch-hunting mood to the con-

ference this year compared with 1986, amongst the ordinary delegates at least. A motion supporting the leadership's 'efforts to rid the Labour Party of the *Militant* influence, however, was carried on the platform's recommendation. The general secretary called on members to support these moves at constituency level.

But *Militant* supporters met less hostility from delegates and visitors. Sales of the paper were up on last year and the *Militant* Readers' Meeting attracted nearly double last year's attendance. Nearly sixty heard Broad Left Presidential candidate, Jeff Price, outline *Militant's* programme.

### Mood

In the elections, the Usdaw Broad Left saw its representation on the TUC delegation increased to eight out of 26, and in the Labour Party delegation saw its representation increased to 10 out of 18, with three *Militant* supporters amongst them.

The conference took a number of radical decisions on a wide range of issues, including setting a wages policy of £120 per week for

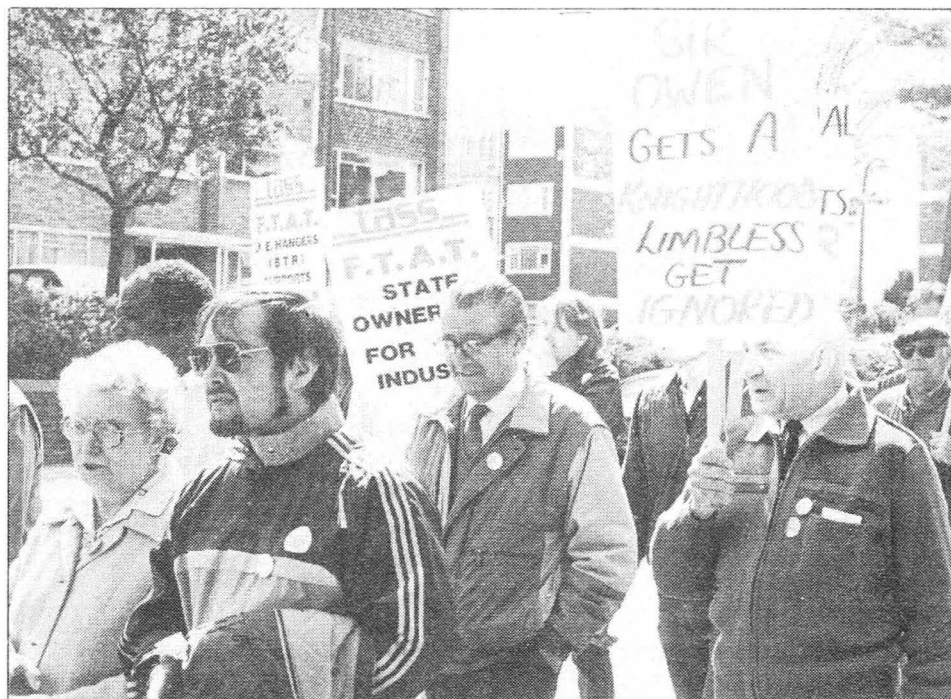


Garfield Davies

35 hours and committed the union to a low pay campaign. The motion called on the EC to hold a mass demonstration on this issue in the next few months.

The executive council suffered a defeat over the question of the Usdaw Youth Conference. A motion calling for the size of the conference to be substantially increased was passed against their recommendation on a card vote by a narrow margin. They are now committed to developing the Youth Conference into a bigger, more representative body.

By Mick Wainwright  
(Usdaw, North Western  
Divisional Councillor)



## Successful Hangers demo

**HUNDREDS OF** demonstrators marched last Saturday in Putney against the sackings of 300 artificial limb makers from the Hangers factory.

Hangers parent company BTR, controls the limb manufacturing market and is making vast profits.

As Charlie Lucas (National League of the Blind and Disabled) commented at the rally: "So long as BTR get their £500 million a year profit they don't care!"

The noisiest contingent on the march was the LPYS, with members mainly from Putney, Hammersmith and Fulham. Jason Fleming and Mark Bedford from Putney LPYS explained to *Militant* how the LPYS had raised more than £1,500 for the strikers during the past seven month long dispute and how LPYS members had been down on the picket line every week. "We won't walk away after this rally but will carry on our support" said Mark.

As the march moved through Putney High Street marchers were greeted with cheers and clapping from passers by. Marchers only saw one unwelcome face, that of disgraced MP Harvey Proctor. He soon disappeared behind the curtain

when he was recognised.

The march moved on to the tune of 'The Drunken Sailor' singing: 'What shall we do with Harvey Proctor' and the reply came back 'spank his bottom.'

Loud applause greeted Cathy Wilson of Liverpool Labour Women's Council, a Hangers consumer. Cathy explained how the skills of the Hangers workers had allowed her the privilege of taking part in the labour movement.

### Monopoly

She outlined how Hangers and Vesser's, two companies that monopolise the artificial limb market, cynically exploit the disabled. She showed how they had taken advantage of this 'growth' industry during the war period and how Hangers now, with their sister company Vesser, both owned by Intermed, are able to capitalise on an aging population.

She pointed out that there was a better rate of return in this industry than any other manufacturing industry.

What BTR are most frightened about is workers fighting back, and the gains made by Hangers workers with national pay rates and national agreements throughout 23 branches of



Cathy Wilson

Hangers in Britain. Cathy linked Hangers' struggle to struggles throughout the world and international workers' day, May Day. She brought fraternal greetings and solidarity from the people of Liverpool.

Alan Doogan, a member of Tass and the dispute committee commented to our reporter: "Out of all the outside people who have supported the dispute, *Militant* has helped the most!"

News from the Tass national conference that delegates had passed a resolution calling for the limb fitting industry to be taken into public ownership, was greeted with cheers and applause!

By Ruth Campbell

## Prince of Wales pit strike

**PRINCE OF** Wales colliery, in Pontefract, was on strike for two days recently over management's decision to pay the underground loco drivers a grade less. Talks had been taking place between management and the union at the pit but they were getting nowhere.

When the men came to work on the Monday night they decided they had had enough and went home. Tuesday day shift heard the usual: "We would like you to work so we can talk to management" from the branch officials, but as he was talking, the day shift loco drivers walked past the canteen windows on their way back home and any other words were lost as the rest of the men followed them.

The strike was called off after two days following a meeting of all the pit's loco drivers when they voted for a return to work.

As is usual at this pit the surface men were advised to work on the first day which they did, apart from a small group of men who refused to work when the underground men are in dispute.

This follows an earlier dispute, when after being told to work, they were sent home after three hours. Because these men went home the coal preparation plant could not run. The manager sent a message over to the plant that the men either ran the plant or went home. They went to see the union who said as long as they were NUM men they should run the plant!

It meant one man, who didn't know the job, having to do someone's job who had gone home in dispute, sanctioned by the union! And contractors doing jobs of some of the others who had gone home, (drivers).

It turned out that the argument of those who had supported the underground men was fully vindicated when the night shift on the surface was sent home by management at 11.00pm! What this episode shows is the need to build up the broad left in the NUM and where it is necessary replace leaders that sanction scabbing!

By a North Yorks  
reporter

## Don't come to the Cabaret

**ONE OF** the West End's most popular musicals, *Cabaret*, was performed last week without music. For the first time ever a West End orchestra are on strike.

Ian Muncey, a member of the Cabaret orchestra talked to Julie Frost and Dave Conway:

The dispute began when all 13 members were given termination of our contracts but no reason was given. Only eight were offered a renewal. We had all been working on the show for over a year and had brought it from tour to the West End.

After a secret ballot we voted 10-3 to go on strike. The Musicians Union made it official and banned any other musician from crossing

the picket. None have attempted to and the management cannot find any musician willing. They have even tried to transfer musicians from some of their other shows.

Support from Equity members has been good, contrary to press reports. 20 of the 30 members of the cast have signed a petition against the sackings. Seven members refused to go on and stayed outside with the strikers. Peter Plouviez, the general secretary has blamed the situation on the management.

Response from the audience has been good. When approached by the pickets most people demanded a refund and refused to go into the show. On its last night only 41 people were present—in a theatre that

can seat almost 1,000.

In an attempt to undermine support management has fed the press with some amazing stories. They would be funny if it wasn't so serious and my job on the line. Now I know how the miners feel about the press.

The management have even gone to the extent of phoning members of the band at home, and have threatened the MU with an injunction and each individual with a £50,000 fine.

We are all prepared to work tonight but it appears that the management are prepared to 'sack' the entire cast and crew, by closing the show, rather than reinstate

But over the bank holiday weekend they were desperately phoning the band to see if it could be resolved. So it's not over yet.

## Council's manual pay deal

**ON 8 April** employers on the National Joint Council (NJC) made a series of proposals in connection with the Local Authorities (LA) manual workers review.

If accepted, they would represent a devastating attack on LA manual workers' terms and conditions.

In return for a new grading system and higher rates of pay, the employers want almost total flexibility of hours and a move away from national negotiations to local agreements. These measures pave the way for privatisation.

The proposals for the new grading system fail to tackle the problems of low pay, actually increasing differentials.

(The lowest paid worker would get £6.55 whilst the highest grade would benefit by as much as £17. Cleansing workers would go down a grade!)

The possibility opens up of a huge increase in part-

time workers and even the introduction of split-shift working and that is only the beginning!

What makes these proposals even worse is that they come from Labour authority representatives on the NJC!

In my own workplace, a Parks Department, the proposals would mean gardeners could be asked to work 30 hours during the winter and 50 hours during the summer months.

### Pay cut

Grass cutting would be carried out on a split shift schedule, from 10am and also cut across tea time (the best times for grass cutting). Glasshouse workers would be asked to start at 4am, the best time for cutting and seed work.

With Saturday and Sunday becoming part of the normal week, park rangers would face a large pay cut.

Management would also be able to dictate when

holidays can be taken—workers having a summer holiday could become a thing of the past.

Trade unionists in the GMB, TGWU and NUPE must demand recall pay conferences to ensure these proposals are discussed and rejected. A real campaign to tackle low pay and reduce the working week must be launched.

Finally, in the April edition of *Labour Party News* the call is made for more efficient services, value for money, etc. Whilst trade unionists and socialists are in favour of such improvements, the striving for efficiency should not be made at the expense of workers' terms and conditions.

By Alan Shadforth  
(Hull City Council Joint  
Shop Stewards' Commit-  
tee Executive, personal  
capacity)

# Industrial Reports

## London bus vote

**LONDON BUSWORKERS have voted for industrial action against attacks on wages and working conditions by London Bus Limited using the threat of further privatisation.**

Behind them stands the Tory government who have introduced competitive tendering, which means that at some stage all London Regional Transport routes will be open to any bus company's bid.

Already many bus garages in the south London area have taken action. One day strikes by a number of outer London garages, with sympathy by some inner London garages, arose from management's attempt to blackmail workers in areas where tendering has taken place or is due in the near future.

Workers at Norbiton garage have been given notice of new contracts and told that if they reject the new terms they will be subject to dismissal without redundancy or severance payments. The company claim this is legal and have formed new subsidiary companies in the affected areas.

The cut in wages for one-

**By M Langabeer**  
(TGWU, Peckham garage)

person operated buses will be at least £30 on basic wages, rising to £50 when unsocial hours payments are included. They also want to introduce compulsory overtime of seven hours, taking the working week from 38 to 45 hours.

A one day strike of the whole fleet should be called. If management refuse to enter negotiations then an indefinite strike must be called.

### Solidarity

Many bus workers will raise doubts about the success of such actions. Older members recall the failure of the 1958 strike which lasted seven weeks and the recent defeats of the miners and printers.

But if we allow the attack on garages at Norbiton,

Plumstead and other outer London garages then as sure as night follows day it will be our garage next.

London Bus management tried to introduce a two-tier wage system before but it was rejected by a ballot vote. Now they are attempting to introduce this through the back door. It shows they fear opposition from the whole fleet and prefer to pick off individual garages.

We must win solidarity from groups like London Underground workers and other bus workers who can only suffer from this wage cutting exercise. For example, London and Country bus workers who are also organised in the TGWU.

If this dispute escalates into a London-wide strike we must also have the support of the whole labour movement. The Labour Party must make clear that tendering will end when they are returned to office and LRT will be made subject to democratic control through the local councils or a new London-wide authority.



Manchester protest against bus deregulation—London busworkers have voted to fight attacks on jobs and conditions.

Photo: J. Smith

## Gateshead police attack pickets

**NEW VICIOUS tactics by police on the picket line at HFW Plastics, Gateshead over the past two weeks has seen a number of pickets injured and 11 arrests.**

The 'honeymoon period' between police and pickets came to an abrupt end on 29 April, when 40 to 50 police waded into a crowd of demonstrators sitting peacefully on the roadway outside the factory.

Terrifying screams and pleas from the women, who were trampled underfoot, dragged by the hair and punched in the face by police, fell on deaf ears.

As the bus carrying around 30 scabs forced its way through what resembled a bloody battlefield, one lad who had been dragged to the ground in front of the bus, only managed to scramble clear of the wheels without a moment to spare.

Teresa Atkinson, an HFW worker for five years before being sacked along with 46 others was dragged along the ground like a sack of potatoes. She saw one girl violently pulled to her feet by her ears. "Another girl was punched in the mouth by the police. It was terrible."

The following Friday, two councillors, John Simpkin of Gateshead and Nigel Todd of Elswick, Newcastle were arrested. This was after John who is also branch secretary of the Sogat union, had approached the police to re-

mind them of the law which allows six pickets to approach the bus driver so as to persuade him to turn back. All along police have refused the pickets this right, seemingly making up their own laws as they go along.

Following these arrests a spontaneous demonstration outside Gateshead police station demanded their immediate release. It was broken up by police and two further arrests were made.

A number of workmen in the construction section of the AEU, who were working on the police station, immediately downed tools and amid cheers from the demonstrators, refused to return until all the arrested were released.

### Support

The dispute, now in its sixth week, is escalating, gaining support from various trade unions, Labour Party branches, unemployed groups, councils and many individuals, such as housewives, students etc.

Phil Main, father of the Sogat chapel at HFW Plastics explained the attitude of management, particularly towards women workers: "Mr Jackson (manager) thought that no woman was worth £100 a week. His main purpose all this time has been to force these girls out and get scab labour in."

"The girls were on £92 a

week, they actually should have been on £113. But even £92 was too much for Jackson. The women did everything for management. They haven't had a pay rise for four years and even accepted a £10 pay cut last year.

"Jackson again refused the women a pay rise this year, so they voted to ban overtime. An ultimatum, demanding a return to work on overtime or face dismissal, was flatly rejected by five girls and three lads who were immediately sacked. 40 other women and a few lads then walked out two days later in support and were also sacked.

"Jackson then took on about 20 to 30 scabs who were being paid only £54 a week. He wants cheap non-union labour.

"I would like to see as many people as possible come down to these gates and give us all the support we need."

Though faced with both the police and management's disgusting attitudes, strikers' morale is tremendous.

We call on workers throughout our area to join with the women on the picket line. Workers throughout the country should send letters of support and donations to: HFW Plastics Strike, Sogat Office 119 Jesmond Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

By Bob Harker

## Support Senior Coleman strikers

**IN THIRTEEN weeks, Senior Coleman strikers have raised thousands of pounds, held two public demonstrations and spoken at numerous meetings.**

They have organised 'blacking', and persuaded Labour councils not to buy Senior Coleman products. The 97 strikers have forged links with workers from Caterpillar and Silentnight and got their strike known throughout the country.

On 29 April Tory MPs' slumbers in the Commons were interrupted as Ken Eastham, Labour MP for Blackley accused Senior Coleman management of "sheer arrogance" and branded them industrial lepers. He also criticised the Tory Manpower Services Commission for "recruiting scab labour" for the vacant jobs.

Senior Coleman, previously Barber and Coleman, was always well known as a non union workplace from 1904 until a hard fought battle secured a union in 1983. Since then they have fought every inch

of the way for pay rises from £83 a week to £119 a week and better conditions.

But earlier this year, management decided to go completely on the offensive. Four members were sacked for refusing to fill in new time sheets. When a strike was called in defiance, all strikers were sacked.

### Threats

The ruthless management even phoned four deaf strikers' homes to tell them to return to work or be sacked and never work again because of their disability. These four strikers are still on strike and take a regular turn on the picket line.

Management have learned that taking on untrained scabs in place of skilled workers has disadvantages. Strikers believe that productivity is down to about 30 per cent of normal.

The strikers have learned a lot too from their battle. One major conclusion is that they cannot just rely on AEU leaders for building support; they rely on rank and file members. The

Senior Coleman strikers are a beacon to engineers everywhere and that has been reflected in solidarity.

When Tony, the strike committee secretary was photographed in the *Manchester Evening News*, people on his estate were knocking on his door with money and food to the point, he says, of embarrassment.

Trade unionists must back this struggle against a "cowboy" boss. A victory here would be another push in the leftward swing of the AEU. The strike committee, with the support of local labour movement and trade union activists and the Labour Party Young Socialists are setting up a Greater Manchester support group.

The first meeting is on Friday 8 May at Manchester Town Hall at 7.30pm. They also want to regularise contributions through a standing order form.

*Messages of support and donations to Senior Coleman strike committee, c/o AEU Offices, The Crescent, Salford. Cheques payable to Senior Coleman Strike Fund.*

## Defend AEU democracy

Dear Comrades,

I was dismayed but not surprised at recent press reports of the AEU's offer to Apex to allow them the option of appointing their officials if Apex would agree to merge with us. Once more it becomes blatantly obvious whose interests the AEU's Executive have at heart.

It has been one of the justifiably proud boasts of my union that all our officials have been elected by the membership.

Once more the best traditions of the labour and trade union movement are seen to be inferior to the aspirations of the bureaucrats at the 'top of the tree', who expose the real nature of their role in the movement by their unprincipled attempts to 'cobble together' a right wing 'super union.'

What hope for the members, if the right wing executive's plans to amalgamate with the EETPU are forced through without proper consultation and undue haste.

The membership must be made aware of the dangers closing in on them and plans made to mobilise those layers of the union as yet dormant, who have for years received little or no attention from the leadership other than as voting fodder when required.

A Broad Left has to be built—with all its leading figures firmly committed to the fight for jobs and prepared to stand firm against right wing sabotage. New young layers have to be mobilised if we are to be successful. Build the broad left now!

Yours fraternally  
Russell Taylor Edinburgh

**THE SELBY complex, British Coal's showpiece development in Yorkshire continues to be beset with strikes. They are now occurring at almost one a fortnight.**

Last week a strike began at Stillingfleet colliery. Significantly it was over the question of private contractors.

A lorry arrived with two sledges made at Toronto engineering. Previously Stillingfleet's sledges had been constructed by Stillingfleet fitters. Consequently the union blacked the lorry and the pit top men refused to unload it. The afternoon shift refused to go down the pit until the waggon left the colliery.

The manager told the fitter that they were there to modify tackle, drill holes. In other words the manager is attempting to de-skill them.

He also made it clear that he would put whatever tackle he chose to outside contract. But by then the lorry had disappeared.

The following morning it returned. The pit-top men refused to unload it. The manager then threatened to stop their pay. They walked off the job. The underground men joined them and the union declared an official dispute.

At the well-attended union meeting called to discuss the issue, such was the anger that an indefinite dispute was called and they refused to allow any safety cover.

The manager then sent a letter to each striker suggesting that he was prepared to sack them: "Participation in the present strike and any similar action in future will be recorded. You should clearly understand that such participation may lead to

serious disciplinary action being taken which may include dismissal from your employer".

This dispute is of particular significance, being against the creeping privatisation which is occurring in all the British coalfields. It also reflects the growing bitterness and militancy of Selby miners.

Unlike pits in many other areas, these miners understand that the future of their collieries are secure and consequently they understand the potential power that they have.

Management have seriously miscalculated. They have attempted to hand-pick the workforce in Selby, obviously to "weed out the militants". But despite all their efforts militancy is growing. And it will prove a major obstacle to privatisation plans.

# Militant

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## CPSA conference

# All out strike needed

**CIVIL SERVANTS have endured eight years of the present Tory government.**

By Bill Boyle

Eight years of miserable wage increases which are no wage increases at all. Eight years of job losses, lousy conditions and cash limits which have squeezed the life out of the Civil Service.

The Tories have reduced morale in the Civil Service, in the whole public sector, to rock bottom.

There is no secret about the levels of militancy displayed in the recent industrial action. It reveals a burning anger against the present Government which resulted in the recent political fund ballot. It has showed itself in the unprecedented rash of strikes in the DHSS and Department of Employment over staffing, premises problems, overtime and many more grievances which might have otherwise bubbled under and not come to the surface.

The overwhelming support, in the 85%—90% range, shown by members to the recent selective action, demonstrates the mood of civil servants for action. Hundreds if not thousands of new members have joined the union since they have seen, at last, that it is seriously preparing to take action to protect the living standards of its members. The picket lines have been stronger and better supported than in any previous action.

The right wing leadership of CPSA, 'led' by John Ellis have absolutely no faith in the membership to carry the present action to its logical and necessary conclusion—an all out strike. They cynically hope that the membership will reject the strike. Instead of ensuring the smoothest possible run-in to the action, they hope to sabotage it.

But the only way forward is the all out strike. It is the only language the Tories will understand. Limited action



Thousands of civil servants supported their union's call for action in London on 5 May. John Macreadie, and John Bryan, Labour's prospective parliamentary candidate for Bermondsey on a Southwark picket line.

will have limited results. This is the time, when the Tories are preparing for a general election, to begin effective action.

If the motions before the CPSA conference are heard, and a realistic timetable for action is agreed, then activists will be able to go back into their branches in time for balloting to begin on 25 May and for an all out strike to begin on 8 June.

### Rallies

If rallies and demonstrations are called prior to the all out action, the membership will be able to feel its enormous power and cohesion in the streets, as they should have been able to do long before now.

The strategy of the SCPS

leadership is to avoid an all out ballot. They have no faith that they can win such a ballot. Neither have the *Morning Star* faction of the SCPS. But the worst possible strategy for the members of the CPSA, NIPSA and SCPS would be for the union to adopt an NUT type strategy, with a programme of action that stretched out into the far future with no end in sight, especially when the vast majority of CPSA members recognise that only an all out strike can win.

With the spectre of regional pay and merit pay in the Tory background awaiting implementation, union members are apprehensive about the future. There is no future for a stable Civil Service with this

government. It has to be removed as soon as possible. In the meantime, the only gains which civil servants will make will be through struggle.

In any forthcoming all out strike the providing of emergency payments will be, as *Militant* supporters have always said, a major factor in winning the strike. It is not good enough for us to say that another union, in this case NALGO, should provide the service which CPSA members should provide under proper trade union control.

### Limited

Already the experiences which CPSA, SCPS and NIPSA members have had in the so far limited strike ac-

tion, proves the point. In Scotland, in one incident staff had to be protected from irate claimants.

### Support

The union must ensure claimants' support, and the wider support of the public at large. This can only be maintained through an offer to DHSS and DE management that members will staff and operate emergency procedures' centres, under trade union control.

Only an all out strike will win the present dispute. This week's CPSA conference must plan in military detail the way to win, to go from this conference to carry it out, then to enthuse the mass of our members to win our claim as quickly as possible.

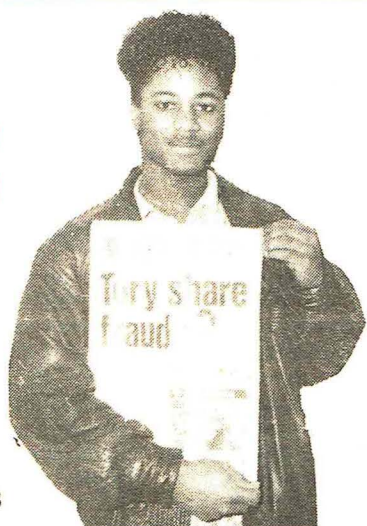
## What We Stand for

- The immediate introduction of a 35-hour week without loss in pay as a step towards the elimination of unemployment.
- Reversal of all Tory cuts and a massive programme of public works on housing, education, the health service, etc.
- A minimum wage of £120 a week for all, including pensioners, sick and disabled people.
- A socialist plan of production democratically drawn up and implemented by committees involving the trade unions, shop stewards, housewives and small business people.
- Opposition to the capitalist Common Market, the EEC. For a socialist United States of Europe as a step towards a World Socialist Federation.
- Workers' management of the nationalised industries. These should be run on the basis of one-third of the places on the management board coming from the unions in the industry, one-third from the TUC representing the working class as a whole, and one-third from the government.
- Opposition to the Tory government's anti-union laws and the reversal of attacks on the trade unions.
- Massive cuts in arms spending. Support for unilateral nuclear disarmament, but with the recognition that only a socialist change of society in Britain and internationally can eliminate the danger of a nuclear holocaust.
- Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, including the banks and insurance companies which control 80 per cent to 85 per cent of the economy. This should be through an Enabling Bill in Parliament with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need.

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