

Militant

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Labour to power on a socialist programme

Tories look

Hit back on 11 June

after the rich

20,000 MILLIONAIRES in Tory Britain; the top 10 per cent of the population owning half of all personal wealth—this is who Thatcher represents.

While these wealthy few can afford private health care and to send their children to expensive public schools, their government is out to destroy public services for the rest.

By Jeremy Birch

★ Thatcher has made it clear comprehensive education will be wound up if she wins a third term. The divisive grammar school selection system will reappear, and for the vast majority of children it will mean second rate, second class schooling.

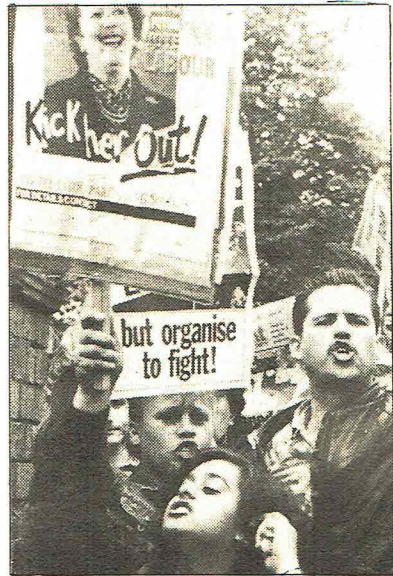
Individual schools will be allowed to opt out of local education authority control, and the Tory government will pay grants straight to them. Then Thatcher will let them introduce their own methods for selecting children, and even to expect parents to pay.

Of course every member of her cabinet sent their children to public schools.

★ The Tories are set on ending council housing. They will pressurise local councils to sell off estates to property companies, which can charge what rents they like. Tenants who object will be forced to move. Buy your own house, pay inflated rates or get out, that's Thatcher's hidden housing agenda.

Her published manifesto talked of tenants being offered the choice to set up a co-operative. What will happen to the unemployed and those on housing benefit then? How will they pay?

Of course Maggie and Dennis are



well set up. They have already bought their luxury £400,000 retirement home in Dulwich.

★ A health service free at the point of use, is not "safe with the Conservatives," it is under threat of abolition. In Thatcher's own Finchley constituency, the local Tory-dominated health authority has slashed 425 of its acute hospital beds in four years. 25 senior local doctors wrote to her complaining of the "primitive" conditions, "unequalled in

Western Europe," in which they are being forced to treat her constituents.

If she gets back again, conditions like this will spread to the rest of the country. Prescription charges will be raised to the full price of the drug, and charges will be imposed for visits to the doctor and for staying in hospital.

The Tories want to ration health care. Health minister, Edwina Currie, proposes her "breadwinner strategy"—workers should be first in the queue for treatment, so the Tory bosses' profits will stay healthy. The old, the chronically sick and the unemployed can wait their turn.

Of course Thatcher never queues. When she needs treatment it is in a private hospital.

What is this but a return to the Victorian values Thatcher holds so dear? The old, the young, the sick are thrown overboard in the lust for profits by the rich few. The real Tory manifesto is 'forward to the 1800s'.

This government of the rich, for the rich must be removed. A socialist Labour government, prepared to take hold of the 'wealth of the nation and to use it in the interests of all, could ensure the health, welfare and education that working people need.



Inside...

Bermondsey — Labour fight for local needs

(see pages 8/9)



GET THEM OUT!

Labour's class fighters

LABOUR'S MOST enthusiastic campaigns can be found in seats where the Labour candidate is standing on a clear socialist programme.

In Broadgreen, the first 1200 Labour posters were snapped up within a day and another 1700 had to be ordered. Some people who couldn't wait for these posters put up 1983 posters and others put up the front page of *Militant* with the headline "Don't give her another chance".

The Tories will stand no chance anywhere if Labour nationally campaigns like these parties.

Coventry S. East

A socialist alternative

OVER 170 canvassers turned out to work for Dave Nellist in Coventry South East last Saturday and Sunday, including workers from the local post office, Alvis and GEC.

Amongst some voters there was a real fear of Thatcher being re-elected. One middle aged woman said "I don't normally drink but if she goes I will definitely have a few."

Even now there are a few who are not yet feeling the pressure of eight years of Tory misery. One canvasser in a better off area discovered that 'the green fly on the roses' was the burning priority!

But in St Michael's ward, with large scale unemployment and where Asian and

black workers have borne the brunt of the Tory attacks, one Asian woman remarked "you will get a lot of support around here. Dave has done a lot for Asians in Coventry."

Labour supporters here are keen to discuss with workers and their families. One shop steward said "I haven't been canvassing before but if it is all like this then it'll be a pleasure to come back next week."

344 copies of *Militant* were sold on the streets and in estate sales during the weekend. There is massive potential to build a socialist alternative to Thatcherism.

COVENTRY socialists offer condolences to Dave Nellist and his family after the death of Dave's sister Jean.

In brief

Pensioners

ABOUT 20 turned up for the first meeting of the Pensioners Organising Committee for a Labour victory in Broadgreen. They included Frank Deegan, veteran class fighter and member of the Spanish civil war Interna-

tional Brigade, and Harry Keidan, surcharged city councillor.

During a lively discussion, plans were laid for a pensioners' canvass and rally for Labour in Tuebrook ward, the area represented by the Liberal candidate, Richard Pine. The pensioners would be calling for all OAP's to vote Labour.

New homes

WITHIN DAYS of Labour's election victory, Liverpool council have restored house-building plans frozen by the illegitimate two month Liberal administration.

Contracts for £40 million had been signed by the out-going Labour council, involving 20 schemes for 800 new homes, 20

refurbishment schemes and 15 demolition projects.

But when the 47 Labour councillors were disqualified from office by the House of Lords, the Liberals froze the deals, despite the threat of many job losses, at local construction companies, 400 for example at Wimpey. The new Labour council's decision to go ahead with the contracts saves 2,000 jobs.

Liverpool Broadgreen

Follow the big red bus



LPYS members and other Labour supporters on the campaign bus in Broadgreen.

"BRILLIANT" commented the young people who joined a march around the Dovecot area of Broadgreen on Saturday.

The march, led by an open-topped, double-decker bus bedecked with red balloons, posters and banners, blaring out music with Terry Fields MP on a loud speaker addressing the crowd, caused great interest on the local estates.

Over 150 LPYS and Labour Party members marched along behind as the bus cruised around. By the end, the march's ranks had gone

over 300 as local kids joined in, some on their bikes, demanding posters, leaflets and stickers.

The marchers, singing, chanting and carrying placards didn't need to knock on doors as people came out to greet the marchers and to demand posters. Passing cars tooted their horns in support.

As the marchers passed the local fire station, the alarms, blue flashing lights and sirens were all switched on to greet Terry.

One marcher, Tricia McCall, a school student who joined the

LPYS in Liverpool four weeks ago said: "The best bit was when we stopped outside the Tory club and an LPYS member wearing a Thatcher mask stood on the pavement outside to shout at the bus. People on the street thought it was great, but the Tories didn't look very pleased."

The march made everyone aware of the election and of Terry's support and encouraged many people to come to the meeting in the evening to hear Terry and Tony Benn. (See back page)

A workers' candidate

"On the trail of the Lonesome Pine"

AROUND 35 local trade unionists came to a meeting in Broadgreen to arrange workplace meetings and special union canvasses for Labour candidate Terry Fields.

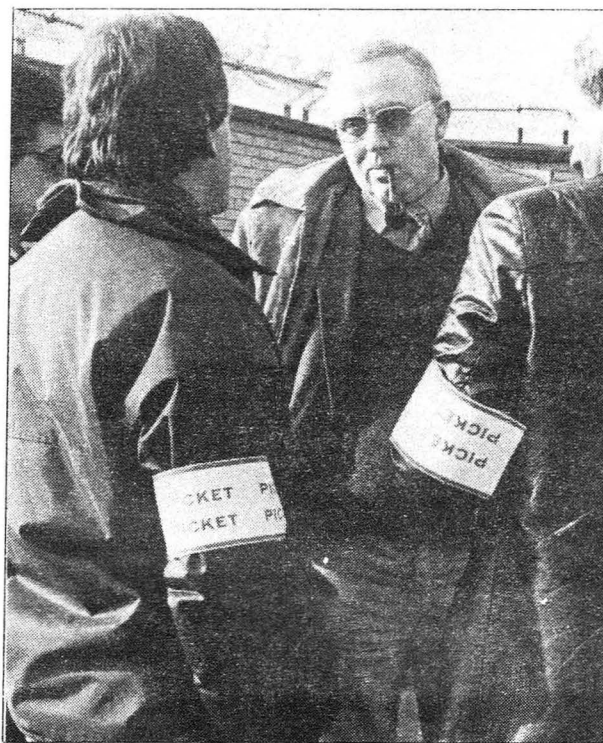
They included representatives of workers from the fire service, NHS, local authorities, engineering, printing, construction, plus typists, civil service workers and Plessey workers.

Fire-fighter

Terry, who served on the FBU NEC before being elected as MP in 1983, called upon trade unionists to return the support he has given to all workers in struggle. He reminded trade unionists that he had kept his promise to live on a fire fighter's wage.

Tom Foley, a member of the AEU national Appeals Committee and a Shell worker said it was a privilege to be at the meeting. "I will do everything possible to mobilise canvassers to get a workers' MP re-elected".

Already, uniformed firefighters from London and Merseyside have can-



Terry Fields on an NCU picket line in Liverpool in the winter.

vassed in Broadgreen. Other canvasses planned include council workers; GMBATU branches 5 and 200 (3 dates); NHS workers (31 May); CPSA (3 June); TGWU (4 June); NCU (8 June) and an all-trade union canvass on 7 June. The NGA are planning a canvass, and council apprentices are being urged to help.

The enthusiasm for a working class socialist

who remains loyal to his class is shown by the workplace/gate meetings planned which include: Park Hospital, Rathbone hospital/Robinson Willey, Plessey, Breckside bins, Green Lane cleansing, Edge Lane buses, Pighue Lane Telecom, Rathbone bins and council static security.

By Richard Knight

THE LIBERAL candidate for Broadgreen, Richard Pine, was looking decidedly jaded in his debate with Terry Fields MP, and Tory candidate Mark Seddon at Millbrook college in Broadgreen.

It wasn't just that he and Seddon were met with stony silence, whereas the 120 FE students present loudly applauded Terry after he spoke. It wasn't even the fact that he got two votes in a straw poll while most of the meeting voted for Terry. At least he beat the Tory who didn't earn a single vote.

No, what may be worrying Richard are the rumours of splits among the Liberals. He was, after all, involved in a fracas with a fellow Liberal at their Party's AGM, and, the story goes, leading Liberals have pulled their supporters out of Broadgreen to work in other areas.

Enthusiastic young canvassers for Terry Fields are now to be heard touring the constituency singing "In the blue ridge mountains of Virginia, on the trail of the Lonesome Pine..."

Photo: Tina Carroll.

Bradford North Serving notice on the Tories

ON TUESDAY 19 May Geoff Lawler was readopted as Tory candidate for Bradford North by an ever shrinking band of the constituency's blue brigade of Conservatives.

Unfortunately for him, a reception he wasn't reckoning on was arranged by the local Labour Party Young Socialists. Since 1979 the Tories' policies have led to 37,000 workers being made redundant in Bradford.

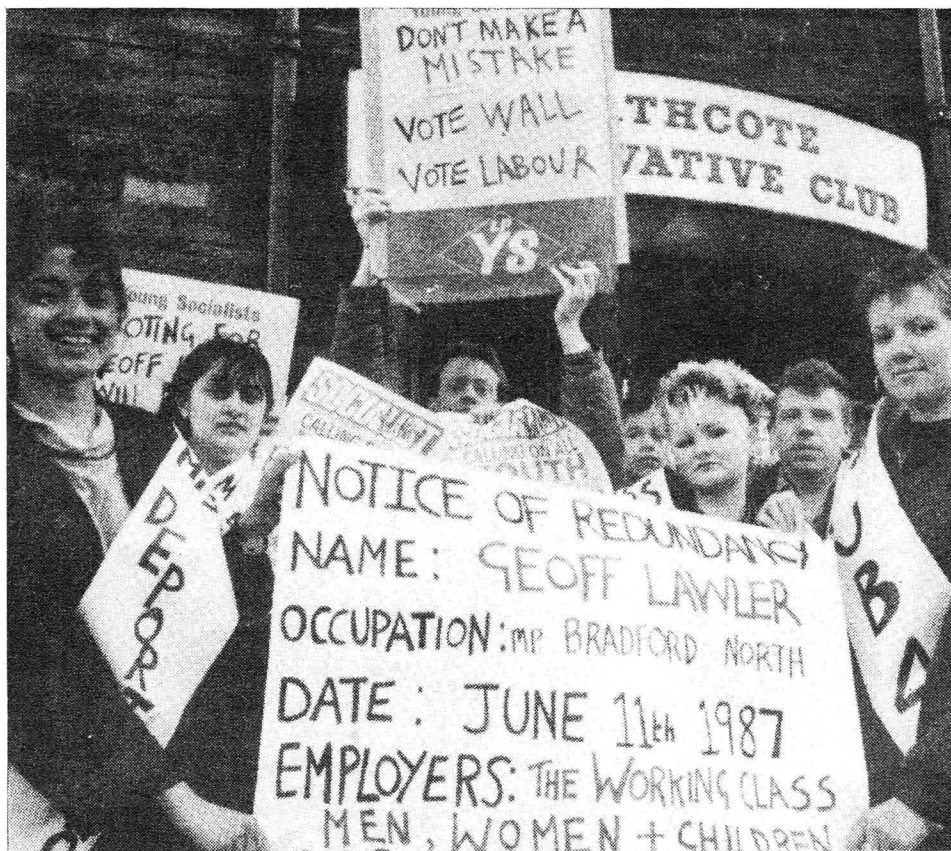
The local LPYS decided to hand Lawler a giant redundancy notice dated 11 June to highlight the Tories' inability to give working class youth a future—and to show his chances of being returned to parliament at the

general election!

As one LPYS member said to the press, it is the only useful redundancy notice Bradford has ever had. Lawler is supposed to be the Tory youth spokesperson. But his time as an MP has been spent on the vitally important task of showing Miss World contestants around the Houses of Parliament.

Ridiculed

To ridicule this, an all female contingent of Young Socialists handed Lawler his redundancy notice, wearing sashes entitled *Miss Deportation*, *Miss Low Pay* and *Miss UB40*. Lawler's response to this got front page coverage in the local press and on local radio, with a limp at-



Lawler gets his cards from the LPYS.

tempt to raise a bogey man of supporters being bussed in from Liverpool to help Pat Wall become the local Labour MP.

As Pat himself replied, after searching thoroughly, the only Liverpudlian supporting his campaign he could find was his wife Pauline who has lived in the constituency for the past 19 years.

The youth of Bradford North will judge Lawler by his actions not words. His only answer to youth unemployment is to suggest

taking a YTS trainee on a road show around Britain to show industry how useful this scheme is.

Lawler has said he will listen to reasoned debate rather than noisy demonstrations. So the LPYS challenged him to a public debate but to nobody's surprise he did not respond. His silence on this and other issues was shown when a local opinion poll showed that only 23 per cent of the electorate knew who their MP was.

Bradford North LPYS will ensure through their

campaigning activity that every voter knows who Pat Wall is and this will contribute to his victory on 11 June.

By Sharon Heal
(Bradford North LPYS)

□ BRADFORD NORTH LPYS 'Kick the Tories Out' demonstration. Saturday 6 June. Assemble 12.30pm The Tyrills, Bradford. Rally. Speakers include Arthur Scargill, Rozina Boston, Pat Wall, Bob Cryer, Max Madden and Linda Douglas.

Bermondsey Liberals admit...

THE LIBERALS are trying to cover up the skeletons in the Alliance cupboard. The skull of David Owen worried them most at a recent meeting.

While Doctor Owen prescribed selling off the rest of British Telecom and all the Post Office to private shareholders, Hughes and another Liberal speaker Des Wilson dithered. Wilson said they were against both renationalisation and privatisation!

Wilson admitted that the Alliance attracted people who are traditionally Conservative but don't like the type of Conservatism we face now. But there's no room for any kind of Tory in-Bermondsey, even one with a Mr Clean mask on like Hughes.

As Labour Party members locally say, it matters little what Simon says, it's what the doctor orders that will guide the Alliance. And that means deals with the Tories!

...they are Tories

A RATHER posh Liberal canvasser, obviously from outside Bermondsey, knocked on the door of Labour candidate John Bryan and asked John how he would be voting. "I'm a Tory" he replied, tongue in cheek.

"There's no point voting Tory" said the canvasser, "the Liberals are just the

same". And he specified all the policies on which they were the same.

John thanked him very much, introduced himself as the Labour candidate and said that he would be using what he had just heard in his campaign on the doorsteps from now on.

A health service— or wealth service?

SIMON HUGHES, Liberal candidate for Bermondsey, thinks that if people can't get treatment at Guy's hospital in their own district, then they should be able to in to other hospitals in other districts and get their

treatment.

Hughes, with his privileged existence at Westminster, is completely out of touch with reality. His 'solution' is no solution at all. How would it have helped a terminally ill patient who

recently waited ten hours in Guy's Hospital casualty for a bed?

His daughter offered to pay, but despite the staff doing everything they could, it still took ten hours. When he finally got into a bed, he died within ten minutes. Ill people can't just hop on the bus, nor can they afford taxis, and the ambulance service cannot cope at peak times as things stand.

The Liberals don't understand that in the Lewisham and North Southwark Health Authority, waiting lists are up. 8,243 people are waiting for treatment; 374 acute admission beds have been cut; 16 children's beds have gone; and three local hospitals are up for closure.

Private profit

With no decent accommodation and rotten pay, nurses are just leaving. As the pressure on beds has increased, people are being discharged earlier and earlier. The burden of care is being carried by the district nurses.

Across the road from Guy's is the new private London Bridge Hospital. It cost £20 million to build. If that money had been put into Guy's they wouldn't have had to make £12million cuts. Bermondsey's working class need a socialist MP who will fight for people before private profit.

By Bermondsey Labour
Party members



Bermondsey's Labour candidate John Bryan.

Who's best for Bermondsey?

	John Bryan (Labour)	Simon Hughes (Liberal)
Father	Docker	Brewer
Education	St Joseph's Primary, St Michael's Secondary, Dockhead	Llandaff Cathedral School (Head Chorister) Christ College, Brecon (Head Boy) Selwyn College, Cambridge (BA, MA, LLB) Inns of Court School of Law, College of Europe, Bruges.
Occupation	Bricklayer	Barrister

Media watch

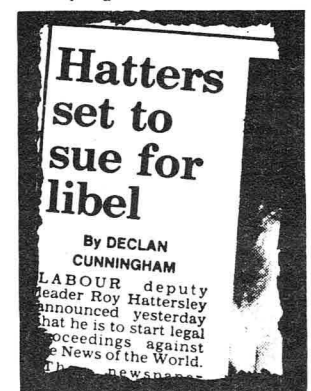


THE MEDIA is obsessed with opinion polls. Every day a TV 'expert' or a journalist builds a story around the latest 'poll findings': literally, builds a story.

Take Martin Linton's *Guardian* article 'Shift to the right threatens Labour in Midlands', quoting a Marplan regional poll that Labour would lose West Midlands seats, including Coventry NW and Coventry SE. This article was published on 18 May, ten days after the local elections. The Marplan regional poll was taken in April. Surely Linton checked the local election results against the 'poll findings'?

The *Guardian* of 9 May showed that Labour's local election vote increased in Coventry NW to 48 per cent, from 44 per cent in the 1983 General Election, and in Coventry SE to 49 from 41 per cent. Both would mean Labour victories. And 65 Labour seats on Birmingham Council is more than 52 opposition seats: yet Linton writes that Labour lost Birmingham Council!

The *Daily Express* has begun to question the polls' accuracy as they move to Labour "all on the evidence of 1,400 sampled electors spread across 100 constituencies. That averages 14 voters in each constituency! Good for a laugh maybe." Or for inventing stories to try and demoralise Labour campaigners.



ANY PRETENCE at balanced reporting or genuine journalism in the openly Tory press is being thrown overboard, to ensure Thatcher is returned to office. It is not just political distortion. No week passes without at least one personal smear against an opposition politician.

But their smears are often downright lies ending in libel suits. Or like the *News of the World's* disgraceful attack on the lifestyle of a Labour official, they are based on information widely known, at least in political circles, for some time.

They clearly store up these stories for use when they believe they can cause the maximum damage.

Militant

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Big business Alliance

THE ALLIANCE election bandwagon is firmly stuck in the mud. They are now unlikely to get even as many votes as in 1983. The dream of replacing Labour as the main opposition to the Tories, which was floated by Thatcher as well as the Alliance leaders themselves, is now forgotten.

As British society has become more polarised under the Tories, the Alliance has been squeezed in the middle. Workers have overwhelmingly remained loyal to the Labour Party, while the bosses have thrown their weight solidly behind their number one choice, the Conservatives.

Big business has been prepared to use the Alliance, and the Liberals before them, as a lightning conductor to draw support away from Labour at times when Tory governments are carrying through unpopular policies. Then they are given friendly coverage in the Tory press and lavish donations by big business to play as their second eleven.

But in a general election, when they might take too many Tory votes, they are cast aside and the press hands out the same kind of smears, lies and slanders as Labour is used to.

Most of the Alliance's policies have come from the SDP. Despite their leaders' origins in the Labour party, they are well to the right of the Liberals. Their economic policies are a mix of those of the Tories and the old Labour right wing. They join the Tories in condemning the last Labour government, but they were leading members of it, responsible for its most unpopular policies!

They pretend that capitalism can be more 'caring' by the injection of a little more public money. But they condemned the Tory union laws for not going far enough and backed Thatcher on the miners' strike. Their one difference with the Tories is that they want wage restraint imposed through an incomes policy.

Owen's foreign policy is pure Thatcherism. He is dedicated to a 'defence' policy based on a willingness to see Britain bombed into obliteration. He even backed the Shah of Iran as a 'friend of Britain' at a time when he was being overthrown by the Iranian masses.

Taking the SDP position to its logical conclusion, former Labour MP John Horam has now defected to the Tory Party and another, Neville Sandelson, has urged tactical voting for the Tories to keep Labour out.

The Liberals provide the bulk of the Alliance's activists and a more 'radical' flavour, which appeals to a section of the lower middle class. In some cities they have also been able to use their 'community politics' to exploit workers' discontent with right-wing Labour councils.

On all fundamental questions however, they too are at one with the Tories. And when the rank and file throw over the traces by voting for unilateral nuclear disarmament, they are simply ignored.

When they have won control of councils, they have cut back house-building and sacked workers in Liverpool and evicted homeless Bengali families in Tower Hamlets. Whatever they may say about coalitions at national level, in many councils they have joined forces with the Tories or kept Tory minorities in control. In the general election the only hope now for the Alliance is that if Labour and the Tories are very close, they might hold the balance of power.

Yet ironically that could be their downfall. The Alliance leaders have refused to deny that they would support a minority Tory government. If they did, most of the Liberal rank and file would revolt. Just when it would have wanted to merge, the Alliance would be split asunder.

The SDP leaders would join their natural allies in the Tory Party; their middle class rank and file would largely drop out of politics.

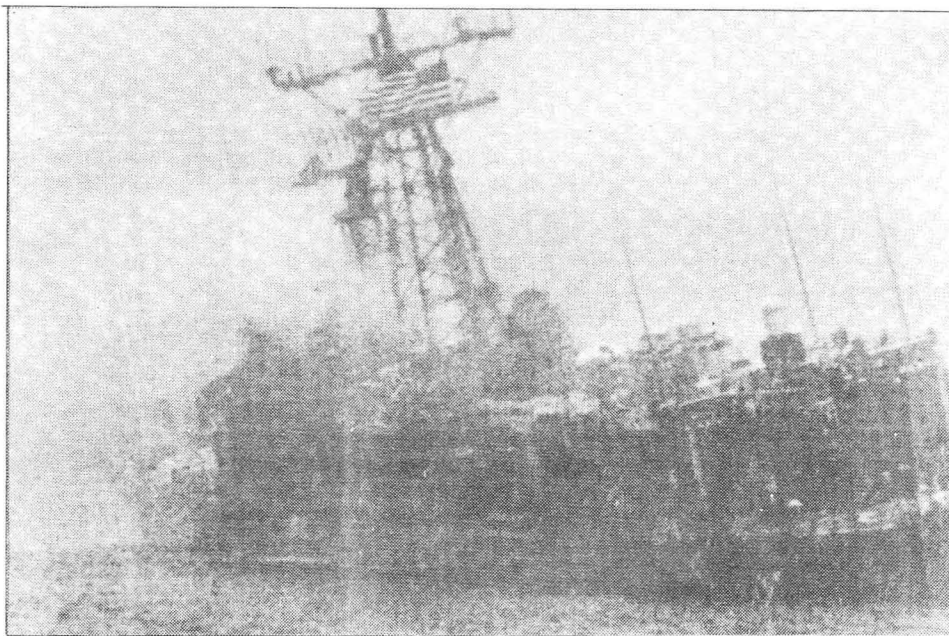
The Liberals would return to play the role of a middle-class sect, winning the occasional by-election, but crushed at every general election.

At local level in some areas however, where the Tories have lost any base of support, the Liberals will move to the right and take over as the Tory opposition to left-wing Labour councils. That is why it is vital to strip off their 'radical' veneer and expose their underlying dependence on donations from big business and the reactionary role they play when in control of councils.

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Seamen risk their lives in the Gulf



USS Stark adrift in the Gulf after Exocet attack.

THE BOMBING of the USS Stark has brought into focus the dangers world shipping faces in the Gulf war zone.

In six years of war, the area around the Straits of Hormuz has become a graveyard for international shipping. Dozens of burnt-out hulls stand as silent reminders of the capitalist greed of the world's tanker operators, which has cost over 300 ships and the lives of hundreds of the workers who crewed them.

Most of the attacks have been on smallish tankers trading with Kuwait or on Kuwaiti-owned vessels. Attacks on the large crude carriers which trade directly with the Iranians have ceased, as both sides have realised that the resulting pollution has caused widespread ecological destruction of the whole Gulf area.

The thinking now is that the smaller tankers are better economic targets and are more likely to go on fire than to discharge large quantities of crude oil into the sea.

As the war has escalated, attacks on neutral shipping have increased and now upwards of two tankers a week, amounting to over 100,000 tonnes of shipping, are being destroyed.

British owners, interested only in the increased freight rates available to operators willing to trade in the area,

have persistently ignored the dangers.

Under the auspices of the General Council of British Shipping, they have constantly denied the very real threat to the crews of their ships and fought off the extension of the war bonus allowance to crew members, whilst secretly increasing the insurance values of their ships to ensure good returns for themselves should their ships come under attack.

With most employers making it a condition of service for seafarers to serve in the Gulf, and the depressed employment prospects, the owners are trying to capitalise on the situation for increased profits at the risk of seamen's lives.

Profiteering

The liquid natural gas carrier *Isomeria*, owned by Shell Tankers UK, was attacked in January this year by Iranian fighters and five Exocet missiles were launched at her. Luckily for the crew of the fully laden ship, all five missed.

This prompted the owners, in a move to placate the unions and the workforce, to seek protection from the Royal Navy. This is just a sham, since both Shell and BP are likely to have several ships in the affected area and only two destroyers have been allocated to "protect the in-

terests of British owners".

Both the Russians and the Americans maintain large fleets in the area which idly stand by as the attacks continue, as their respective governments vie with each other to protect the interests of Kuwait and increase their influence in the Gulf.

The only possible winners out of the present situation are the international capitalists who are selling arms in the Gulf, making extortionate profits from the carriage of oil and in the world's insurance markets on the underwriting of the ships and their cargoes.

Socialists must demand the following urgent international action:

- ★ An end to trade in the gulf;
- ★ An immediate end to the enforced working in war zones as a condition of service;
- ★ An international conference of seamen's unions to plan an effective campaign against the oil barons and multi-nationals;
- ★ The nationalisation and control of such a vital industry by the workers and the unions, to run it under proper socialist conditions for the good of the working class, as part of a planned economy.

By a Militant reporter at sea

Owen prefers Tories

DAVID OWEN has finally revealed that he would prefer a Tory government to a Labour one. He said that Labour are not fit to govern the country. As the *Daily Express* reported: "It was the first time he had admitted what many Tories had long suspected—that he would rather back them than Labour."

On the same programme, David Steel said he would not be provoked into making a choice but that he agreed with David Owen! The SDP leader then commented: "I am terribly indiscreet, David is much wiser than I am."

Sell

Militant

Election boosts potential

OVER 300 copies of *Militant* were sold last week in Musselburgh, East Lothian. Through well-organised street, workplace and door-to-door sales, our supporters took *Militant's* message of 'Labour to power on a socialist programme' directly to workers and tenants.

In Coventry, supporters also went on to the streets and estates and sold 344 *Militants*.

From the reports coming in it is obvious that door-to-door sales are booming. 24 were sold on an estate in Hull, 31 in a small village in Taff Vale last Thursday night and another 22 in the same place the following night.

133 sold in Islwyn

15 papers were sold in just two streets in one Maesteg estate and 24 on another later on. 30 papers were sold in a street sale in Tedegar (on a half-day closing day as well) and over 400 were sold on the doorsteps last week in Bermondsey.

But the biscuit this week goes to *Militant* sellers in Islwyn, Neil Kinnock's constituency, who sold 133 of last week's issue. "On Wednesday" they told us "two sellers were accosted by Labour's election agent. She harangued them, asking them not to sell as that would count as election expenses and it was embarrassing Neil Kinnock. Getting no joy she stormed back up the road.

"A policeman who had been talking to us walked away in a state of shock. He came back later and said he was flabbergasted: 'I thought we lived in a democracy!'"

Win youth for Labour

LABOUR is the only party which has organised a press conference on the important question of youth. The Tories are keeping a very low profile, saying they "don't believe in treating young people as a separate group". This is not surprising when you consider their record in sentencing young people to a lifetime without hope.

In a cinema in London's West End, the Labour Party launched its policies to win the youth vote and the commercial which they will be showing in 1,000 cinemas across Britain in the next two weeks.

Neil Kinnock began by attacking the Tories as 'anti-young' and 'tamers' of young people.

Barry Sheerman, the party spokesman on youth and training, outlined the 'nuts and bolts' of Labour's programme for youth, explaining that "only Labour would offer all young people real choice and opportunity at 16", and, unlike the Tories with their plans to conscript youth on to YTS, would not have "the letters YTS branded on young people's foreheads".

He emphasised that "every 16 year old would gain a real skilled training, or a study allowance, or a job" as part of Labour's plan to create a million jobs in two years. (Unfortunately the figure of £27 a week study allowance in Labour's Youth Charter has been omitted).

This 'foundation programme' which Labour is promising would mean, it is claimed, that no young person under 20 would be unemployed. This would come about, Sheerman said, not by making training 'compulsory' but by improving training: "Young people will be queuing up in their thousands to receive proper training". Labour also pledged to restore the value of student grants to their 1979 level.

Also on the platform were Vicky Phillips, President of the National Union of Students, and a young trade unionist from Blackpool. Regrettably Linda Douglas, Labour's youth representative on the national executive com-



Linda Douglas Photo: Mick Carroll.

mittee was kept off the platform "for political reasons."

Incredibly, just before the start of the launch, the seating arrangements for Glenys Kinnock and her children were changed to ensure that Linda Douglas, sitting in the audience, would not be filmed sitting behind the leader's wife!

It was unfortunate that Labour's own youth section, the Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS), with their excellent campaigning record amongst young people were kept well out of view.

But despite the public rebuff, LPYS members will go out and vigorously campaign to win all the 6,200,000 young voters to vote Labour as the only alternative to the nightmare of Tory rule.

Assaulted for trying to help Labour win!

AT A time when Labour Party members are working flat out for an election victory, unity within the ranks is more vital than ever.

Every party member will therefore be appalled at the violent assault by some party officers in Livingston, West Lothian, on Wendy Milne, a member of Livingston Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS).

Members of the LPYS in Livingston have been banned from canvassing and leafletting in the campaign to re-elect Labour candidate Robin Cook, on the grounds that they have been selling *Militant*.

Even when LPYS members gave a full commitment not to sell the paper while canvassing for the Labour Party, Robin Cook himself said that on no account was any Young Socialist who was a *Militant* supporter to be allowed to go around the doors to canvass for him.

Despite this hostility, the Young Socialists still went to the Party premises and asked to help. Every day they went along and every day they were turned away.

On Monday, Wendy Milne and Sam Gibson again went to the premises and asked to help.

By a Militant reporter



Robin Cook.

The election agent didn't even let them through the front door. As Wendy Milne opened it, she was attacked by the agent. "I was punched in the chest and then grabbed by the arm; my arm was pushed up my back and I was forced against the wall" she said.

When the other LPYS member protested and said "I saw that. I saw everything that happened", Jim Devine replied "so what?"

At that point, John Lambie, an official from NUPE appeared. He opened the door and said: "The Militant is nothing but scum; they're nothing but poison; there's

no place for you in this election campaign". He opened the door and said "There's the stairs. The best thing you can do is go down them and leave".

They replied that they were Party members and had every right to take part in the campaign to get Robin Cook re-elected.

John Lambie then aggressively squashed Wendy Milne's hand on to the door and stood on her foot, pressing down his heel into her foot.

He then said: "If they don't leave, Jim, then we'll bodily remove them. If you want, we'll get a couple of lads to throw them out of this building and we'll get rid of the *Militant* once and for all".

Eventually the Young Socialists got into the building. Then the officials said that unless they left, they would phone the police, which in fact they had already done. Five minutes later the police arrived and the two were removed.

As a result of this attack, Wendy Milne had to visit her doctor.

This assault on a young, slightly-built, female party member by well-built middle aged Party and union of-



Leicester's young show Thatcher what they think of her.

Photo: Mark Salmon.

Young Socialists spoil Thatcher's secret visit

THATCHER GOT an unwelcome reception in Leicester on Bank Holiday Monday. The Tories tried to keep her visit secret but Militant supporters, members of the Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS) and other Labour Party members mobilised at a few hours' notice. One junior ranking policeman complained that we knew of her visit before he did.

A small but noisy demonstration met Thatcher as she arrived at Leicester Grammar School, a fee paying private school recently established in a former state school building.

Also there to greet her were a select audience of Tory party members and the

gilded youth of the Federation of Conservative Students, one of whom shouted "repatriate the blacks" at Asian LPYS members.

Some LPYS members who are school students were amazed at the sight of these private school kids in immaculate and expensive suits.

Thatcher's policies on private education were here on display in practice. The class divide in education could not have been clearer. Private schools cater for the rich; the rest are educated for YTS and the dole.

All Thatcher's visits are being kept secret. They say this is because of 'security'. The truth is that the Tories

are frightened of exposing her to angry demonstrations by those who have been her victims. She can tour the streets of Moscow, but not of Britain. Fortunately the LPYS in Leicester foiled her plans!

By Steve Score

ON A recent canvass in Gillingham, Kent, LPYS members signed up 13 new Labour Party members, seven of whom, including several Asians, want to join the LPYS.

STEVENAGE LPYS, through their consistent campaigning, have 45 young people interested in joining the Labour Party and the Young Socialists.

Scottish students move left

THE 1987 conference of the Scottish Labour Students (SLS) saw an advance for the left.

Standing with others on the left, the Marxists, Kenny Weir (Stirling University) and Cathy Coghlan (Cardonald Further Education College, which has the largest FE Labour club in the country), were easily elected to the SLS regional committee.

More significantly in the elections for vice-chair, the left candidate lost by a mere three votes.

On policy, the conference moved to the left. On the economy a resolution was passed stating that "the economic crisis is one of international capitalism" and calling for the next Labour government to "immediately nationalise all financial institutions and put them under democratic workers'

control and management".

Against the wishes of the regional committee, an emergency resolution was passed calling for an end to witch-hunts and the immediate reinstatement of Sharon Atkin.

Another emergency resolution on South Africa condemned "the class collaborationist policies of Inkatha and their belief that a negotiated settlement can be reached with the Botha regime." The conference also condemned the murder of Ivin Malaza and agreed to send a letter of condolence to his family.

Militant supporters left confident for the future and the campaign for the general election. The right were demoralised, with every reason to be so.

By Dougie Blackstock

Left policies win elections

THE TORY PRESS argue that Labour can only win elections by watering down the Party's programme.

The Tories make this claim because they are terrified of the main party of the working class taking up a programme for complete socialist change.

A glance at Labour's past campaigns gives a lie to the media's claim. The 1945 election was a Labour landslide with a majority of 146 seats, thanks to a radical programme and campaign.

The radicalisation began in the armed forces, anxious not to return to the dole queues, and in the unions. The AEU had doubled its membership between 1939 and 1943 and new recruits to the aircraft industry were approached directly to contribute to Party funds.

Mass meetings

Mass meetings in factories up and down the land cemented Labour's vote as the election approached.

Labour's leaders argued at the 1944 conference that full employment could be guaranteed just by a continuation of wartime controls.

But the Transport and General Workers Union submitted a resolution that: "All vital services, land, banking, coal and power, steel, chemicals and transport (including road, rail, shipping and civil aviation) shall be brought under a system of public ownership and control."

Such was the pressure from below that the 1945 manifesto 'Let us face the future' declared:

"The Labour Party is a socialist party, and proud of it. Its ultimate purpose at home is the establishment of the socialist commonwealth of Great Britain". It proposed nationalisation of fuel and power, land, transport, iron and steel and a comprehensive welfare state.

Despite a Tory scare campaign Labour harnessed the imagination of working people to a vision of socialist change and swept all before it.

But the 1950s saw undisputed ascendancy for the right in the party and dog days for Labour at the polls.

The 1955 programme "Forward with Labour" merely argued for renationalisation of steel and road haulage (denationalised by the Tories) and for sections of the chemical and machine tool industries to be taken over.

Labour went down, with its vote falling for the first time since 1931.

The statement 'Industry and Society' in 1957 continued to assert that "large firms are as a whole serving the nation well." Labour's main pledge in the 1959 election was for a 10 shilling (50p) increase in old age pensions.

The political commentators Butler and Rose found that 38 per cent of voters could find little to choose between the parties. Tory rhetoric of 'you've never had it so good' went unchallenged by Labour's leaders, who lost by 93 seats.

Labour declared in 1960: "We do not base our criticism of contemporary capitalism on pessimistic assumptions about a recur-

By Mick Brooks

rence of mass unemployment."

Labour remained under the control of the right throughout the 1964-70 Labour government, whose programme of counter-reforms sold the pass to the Tories in 1970. The onslaught of the Heath government however, radicalised the Labour Party.

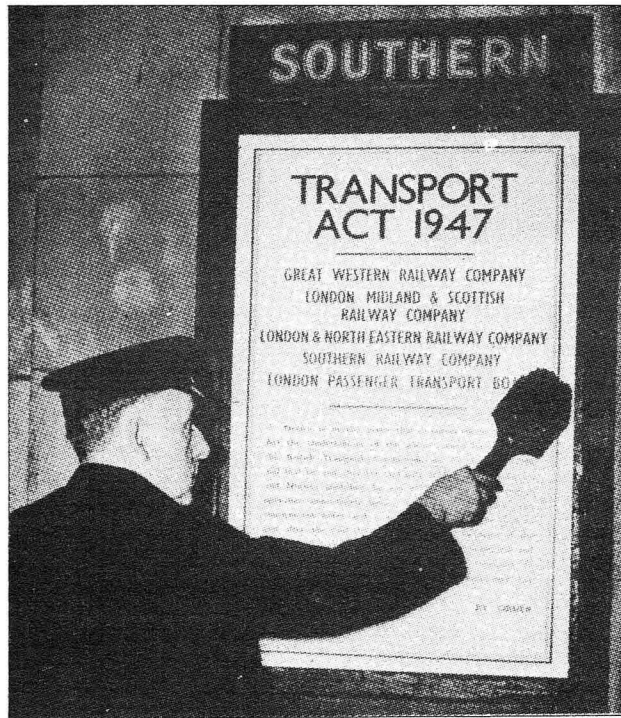
"Let us work together" in 1974 promised "a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families". "The aims in this manifesto are socialist aims and we are proud of the word" it declared. Apart from reversing Tory anti-working class laws and privatisation, it proposed substantial nationalisation.

"We shall take development land and mineral rights, shipbuilding, ship-repairing and marine engineering, ports, the manufacture of air frames and aeroengines into public ownership and control. But we shall not confine ourselves to loss making industries.

"We shall therefore include in this operation sections of pharmaceuticals, road haulage, construction, machine tools, in addition to our proposals for North Sea and Celtic Sea oil and gas". Quite a list! In fact this programme represented a climb down from Party policy to take over 25 of the biggest profit making monopolies.

In a broadcast in 1974 Denis Healey pledged that Labour would "squeeze the rich till the pips squeaked". But the promised wealth tax was never introduced and after five years of being compelled by a still dominant big business to carry through counter reforms, the revolt of the low paid in 1978-79 triggered a new election.

In 1979 again Labour's leaders campaigned as the party of the status quo



January 1947. The nationalisation of railways and mines saw Labour reach a new height in the opinion polls.

against Thatcher's programme of 'radical' change. The 1977 conference resolution for nationalisation of banks and insurance companies was watered down into a plan to unite the National Savings Bank and Post Office Giro and "give serious consideration as to how best to create a further substantial public stake."

The abolition of the House of Lords, approved in 1977 by six million votes was left to one side. Labour promised to increase pensions, improve education, end private beds in hospitals and introduce a wealth tax. But they gave no explanation why these reforms had not been carried out before.

Unprecedented attacks

Thatcher swept to power in 1979 to launch unprecedented attacks on a working class movement which was disorientated by Labour's past failures and lack of alternative.

But this failure also led to the ranks of the Party shifting markedly to the left. This was reflected in the 1983 manifesto 'New hope for Britain' which opposed

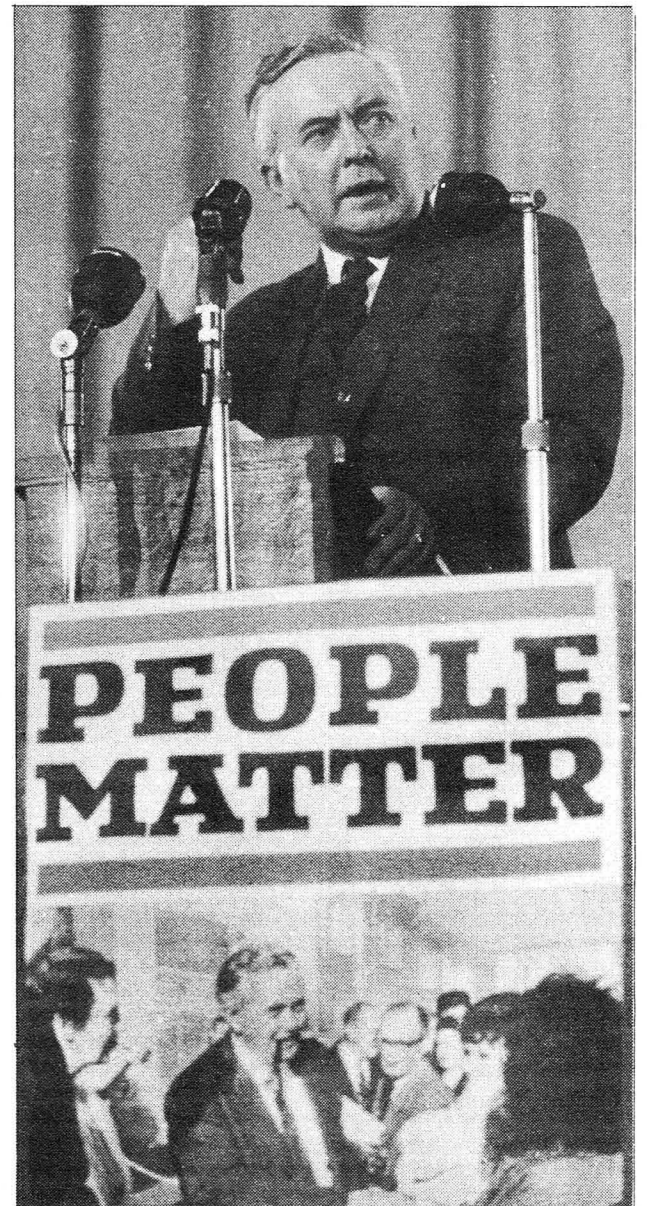
Cruise and Trident missiles.

The stance was undermined when that policy was knifed by ex-leader Callaghan in mid-campaign. Meanwhile Thatcher was riding high on the 'Falklands factor'. Labour's campaign failed to achieve credibility with many ordinary workers largely because its programme was not so radical on issues immediately affecting living standards, above all unemployment.

It advocated reflation rather than changing the system. This opened it up to the criticism of the Tories "where is the money coming from?" and "why didn't you do this in office?"

At the same time a bold socialist campaign won Liverpool Broadgreen from the Tories totally against the national swing. Far from being a drawback, a radical campaign to change society is the best way to convince the waverers that Labour can win and keep winning.

The Tories are now more hated than ever before. If Labour recaptured its proud socialist traditions and campaigns on a fighting programme, it would be assured of victory.



Harold Wilson was re-elected in 1974 on the basis of a manifesto commitment to a "fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families."

Left and Right

In the lions' den

A TORY councillor from Cleethorpes has joined the ranks of *Militant* readers, and proved that you really can sell the paper anywhere.

Mrs Josephine Gibney wrote to her local evening paper about the evening "a group of Militants swept down the street trying to sell their paper."

"A young man knocked at my door and politely asked me would I buy a copy of his paper. I replied: 'How have you got the cheek to knock at my door with Tory posters in the window? No thanks... no paper'.

"He smiled and walked away as I closed the door. Just as quickly I opened it again and called out: 'Come back here lad, if you've got the nerve to knock at my door I'll buy your paper'...

"I read the *Militant* from front to back... I'd forgotten next day what the paper said but shall remember with pleasure the young man who called at my house as surely he was a modern day Daniel who dared to enter the lions' den."

Pressures on the line

"WE WILL soon catch up with the Japanese" Ray Horrocks, former chief executive of Austin Rover told the world. They've still got a colossal way to go in investment to compare with Japanese capitalism. Possibly they're talking about conditions though.

The *Daily Telegraph* ruffled a few management feathers at Nissan in Sunderland when it reported on the difficulty workers have in keeping up with totally inhuman production lines, forcing workers to work unpaid before shifts and during breaks to keep up with targets.

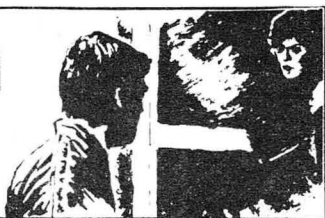
Other complaints include pay stopped or lieu days docked when workers are off sick. The company council which is supposed to supplant the unions is described as just a group of yes men. But this expose in a Tory paper is just showing what the Tories have in mind for all of us. Having destroyed millions of manufacturing jobs, the bosses may graciously give a few back, with workers rigorously vetted, and then overworked and with the union abolished or very weak.

It is up to the union leaders and Labour Party to fight for jobs with decent conditions and union rights.



Labour leader Attlee celebrates the 1945 landslide, when the radicalised working class gave great support to a radical Labour manifesto.

Campaign Forum



Militant looks into the election issues

Maggies criminal record

"WE WILL continue to put a high priority on the fight against crime, so the citizen can feel safe on the street or in house."
—Tory Manifesto.

The Tories claim to be the party of 'Law and order'. In its crusade against crime, the Tory government has strengthened the police, introduced tougher laws, and thrown more into prison than ever before.

By Lynn Walsh

Anyone who opposes this is denounced as aiding and abetting crime.

Yet since Thatcher became Prime Minister total crime has grown by 49 per cent! A new study, published by *New Society* on 22 May, concludes: "The rise in crime rate under the Conservatives (7.2 per cent) has been more than twice the rise under Labour governments (3.6 per cent)".

Crimes of violence against the person have risen by 46 per cent since 1978, the Labour government's last full year.

The biggest upsurge, however, has been in the kind of offences which more and more people are coming to fear. Since 1979, criminal damage (vandalism, etc) has risen by 91 per cent, domestic burglary by 97 per cent, and robbery (including muggings, thefts from cars, etc) by 127 per cent.

Even these figures underestimate the problem. Many people do not report break-ins and muggings because they have little or no confidence in the Police. While it is the Tories who try to exploit the issue, the British Crime Survey figures make one thing clear: it is working class people, not the middle class or the wealthy, who suffer most. In some parts of Liverpool, for instance, about one

household in four is burgled every year—eight times the level in better-off areas of the country.

The worst crime statistics correspond with the worst figures for unemployment, poverty, slum housing, and environmental decay. This is hardly surprising!

Yet when she was challenged in parliament (16 April, 1982) about the link between mass unemployment and crime, Thatcher made the notorious reply: "No sir, there is not a direct relationship in any way..."

All attempts to expose the social roots of crime are denounced by the Tories as so many excuses for evil criminal behaviour. What could be more cynical?

Social pressures

Socialists do not condone crime. We utterly condemn violent attacks, especially on children, women, the elderly and other vulnerable people. Politically conscious workers do not oppose effective measures to counter crime.

But how can the conditions which breed crime be ignored? If people are trapped in brutal, inhuman conditions, is it surprising that a few become brutalised and violent?



If workers and youth are subjected to demoralising social pressures, is it so amazing that some of them resort to petty theft? Even the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Kenneth Newman, recently pointed to "the constant visual battering of impressions on TV of the consumer-orientated society" as one cause of crime.

"The Devil is still with us, recording his successes in the crime figures..."
Margaret Thatcher.

Mrs Thatcher, however, prefers to sermonise: "The Devil is still with us, recording his successes in the crime figures..." Yet while she adopts this high moral tone, the ruthless pursuit of personal gain in the City is promoted and applauded by her government. For millionaires, verily, greed is virtue.

Apart from the legalised gambling of the casino economy, the City has thrown up a series of criminal scandals: frauds at Lloyds, embezzlement from banks, and "insider trading" during takeover battles, the Guinness affair being just the latest.

The financiers involved have netted hundreds of millions. By comparison, the £26 million lifted in the Brinksmat bullion robbery is small beer—petty larceny by a few small-time crooks trying to emulate their betters.

In spite of this, the Tories stick to the principle of "self-

regulation" for the City. Nothing must impede the freedom of the market. A few laws have been tightened up, but the Fraud Squad remains about as effective as a lollypop-person on the M25.

The parasitic growth of finance capital in the City is accelerating the decline of industry and the spread of mass unemployment which underlies the rise in crime. No wonder the Tories prefer to blame the Devil!

A confidential Met briefing paper argues that "police performance must be judged against government policy, which accepts social victims as 'necessary casualties' of the war against inflation." It particularly cites the "enforced idleness of unemployed youngsters." (*Guardian*, 7 April.)

Referring to inner-city disturbances (a dozen major riots since 1979), Newman points to the "predisposing causes," such as unemployment, discrimination, and underprivilege. There is a "volatile vapour hanging over the city looking for a spark to set it off." (*Guardian*, 20 April.)

Crime soaring

Newman has his own motive, which is not hard to see. All the demands of the police chiefs have been met by the Tories: for more personnel and exceptional pay, for more equipment and weaponry, and for draconian legal powers. Yet the crime rate is soaring, while the clear-up rate is at an all-time low. A mere 6 per cent of property offences were cleared up in London last year!

If the market criteria usually

favoured by the Tories were applied to the police, most forces would have gone into liquidation long ago!

With the crime rate inevitably becoming an election issue, Newman is determined that the police should not carry the can. "Parents, schools and the church must all take a share of the blame," he says. (*Daily Telegraph*, 17 March.)

But above all, the illuminating comments from this impeccable police witness give the lie to the hypocritical Tory claim that there is no link between the rise in crime and the social decay which is aggravated by their policies.

Giving even more powers to the police is no answer to crime. The Tory's policy of aggressive policing, carried out under the direction of police chiefs who reject any kind of democratic accountability, is aimed at maintaining the Tory's undemocratic idea of 'public order'. Far from improving the investigation and clearing-up of crime, this repressive role undermines the public co-operation which is vital to any real measures to reduce crime.

The labour movement must fight for democratic control over the police to ensure that effective policies are carried out.

But the problem of crime cannot be tackled in isolation. Crime will only be wiped out through the eradication of the conditions which breed crime. The Tories may launch moral crusades against crime, but their policies, based on the defence of a diseased system, will inevitably have criminal results.

Fighting Fund

Target date
1 August

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 Scotland East	527		2800
2 Wales	656		4850
3 West Midlands	694		4850
4 Yorkshire	1210		8450
5 Eastern	386		3050
6 Scotland West	452		3500
7 East Midlands	401		3250
8 London	1141		9400
9 South West	164		1900
10 Merseyside	476		7500
11 Northern	226		4600
12 Southern	161		3100
13 South East	91		2250
14 Manchester/Lancs	114		4050
15 National	6902		6950
Total	13600		70000

Vote with your cash

POLITICIANS ARE often accused of just showing their faces at election times. *Militant* sellers are out all year round, no matter what the weather's like, fighting for socialist policies, selling our paper, raising the cash necessary for a more regular *Militant*. Working people and youth in particular, are looking for our ideas more than ever with 'election fever' in the air.

If you are a new reader and want to see Thatcher out, send us a donation to the fighting fund. Help us fight back against the Tories and for socialist ideas. We're getting reports from all over the country of people being more than willing to donate

to the Fighting Fund, even without being asked. Since the last issue we've received £1,984.

Two sellers in Peckham have shown us how easy it is. They didn't allow the pouring rain to stop them from getting out last Saturday on Walworth Road to sell the *Militant* and shake their rattling tins. Their slogan was 'Buy *Militant*—the paper that fights back against Thatcher.' Anyone who didn't was still asked for a donation to help 'Get her out'—the money came flooding in—over £13 in an hour!

Sellers on an estate in the West Midlands last weekend sold 91 papers and raised £31

Fighting Fund!!

Look at how your area is doing in our chart. It's up to you to make sure it goes shooting across in the last two weeks of the Election Campaign. When you go on a street or estate sale—make sure you're armed with stickers, collecting tin—and always for a donation! You're bound to get a brilliant response—if you have a go! Good luck!

THANKS ALSO to: SCPS Conference £71.40; ASTMS Conference £287; John Cooper N. Hull LPYS £60; W. Hanlon, Isleworth £10; Dave Walls, Hull £14; M. Phillips, Poole £25; Glasgow 5-a-side, £24; Liverpool taxi driver £2 for two papers!

Invasion of the whizzkids in Bermondsey

JULIE DONOVAN and JOANNE MARTIN, who joined Bermondsey Labour Party after being active in the campaign to stop the area being taken over by the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) toured the riverside areas of Bermondsey with reporter Tony Cross. They discussed how the area had changed.

We turn on to Elephant Lane, Rotherhithe: "These are offices that they admit they can't sell. They're too small for big businesses and too big for small ones."

All around warehouses are being converted into luxury flats. "That pub there used to be a right good local. Now you can't get in there without a suit and tie."

Downtown is the area surrounding the old Surrey Docks. It was a really rundown council estate. Now the LDDC is building blocks of flats for 'yuppies'. They're even buying old council blocks and doing them up.

Because this area has a view of the river and is close to the City of London, prices have soared. Companies buy the flats to put visiting executives up in and City whizzkids snap them up as 'town houses'.

"People used to be fighting to get out of that block; now the LDDC is selling flats for £95,000. All they've done is dryline the walls, which won't stop the damp and which Southwark Council had been planning to do anyway."

Downtown always had a close-knit and thriving community based on the water industry. The council estates were of terrible quality and there were (and still are) no shops or phone boxes and a non-existent bus service. It was always isolated.

"Now it's called 'Milton Keynes' because of all the new housing. Instead of people coming out of the area with bags of washing and shopping, you see trendies in their shawls."

"A Tory MP lives in this block. These people aren't here all the time. They don't care what happens to the neighbourhood."

Nobody's nostalgic about how it used to be, but local people are bitter that the money could be found to build these luxury flats for the rich, but it couldn't be found for ordinary people.

"Young people press their answer-phones and when they answer, they say 'Hello, is that Lord Snooty?' They're really frightened of the people they've pushed out, although nobody is really going to do anything."

"See that block over there with its Grecian columns? The LDDC paid for those to be put on and the fronts to be done up, but they didn't touch anything you can't see from the outside. They're still the same damp flats inside; last winter they didn't have water because the pipes haven't been maintained."

"It's quite obvious to local people whose benefit these 'improvements' are for, the buyers of the luxury houses, so they don't have to look at the slums we have to live in."

The jobs that used to be provided by the warehouses and small factories have all gone. "This is called Cinnamon Wharf because it was all spice warehouses. Now they're converting the warehouses into apartments."

"Nobody local works here except for a few who've got jobs as cleaners. We know of a lad who got a job as a tea-boy on one of the building sites. He found that all the building workers had been brought in from Devon."

Graffiti like 'Homes for locals not snobs', 'This is Bermondsey not Mayfair', 'LDDC, the pimps of docklands', 'We need houses we can afford', 'LDDC are thieves', 'Abolish the LDDC' and 'Local people need this land' testify to the resentment felt by local people.

They've put up a fight against the LDDC. "Their weak point is their public relations. They're terrified of bad publicity which will put the buyers off." So the campaigners have won some small victories by threatening to lie in front of the bulldozers and occupy the LDDC offices:

★ Lord Vestey had planned to build a heliport right by a school but this was stopped.

★ Half the land at Cherry Gardens, which looks out on the river, has been designated for 68 council houses.



Joanne Martin with John Bryan.

"Swan Lane residents lit a fire next to the entrance to the site next to their council estate when they tried to build luxury houses on it and the kids nicked things from the machines. But a lot of the campaigning was public meetings as well."

But the invasion carries on. Recently a young couple were walking along the river bank by the luxury converted warehouses. They were stopped by the police and told not to walk there any more.

Another local lad was stopped and searched. The police took his flat apart because he had a packet of Rizlas on him.

"Our area was always a slum when it and the people in it served the water and dock industries. When they went, the Tory government realised how much money could be made."

"Michael Heseltine said that 'the redevelopment of London's docklands is of national significance'. So they imposed this LDDC quango on us, which hyped up land values by exploiting not only its proximity to the City but also our history."

"They've used the fact that it's 'docklands'. None of us thought we lived in 'docklands'; it was just by the river and the Surrey Docks where your dad and grandad used to work."



Residents campaigning for their land.

"But they've built luxury houses to look like warehouses; they paint up old cranes. There is bitterness that the people here worked the docks, lived with the rats and all the rest and when the time came that we could benefit from what was left, they've totally disregarded our needs."

"And to do that they had to take away our democratic rights. The unelected LDDC has powers over the place where we live that our elected borough council used to have."

"If the Tories get back in they are going to create more of the Urban Development Corporations. They've got the money to give them, but not to the councils. But Labour is pledged to 'return powers and land to local authorities'."

Fighting for local needs

TO OPEN her election campaign, Maggie Thatcher chose to visit East London's former docklands. She described the transformation of this area into a paradise for big business profiteers and 'upwardly mobile' whizz kids as "a fantastic example of Tory enterprise".

That is a warning to workers in every other rundown city area of what to expect if the Tories get back. The reality is anything but 'fantastic'. Just across the river in Bermondsey, the redevelopment of the docklands is seen in a very different light.

For the last couple of years, corrugated iron round derelict riverside sites in Bermondsey has been covered with graffiti: with slogans like 'Houses for locals' and 'We don't need the rich, we need homes now'.

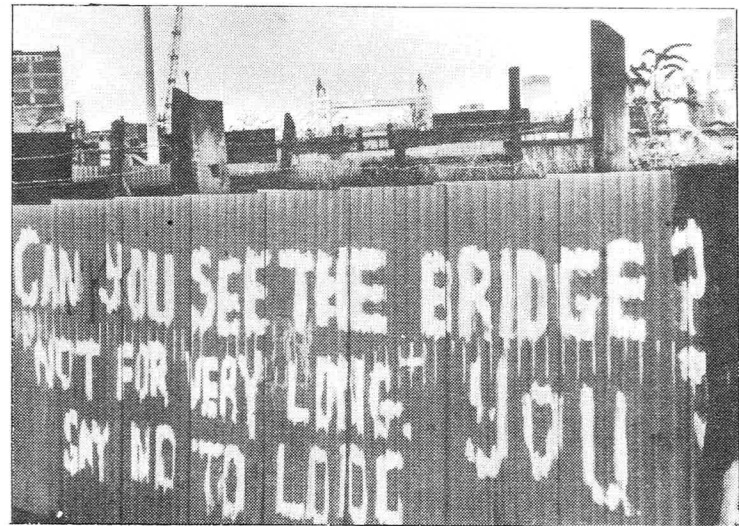
That was the response of local people to the London Docklands Development Corporation's plans for luxury housing on sites once planned for council houses.

The LDDC was set up in 1981 and given wide powers, including the right to acquire land from local authorities, and millions of pounds of public money.

When local people heard about it, they welcomed what they assumed would be an influx of money and resources into the area, which had 30 per cent unemployment and a massive housing shortage.

However it was soon obvious that the LDDC's claim that they would provide housing and jobs for local people was a fiction. Bermondsey has estates falling to pieces, but the LDDC's response to the needs of local people was to build luxury developments at prices of £150,000 and £250,000.

Because it is an unelected quango with absolutely no scruples, it seemed at first that there was little people could do to stop its plans. But incensed by the corporation's arrogance, they began to fight back.



Docklands residents express their views of the LDDC.

Cherry Gardens was a prime site for development because of its views of the Thames and Tower Bridge. The LDDC held an architectural competition for the site. The winners proposed eight multi-storey blocks of flats at starting prices of £100,000.

At a packed public meeting to discuss the scheme, angry tenants asked where the 'affordable housing' they had been promised was.

"Here it is" they answered. Right at the back, next to the car parks, were some 'studio flats' (bed-sits) for £65,000—really suitable for family housing!

People were so incensed they set up an action committee. "They said that land values meant that only luxury housing could be built there"

said Joanne Martin, a member of Riverside Ward Labour Party, who was a member of the executive: "We told them we would prevent them from building by any means."

A two-year campaign resulted in them handing over half of the land for council housing.

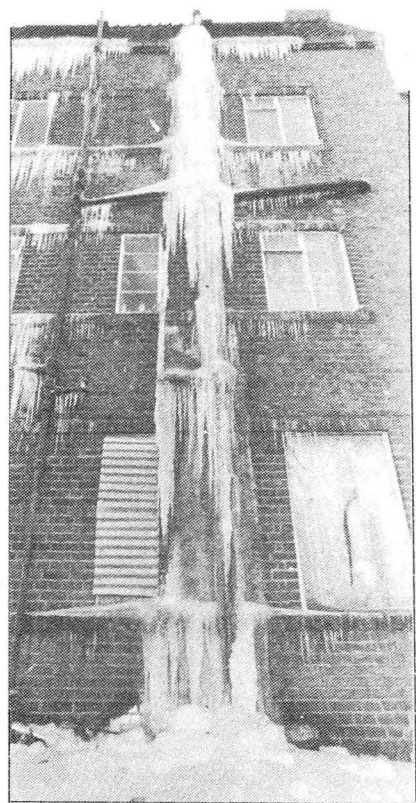
This is a small victory compared to what has happened in docklands as a whole, but at least local people can feel they have achieved something against this multi-million pound Tory quango, whose idea of "responding to the needs of local people", as Liberal Simon Hughes recently claimed they were doing, is to hand out a few grants to community groups for minibuses.

sey's heartland

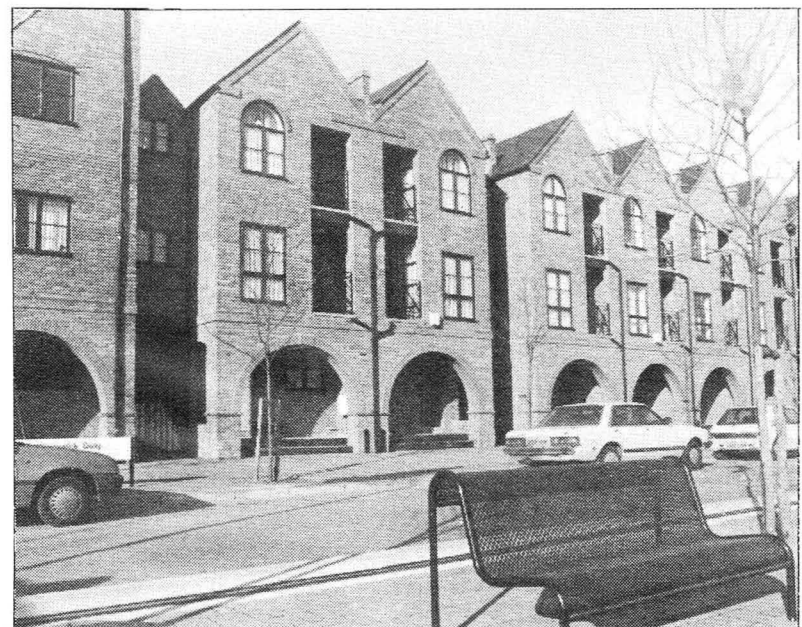


Photos: Mick Barwood.

David Leach, looking through the hole in the wall of his flat (see story below right).



Frozen up council flats last winter.



The new luxury flats in Bermondsey, in converted warehouses.

John Bryan for Labour

Working class socialist set to beat the Liberals

JOHN BRYAN, Labour candidate for Bermondsey, has lived in the constituency all his life. As a school governor, as chair of his Tenants Association on a pre-war council estate in Rotherhithe and as a member of the local Health Authority, he has consistently fought against the Tory government's cuts which have so drastically affected so many local people.

Well aware of the dangers of MPs forgetting their roots if elected, he has pledged to live on the wage of a skilled worker, to remain in touch with the needs and conditions of local people.

Million jobs

This is what John Bryan stands for:

On unemployment—on which Labour is committed to creating one million new jobs in two years—a Labour government to introduce without delay a 35 hour week without loss of pay to create a further million new jobs.

On health—a massive increase in funding for the NHS to reduce waiting lists and increase research into killer diseases, especially AIDS, the abolition of all prescription charges and opposition to all privatisation of NHS services.

A national minimum wage of £120 a week for all workers.

On housing—no rent or rate increases, building of 8,000 new houses and renovation of 18,000 houses in the borough of

Southwark, abolition of the LDDC, the return of land and resources to local councils and the nationalisation of building land and building and property companies under workers' control and management. Build homes for need not profit!

Decent pensions

On education—reversal of all cuts, restoration of full negotiating rights to the teachers and no compulsory redeployment or backdoor cuts by amalgamation.

On pensions—which Labour is pledged to raise by £5 for single pensioners and £8 for couples—all pensioners to get a decent living pension with a minimum of £120.

On youth—no to compulsory

YTS and JTS, a guaranteed job for all school leavers and a £35 a week grant to all 16-18 year olds in full-time education.

On women—a national cervical cancer screening programme, day-time nursery provision for all 3-5 year olds, equal pay for women workers.

Less than 200 giant companies and big banks control over 80 per cent of the economy. The Tories and the Liberals represent the interests of these millionaires.

Labour stands for a socialist society owned and run democratically by working people. The chaos of capitalism which produced poverty, slums and unemployment must be replaced by a democratic socialist society to fulfil Labour's aim.



John Bryan with some young Labour supporters who live on his estate

'We will build'

AT A public meeting on the Rockingham estate, Labour candidate John Bryan outlined Bermondsey Labour Party's plan for 8,000 new homes and the renovation of 18,000 others.

"If anyone thinks this is unrealistic" he said, "look at the docklands area, where London Docklands Development Corporation land is now reaching prices of £4.3 million a square acre.

"If such rapid building can be done for the rich then it can be done for the ordinary people of Bermondsey."

Housing horror story

NOTHING REVEALS more dramatically the horrific housing problems of the people of Bermondsey than the story of Debbie Leach, who lives with her four children on the Bonamy estate. She spoke to Julie Donovan:

"When I moved into this flat, my son's bedroom was damp and there was mildew on the walls. I reported it immediately of course, but it took two months for them to come. Then they stripped the walls, treated them and eight to nine months later the mildew grew back.

Once again I reported it. Four years have gone by and it's now much worse, because water leaks from the pipes, which are completely exposed so that now you can see from the toilet through to my son David's bedroom. He has to sleep in my bedroom with all my other kids.

Four to five weeks ago my pipes burst and flooded out our downstairs. My carpets were ruined. I phoned all night trying to get help.

They came two weeks later to fix my pipes. They took the locks off the door to the heating cupboard. Now it's open all the time and the big metal fan is exposed. It could easily cut off the kids' fingers.



The Leach family in the one bedroom which they are forced to share.

Now we've got a hole in the toilet wall through to the streets. We've had cats and cockroaches crawling in through it and all I hear is that nothing can be done to help.

Two weeks ago I felt that I just couldn't take it any more, so I took an overdose. Everyone says I'm silly, but I just couldn't cope any more. My eldest son David has recently suffered with his health and it's all to do with this place. He's only nine but he doesn't think he's got anything to live for.

Throughout all of this I have

been in touch with Simon Hughes. It all started in 1982 and all I get from him is letters and invitations to see him, but nothing ever happens, just more letters.

Of course if Hughes could have got his mug on telly then he would have done something. But as it stands, every time it rains I'm flooded out. If it hadn't been for you I don't know what I would have done. Hughes has been on to this since 1982, but I've seen more of you in two weeks than I have from all of the rest."



THE COLOMBO terrorist bomb outrage, in which 150 people at the city's bus station were killed on 21 April and hundreds more maimed, has been blamed on armed separatist groups among the island's Tamil national minority. Military operations have intensified against Jaffna, stronghold of the Tamil guerrillas.

From N. Mukesh in Colombo

Workers across the world must have the impression of yet another third world country collapsing into a Lebanese-type communal nightmare.

The right-wing UNP government of President J.R. Jayawardena immediately seized the opportunity provided by the terrorist act to clamp down on workers' rights. May Day rallies and marches were banned to "maintain the peace". Cunningly, JR claimed that he would not allow a repetition of the anti-Tamil riots of 1983.

May Day is deeply imbedded in the mass consciousness in Sri Lanka. From the 1930s workers would come out on strike on 1 May. In 1957 May Day was made a public holiday, and since 1977 even the UNP government has organised May Day festivals.

So when the government banned May Day there was a general outcry, especially from workplaces and traditional left areas. But, while most left leaders confined themselves to a verbal protest, the Marxist Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP) decided to initiate a united protest for May Day to defy the law.

This proposal was taken to the leaders of the three-party Left Front who have the power to draw tens of thousands of workers behind them if they were to give the signal for battle. It was taken also to the rank and file workers, with 20,000 leaflets distributed to factories, offices and commuters in a single morning.

Up to this time there was no public action from any of the other left parties.

But the call by the NSSP caught the mood of the masses, and the heat which it generated began to warm up the seats of the law-abiding opposition leaders. Very soon everyone, from the left parties to the capitalist SLFP and the semi-fascist Motherland Front were stumbling over each other, pronouncing their intention to defy the May Day ban.

However, the left leaders were disarmed by JR's clever warning that the racists would use May Day for their own ends. They made no attempt to mobilise their followers but called a meeting of opposition parties, which decided to send a protest letter to the President.

Frantic telephone conversations between the left leaders and JR followed. The result of all this was the government's announcement on 29 April that May Day celebrations would be permitted on—22 May, National Heroes' Day!

This concession was really achieved by the campaign initiated by the NSSP. However, it was too little and too late. The mobilisation of activists to defy the law could no longer be stopped.

Sri Lanka: new opportunities for the left

NSSP lead defiance of May Day ban



May Day in Colombo. (Top) NSSP marchers, defying the police ban, on their way to Left Front rally. (Above) At the rally—NSSP leader Vasudeva (left) receives an ovation as he joins the Left Front leaders on the platform.

The Left Front declared they would hold a joint indoor meeting at the LSSP (an ex-Marxist left party) office on 1 May, and then come out of the building to demonstrate and distribute leaflets.

From the beginning the capitalist press voiced total confidence in one thing only: "Vasudeva Nanayakkara and the NSSP will defy the law." On 1 May the *Sun* newspaper declared:

"Main among the groups planning to defy the ban on May Day rallies and processions today was the NSSP. Its leader, Vasudeva Nanayakkara, said that though the government had banned May Day celebrations, their party did not ban it, and added that a rally and meeting will definitely take place at Cotta Park in Colombo. 'We will face whatever situation that may arise,' he added."

Armed police

In reality, Comrade Vasu had made no specific reference to marching to Cotta Park. But thanks to the *Sun* the police were completely fooled. Several truckloads of well-armed police ended up prowling and scowling around Cotta Park, waiting for a demonstration that never arrived.

At 5.30am on May Day the NSSP-linked trade union offices in Slave Island, Colombo, were a bustle of activity. The government had unofficially stopped the transport

system to Colombo, which prevented thousands from reaching the May Day activities.

But from the early hours workers donned their red shirts and walked for miles to reach our centre. By 11am, 400 workers had assembled, and set off. Our objective: to march the one-and-a-half mile distance to join the Left Front demonstration.

Unlike the sectarians, who held their jamboree outside a tea shop in splendid isolation (and later obediently dispersed), we were determined to reach the activists and workers of the left parties with our socialist ideas and example of mass action as the way to force out the UNP government.

The three left parties had allowed the NSSP to attend their gathering, but not to speak at the indoor meeting prior to the demonstration. Comrade Vickramabahu, NSSP general secretary, and a score of comrades were already at the LSSP offices, and were enthusiastically greeted by the workers gathered there.

The NSSP was the only organisation to hold a May Day procession in Colombo. For over a mile the exhilarating march continued, smashing the government's ban. A busload of armed police sped by alongside, cut sharply in front—but the marchers merely flowed past the nervous constables.

A hundred yards from the Left rally we met a serious police

roadblock.

"We have marched to break the government's legal ban on the May Day, and we are going to the LSSP office. Please don't cause any trouble, we don't want any violence but we are prepared for your batons. So allow us to proceed," was Vasu's challenge to the police.

After a few minutes' worried consultation the police agreed to let our comrades walk in single file to the rally.

Meanwhile, inside the LSSP office, the left leaders were making speeches while workers outside shouted to increase the volume from the loudspeakers. As each of our comrades came up, an enormous cheer rose from the thousands of workers.

Left unity

The left leaders, hearing this and the continuous shouting of slogans for left unity, finished their meeting and came downstairs. The entire dual carriageway was now blocked by the chanting and cheering activists of the NSSP and left parties.

A table was lowered onto the road and the three left leaders got up. A mood of expectancy gripped the crowd for several minutes, then an enormous roar exploded as Comrade Vasu climbed onto the platform.

The left leaders, who for three years had refused to take the NSSP

into their "United Front", smiled embarrassedly as their supporters joined the cheering.

Colvin R de Silva, LSSP leader, tried to speak over the noise: "Comrades, we've had a successful meeting... and now I think we should disperse and go home..."

Vijaya, SLMP (a radical split-off from the SLFP) leader, had barely begun his second sentence when the police fired tear gas into the heart of the rally. Several NSSP-ers and others were arrested and hospitalised.

Even after this, a section of the crowd led by the NSSP started a march and continued for half a mile.

Sri Lankan society has been in a state of 'drift' during the last period. The anti-Tamil war has intensified, death and destruction mount daily. The fear of bombs, and the economic hardships, have created great anger against the government. But the Left Front has singularly failed to provide a convincing alternative.

Often they have preferred JR's government as a lesser evil than the Sinhala chauvinist forces. This has only strengthened those forces.

But this May Day, because of the NSSP's campaign, the left was forced to take a stand against the government, and national attention has been focussed on the left.

The Left Front must take the NSSP into its ranks. They must seize this opportunity to embark on a bold campaign of action, including a national day of protest on all pressing issues. This is the only way to force a general election.

Based on a programme of unity between the Sinhala and Tamil masses, the left can seize the initiative and bring to power a workers' and peasants' government that will pave the way for socialism.

Support Bata workers

A MAJOR strike is threatening at Bata Shoe Company in Sri Lanka. Management has broken the collective agreement, suspended two workers' leaders and is preparing to sack a leading NSSP activist. Bata workers in Sri Lanka appeal to their fellow workers internationally to be ready to support them if they are forced into struggle.

Nigerian labour declare 'state of emergency'

Peter Asanba, National President of the Footwear, Leather & Rubber Products Workers' Union of Nigeria, speaks to *Militant*.

NIGERIAN WORKERS are faced with mass unemployment, hyperinflation and government attacks on their rights. But there is growing militancy and a mood to fight for change.

Most of Nigeria's 100 million people live from peasant agriculture. The working class is some three million strong. But upwards of four million people are looking for jobs, and their number is added to every day as the capitalists retrench or shut down whole factories.

In my own union, membership has fallen from 19,000 in 1982 to 7,000 as a result of retrenchments.

On foreign exchange markets the national currency, the *naira*, has been devalued by three-quarters as part of the 'solution' to the country's economic crisis prescribed by the imperialist bankers. The main effect has been to boost inflation to 500 per cent, and cut the value of the minimum wage to US\$37 per

month.

Then, in March, the Minister of Labour provoked a serious confrontation when he amended the Minimum Wage Act to exempt employers with less than 500 workers from paying the minimum wage - i.e., no more minimum wage!

Demands

But the workers totally rejected this attack. Under pressure from the ranks, the NEC of the Nigerian Labour Congress (to which all trade unions are affiliated - *Editor*) declared a state of emergency against the government. This means: anything can now happen between the government and the workers.

The following demands were put forward:

- ★ Scrap the amendment to the Minimum Wage Act.
- ★ End the freeze on wages (imposed in 1982).
- ★ Pensions not less than the

minimum wage.

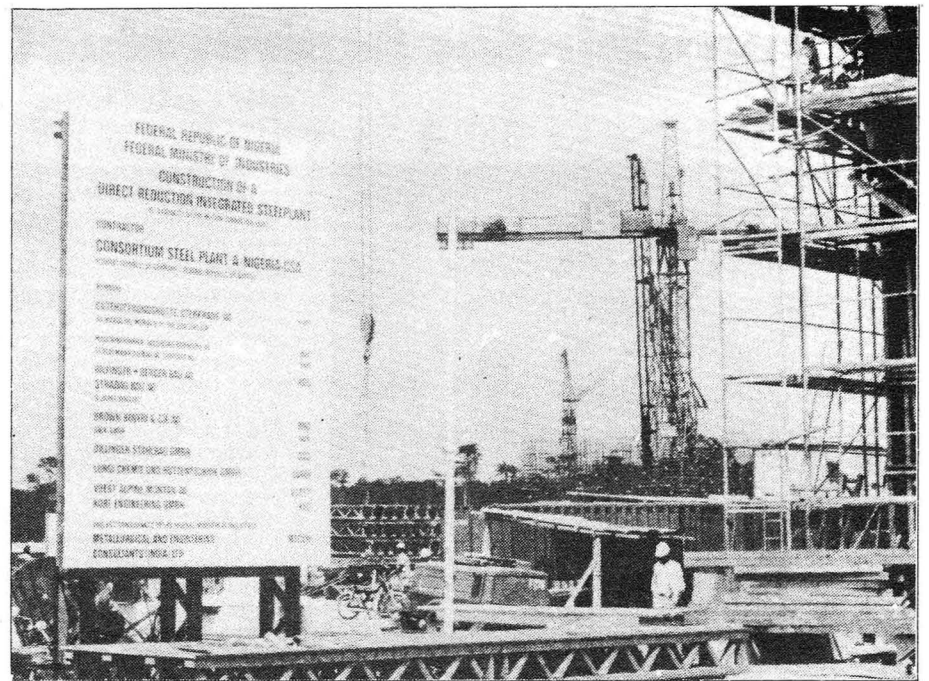
- ★ The Industrial Arbitration Panel to be independent of the Minister, with the powers to make binding decisions.

The labour leaders called for mobilisation of the people. At this the government panicked, and withdrew the amendment to the Minimum Wage Act immediately.

But the other demands have still to be met, and the movement is continuing. Meetings have been called everywhere to explain what is at stake.

On May Day the mood of the workers was made clear. In Lagos 30,000 workers gathered, with similar meetings in all the other cities. There was none of the traditional fanfare. The President of the NLC told the government what the position was. But the Minister of Labour could not reply. He was shouted down; nobody wanted to hear him.

At meetings the workers say to the union leaders: we are ready to act. You tell us what should be



Nigerian steel plant under construction.

done. The proposal for a nationwide general strike has been made. But the leaders have kept it quiet, and set no date.

Nigerian unions have a tradition of action. There has never been a problem with the workers, only problems of leadership. The government has never been able to defeat the unions. Only if the leaders are not effective, the government can play games with them.

There is enormous pressure for action. Only a serious struggle will improve matters for the workers - a struggle not only for our economic demands, but for political power.

Political power

Under capitalism the position of the workers is hopeless. The NLC has the demand for socialism in its programme, but there are illusions in what it means.

Socialism does not mean nationalisation alone. Who is to

manage the nationalised property? We must base our movement on Marxist ideas of nationalising the means of production under the perfect control of the working class.

There is total support for these ideas in my union, and I am convinced that the majority of the masses would support it if it was explained.

Michelin workers in struggle

THE ANTI-union management of Michelin Tyres in Nigeria dismissed 100 union activists on 5 February. The case is still before the Industrial Arbitration Panel. The workers appeal for support from their fellow Michelin workers and trade unionists internationally. Messages to Footwear, Leather & Rubber Products Workers' Union, 71 Palm Avenue Mushin, PO Box 3730, Surulere, Lagos, Nigeria. Telephone: 524268.

South Korea

Spirit of Kwangju lives on

KWANGJU IS an industrial and university city in the southern part of South Korea. Seven years ago, in May 1980, a student uprising led to the entire population rising up and seizing the city in revolutionary protest against the military-police dictatorship.

After a few days the military cracked down, killing around 2,600 people and imprisoning many more.

This week has seen massive riots, protests and demonstrations in South Korea on the seventh anniversary of the Kwangju uprising and the subsequent massacre.

In Suwon, the Hanyang university was burned down. In Seoul, the capital, crowds of up to 10,000 stoned the police. In Kwangju, 10,000 students and workers were teargassed and baton charged.

These events form part of a developing pattern of instability in South Korea, one of capitalism's "high-growth" enclaves in the Far East. Political repression and cheap labour have formed the basis for multinational investment, turning out mass-produced commodities for their markets around the world.

One dictatorship has followed another since Korea was partitioned between the Stalinist north and the capitalist south in 1950. The present dictator, Chun doo Hwan, came to power in 1979 after his predecessor was assassinated.

A state machine has been



Dictator Chun.

perfected over the years with totalitarian powers and frightening riot police which make the British version look like pacifists.

Goon squads

Trade unionism is not encouraged either. On *Newsnight* recently a young woman was interviewed who had tried to set up a union in the factory where she worked. The women were rounded up by the company's own goon squad, stripped, beaten up and thrown off the premises.

Every demonstration, no matter how tame, ends up as a pitched battle with the riot police.

Last December the two main opposition parties (both banned) organised a Philippines-style "Peoples'

Power" rally in Seoul. It never took place. 40,000 police were mobilised and 100,000 put on alert to smash the rally. Anyone who turned up was arrested.

But, with pressure building up from below, Chun last year promised 'democracy'. Then, with his grip temporarily strengthened, he 'postponed' reform until after the 1988 Olympic Games which are due to be held in Seoul.

South Korea is at present experiencing a boom, particularly in computers. Japan is in the process of transferring its entire ship-building industry to South Korea.

Despite this, Chun's dictatorship cannot find stability. Although both the opposition parties are liberal capitalist parties, the leader-

ship of one (the Reunification Democratic Party) is giving some voice to the mass hatred of the dictatorship.

But behind the 'democratic' politicians is the pressure of the workers and the youth. South Korea's industrialisation has led to the enormous growth of the working class. As that class becomes organised and aware of its strength, it will emerge as the real leadership of the struggle.

The heroic example of Kwangju will be followed in future battles, spelling the overthrow of the dictatorship and the capitalist system it defends.

By Tim White

Debt crisis in new stage

THE WORLD of high finance has been shaken by the decision of Citicorp, biggest of the international moneylenders, to write \$3 billion off its debts from third world countries. This means no profits this year.

Citicorp's arm has been jugged by the Brazilian government's decision to suspend repayments on its mammoth \$113 billion foreign debt.

The underdeveloped countries owe \$1 trillion (a million million) to the big banks, and it has been clear for years that they won't get all this money back. The *Financial Times* comments: "Only an optimist would expect to recover three quarters". That means kissing \$250 billion goodbye!

This reality is reflected in the shadow market in foreign debt - e.g., buy \$1 of Brazilian debt for 63 cents and see if you get your money back. \$1 of Bolivian debt goes for only 10 cents. Citicorp portrays its rejig

of the books as a measure of financial probity. It is true that other US banks will be forced to follow suit. They are even more over-exposed, and will feel the loss more. That is why Citicorp is leading the way.

But despite the changes in Citicorp's bookkeeping, there will be no relief for the debtor countries. They will be expected to continue paying as before.

The bankers are even developing new ways of squeezing more money out of the impoverished third world peoples. Under the system known as "debt-equity swapping", part of the debt is turned into shares in local nationalised industries, thus giving the imperialists even more control over the economies of debtor states.

The debt crisis won't go away. It is entering a new stage, threatening to drag the international financial system down with it.

By Mick Brooks

International contributions to Ivin Malaza Memorial Fund

SOCIALISTS INTERNATIONALLY have continued to respond to the appeal for funds to assist the family and continue the work of murdered South African worker-militant Ivin Malaza. £300 has been collected in Spain, £180 in Italy and £50 in Australia. Please match this sacrifice to keep the funds flowing. Donations: c/o Cllr L. Faulkes, 143B Amhurst Road, London E8 2AW.

Tories Exploit Children

"CHRISTIAN CHARITY" were the words used by the chairman of social services to describe the sacrifice made by hundreds, if not thousands of young children who devote their childhood to looking after ill or disabled parents.

What he really meant was "Thank God for the jobs these children do, it's saving us a bomb on home helps nurses etc".

The Brass Tacks programme concentrated on the scandal of Britain in the 1980's where children have no time to call their own, to enjoy their friends or their childhood because of their responsibility to their disabled, single parents.

An 11 year old girl has sole responsibility for her mother from 5.30 in the evening until 8.30 the following morning and all weekend! And she's been doing that for six years.

She has to count out and administer her mother's life-saving drugs every day, wash her, dress her, feed her, take her to the toilet and get up at least once in the night to turn her so she doesn't get pressure sores. She can't go out to play because she has to respond immediately if her mother calls.

The reporter finished the programme by saying some of the stories they discovered were too harrowing to use. Like the 13 year old girl who cracked under the strain, had a nervous breakdown and is now in a psychiatric hospital. Or the 13 year old boy who couldn't take any more of looking after his severely epileptic mother and ran away.

These children undoubtedly love their parents very much, but cost-cutting local authorities shouldn't exploit that fact by giving them the main burden of caring, their shoulders aren't broad enough. Their lives could be transformed if Labour gets elected and pumps the necessary money into social services, to make sure that these children have the opportunity to enjoy their childhood. I hope you are listening Mr Kinnock.

Yours fraternally
Maggie McGinley
Barking, London

Women trapped in the home

Dear Comrades,

My cousin was killed recently, another victim of domestic violence. After the birth of her son four years ago she suffered from severe post-natal depression and became unable to cope with either her career or life in general. The illness drastically affected her marriage and, I feel, culminated in her early, tragic death.

My cousin saw herself as tied to the marital home as she didn't feel able to support or

cope with her little boy herself. She was receiving psychiatric help but little is known about the causes of this type of depression.

A socialist transformation of society could liberate women from the conditions which keep them imprisoned in unhappy marriages, financially and socially dependent on their husbands.

Yours fraternally
Mandy Moss
Swansea

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

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

International Solidarity from Pakistan

The following letter was sent to Pat Wall, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Bradford North.

Dear Pat Wall,
Hope this finds you in the best of health. You might be aware that Faisalabad (termed the Manchester of Pakistan) is the third largest city of Pakistan, renowned for its textile industry. Out of 1.6 million population, about 0.4 million are labourers. I represent this section of labourers as a councillor in the local Municipal Corporation.

I have heard that you are contesting the forthcoming General Elections for the Labour Party in Bradford North.

My whole team send their warmest greetings to you to achieve an enviable success in the elections. We hope for a majority win of the Labour Party, for the implementation of its programme and policy for the betterment of the labour class, which today stands oppressed by the Thatcher regime.

I and my companions appeal to our Pakistani brethren in Bradford to launch a vigorous election campaign and exercise their franchise in favour of Labour Party candidates not only for a convincing victory



but to impose a historic defeat on Thatcher's nominees. Your success is our success. Undoubtedly you are most suitable candidate for the solution of our

problems.
Yours Sincerely
S. Safdar Bokhari
President, Peoples Labour Union
Faisalabad

Incentive Scheme—Poverty

Dear Comrades,

Our local Labour council has decided to encourage tourism in the area (in order to replace jobs lost in manufacturing industry). As part of this programme the architect Rod Hackney has been allowed to buy a row of dilapidated old buildings on the Leeds-Liverpool canal.

One of my mates is working for

Hackney on another renovation scheme in Burnley. He is eighteen and gets paid £55 net for a 40 hour week as a labourer. The gaffer on the site is a born-again Christian. When one of the workers complained about the low wages he was told "I'd be glad if I was getting as little as that. It would give me an incentive to get on in life!"
The workers are not provided

with safety boots. Apparently this is illegal. Hackney is reported to have told the gaffer that if one of his workers knows so much about the Factory Act he should think about what act he can do to keep his job!

Yours fraternally
Andrew Sinclair
Burnley Labour Party Young Socialists

Chipping away at Paper Sales

Dear Comrades,

For the past two months myself and another comrade have been selling outside the gates of a McCains chip factory without ever having much success, or so we thought.

It appears that one worker who regularly buys the paper has been leaving his copy of the paper in the staff canteen and it is being read by other workers.

This has started off quite a bit of political discussion among the workforce, with the result that the once virtually obsolete union branch has been transformed. 126 workers

have signed membership forms over the past few weeks.

Management have begun to take notice of this sudden interest in the union and have instructed supervisors to keep them fully informed.

Time spent outside a factory or other workplace is never wasted. Even if not many papers or none are sold, Sellers get noticed and if one paper is taken into the workplace it can have an effect.

Yours fraternally
Dave Pollock
Scarborough

Alliance—Nothing To offer

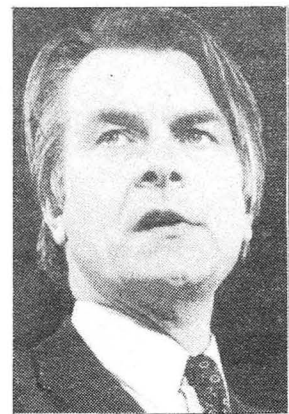
Dear Comrades,

While in Liverpool for the council election I spent some time outside a polling station. The Liberal kept trying to start a conversation and eventually remarked that "It'll be terrible if she gets back in won't it?"

I replied that the only way she would get back in was because his lot would support her. He looked a bit worried at this so I asked if he was a member of the Liberal

party. "Oh no" he said "I just like the bloke who's standing for councillor, come the General Election I'll be voting Labour".

Yours fraternally
Julie Donovan
Bermondsey Labour Party Young Socialists



Dear Comrades,

The Alliance arrived in Sittingbourne in the shape of David Owen on Tuesday. About 70 people were on the street awaiting the arrival of the yellow bus.

One woman asked "What are you offering us in this town for a hospital? We don't have one and must travel to Gillingham, miles away". Owen replied "The Alliance intend to save the National Health, if

you have to go to the nearest hospital we will insist that your District Health Authority pay for it!"

Three copies of the mid-week Militant were sold and one young man said "If that's what the SDP are looking to do, which is nothing for youth, unemployment, housing, in fact they are the same as the Tories!"

Yours fraternally
Anne Ursell
Sittingbourne

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.

○ **Offensiv camp in Sweden.** Monday 6—Saturday 11 July 1987. For information write to *Offensiv* Brahegatan 2, S-415 01 Göteborg, Sweden. Tel 031 844 162.

○ **East Lewisham LPYS** present a Rock the Tories Disco at Lewisham Labour Club, Limes Grove, Lewisham SE13. 7-12pm. Tickets £2 waged, £1 unwaged.

Workers Education Group. Socialist Summer Camp '87. Saturday 8 August to Saturday 15 August. Bracelands campsite, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire. Courses on Marxist Economics, Youth and the struggle for socialism, the Russian revolution, USA, the third world. Plus rallies, debates, discos, sports, creche. Cost £40 (£75 for family booking). Brochure available now. Write to Workers Education Group, PO Box 332, London E15 33Y.

□ **Jack Collins Memorial Meeting and Social.** 13 June 6pm. Chislet Miners Welfare Club Hersden, near Canterbury. For invitations please phone 0304 367840 any weekday morning, or write to: Magness House, Mill Hill, Deal, Kent.

○ **Female comrade** moving into inner London seeks accommodation before 26 July. Tel Carol Moya 07375 57587.

○ **TRAVEL X.** We cater for ALL types of holiday and flights at competitive rates. Tel 01 942 1234 or 01 942 7156. 7A Coombe Rd, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4PX. 24 hour answer phone service available.

○ **In memory of IAN BURGE** who made us Militant. Myrna Shaw and Helen Redwood.

Marxist Discussion Groups

□ **Stretford** Thursday 4 and Wednesday 10 June. 8.30pm. St Alphonsus Parish centre, Powell St, off Ayres Rd.

□ **Barnsley** The Victoria Pub, corner of Sheffield Rd and Cemetery Rd. 8.15pm. Tuesday 2 June "Marxists and Parliament".

□ **Hoyland and Wombwell** The St George's Arms, Hough Lane, Wombwell. 8.15pm, Thursday 4 June. "Marxists and Parliament".

□ **Chapelton** The Commercial Pub. 8.15pm Tuesday 2 June. "Marxists and Parliament".

□ **Salford** every Monday, Black Horse, The Crescent. 8.30pm.

□ **Wigan** every Tuesday, 7 Stars, Wallgate, Wigan. 8.30pm.

□ **Bolton** every Wednesday, Clarence Hotel, Bradshawgate, Bolton. 8.30pm

□ **Eccles** every Thursday, Duke of York, Church St, Eccles. 8.30pm.

□ **Chorlton** every Thursday, The Southern Hotel, Mauldeth Rd West, Chorlton. 8.30pm.

□ **Blackley** Bradford Miners Club, Teddington Rd off Moston Lane, Moston. Wednesday 27 May and Wednesday 3 June. 8.30pm.

□ **Blackburn** every Wednesday. The Trades Club, 8.30pm

WORLD SOCIALIST BOOKS

Lenin *Left wing communism, an infantile disorder* 55p. The basic arguments why Marxists participate in elections and how to use Parliament in a revolutionary way.

Jenness—Lenin as election campaign manager 30p. Chronicles the Bolshevik involvement in elections, the reasons for it, how they worked and what they got out of it.

Militant *History of the Labour Party* 35p. The record of past campaigns and past Labour governments.

Labour Party *Breaking the nation: a guide to Thatcher's Britain* £2.50. Facts and figures for canvassers on all issues.

Labour Research Dept pamphlets:
Defending the NHS 85p
Social insecurity 65p
Farewell to welfare 55p
Privatisation: paying the price £1.15
Bashing the unions 70p
Widening the gap: Rich and poor today £1.10
A state of collapse: UK economy under the Tories £1.10.

Add 25 per cent postage for orders under £5, 10 per cent for orders over £5. Order from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.

Election Special Offers

THE REAL nature of the so-called 'Thatcher Revolution' in education has been revealed. At a press conference on 22 May she stated: "It is up to the school to pursue its own admission policies". Despite frantic efforts later to explain away her comments, Thatcher had blurted out the truth about the Tories' plans for education. Schools would be able to set their own entry exams and charge fees. The Tory Manifesto proposals were revealed as the first step to a two tier system of education: one tier for the children of the rich, another for the rest.

In this feature BOB SULATYCKI of West London NUT, writing in a personal capacity, examines the Tories plans and the alternative the teachers' unions and the Labour Party should be fighting for.

The Tories threat to state education

State schools: The Tories' record

Behind all the reactionary and dangerous proposals put forward by the Tories there is a complete failure to address the real issues in education: above all the question of resources. The Tories claim: "this government has provided more resources for pupils than ever before." Yet anyone involved in education knows that this is a lie. Since 1979 the Tories have consistently undermined state schools to bolster the attraction of a private education.

- ★ Capital spending on education in 1985 was 25 per cent lower than it was in 1978.
- ★ Secondary school spending per pupil on books fell by 25 per cent between 1979 and 1984. A joint survey by the DES and the Furniture Industry Research Association found that 90 per cent of school cupboards and 30 per cent of tables needed to be repaired or replaced.
- ★ The pupil-teacher ratio in nursery schools was 8 per cent higher in 1985 than in 1980.
- ★ HM Inspectors reports have shown that two thirds of schools are in substantial need of repair; one in four have outside toilets; one in five were overcrowded; and more than one million pupils were in schools where there were over 30 pupils in a class.
- ★ A glimpse of the abyss ahead, if the Tories are re-elected, is shown in the Inner London Education Authority where years of rate capping has now begun to make itself felt. In Hackney 300 primary school children are being sent home every week because of the desperate teacher shortage. Baker told one headmaster who asked if he was expected to continue to teach classes of 53: "I'm sure you'll manage".

The reality behind 'Thatcher's revolution'

The Tories promise a 'choice' for schools to 'opt out' of local authority control, receive a grant from the government and become independent charitable trusts. What this means is that right wing heads and governors of schools under a Labour controlled local education authority will be able to break away, set up their own entrance exams and, as Thatcher herself admitted, charge fees. The 'choice' for less well off parents with a child in such a school would be to pay up or get out.

Tied to this is the proposal that school budgets should be placed under the control of individual heads and governors. The Tory Manifesto quotes approvingly 'pilot schemes' in Cambridgeshire and Solihull. In fact these schemes have been a disaster. Only last week Cambridgeshire secondary heads were disputing their cash allocation!

Under the Tories' proposals the money going to each school would be

related to pupil numbers. Now LEAs allocate funds to schools after assessing the needs of a whole area. But with schools competing for pupils to enroll, funding could fluctuate unpredictably. Heads will be turned into accountants. And what would happen if the money started to run out half way through the year? The first thing to go would be school cleaning, maintenance (including health and safety), new books and equipment. But 70 per cent of a school budget is spent on teachers, and 20 per cent on ancillary and other support staff. For the Tories' scheme to work, teachers and staff will have to be on temporary contracts, to be dispensed with when the money runs out.

Open competition for pupil numbers will lead to schools advertising against each other simply to secure next year's budget! Those schools which failed to recruit will enter a vicious downward spiral: less numbers, therefore less

money, therefore less provision, therefore less numbers. It will result in schools, particularly in the poorer catchment areas, simply going to the wall.

Schools will have to turn to independent fundraising. There will be an increase in direct business funding and control of education. A glimpse of the future is shown in the Tories' new City Technology Colleges. The three CTC's already planned are being 'sponsored', with massive tax savings as bribes to the companies involved, by those well known educational concerns: Dixons, the Hanson Trust and the Harris Queensway furniture warehousing group. Education Minister Bob Dunn has said that a further "220, maybe 420 colleges" are planned. These 'super schools' will still only cater for a very small minority of pupils but by operating through selection at 11 will be elitist institutions diverting money away from other schools.



Education Minister Kenneth Baker has no personal knowledge of state schools. He attended St. Paul's (Fees in 1985 of £4,878 a year) before going to Oxford University, 248 out of 392 Tory MPs went to public schools and 15 out of 22 cabinet ministers.



Paying for private education

The Tories have spent millions subsidising private schools to make 'commercial' education attractive compared to the run down state system. And now they offer a mirage: that education of the quality available to the 6 per cent of pupils in private schools can be achieved by state schools 'opting out' from local authority control.

- ★ The Assisted Places Scheme, which subsidises the fees of pupils from low income families attending private schools, is to be expanded by 40 per cent.
- ★ Public spending per pupil on the 24,500 children on the scheme is 28 per cent higher, £1,520 at 1984 prices, than spending per pupil on those attending state schools.
- ★ Not surprisingly, with this subsidy from workers' taxes, pupil-teacher ratios in independent schools are at least 45 per cent better than in state secondary schools. In 1985 private schools were able to spend £254 per pupil on new buildings and equipment compared to under £50 per pupil in state schools.

What Labour must do

The teachers' unions are escalating action over pay and conditions and the loss of negotiating rights. This must be linked to the campaign to returning a Labour Government committed to socialist policies—not just in education but in society as a whole. Equality of opportunity cannot be simply won by 'better schools', laudable though that may be, but by removing the roots of social and economic inequality that are inherent in capitalism.

The teachers' unions and the Labour Party must go on the offensive, and not simply defend the current status quo which is widely seen as unsatisfactory. Such a campaign would draw in tremendous support from both parents and pupils. It would also be the best guarantee of preventing the Tories returning to power:

- ★ The restoration of all cuts in education spending over the last eight years.
- ★ A programme of teacher training to bring in a maximum class size of 20.
- ★ A massive programme of school building and refurbishment.
- ★ The abolition of all public and selective schools—for a fully comprehensive secondary education with a £35 a week grant for those staying on at 16.
- ★ Abandonment of the City Technology Scheme and access to good quality technical education for all.
- ★ Restoration of negotiating rights to teachers and a £1,200 pay rise with no strings.
- ★ Free nursery education to be available for all children from the age of 3.
- ★ For a socialist Labour government committed to a properly resourced and democratically controlled comprehensive education system.

National Communications Union conference

One executive one rule book and one union

THE FAILURE to unite the clerical and engineering group members in joint action around a common claim is the most important lesson to come out of the NCU pay strike.

The false notion, put forward by the right wing, that members' interests are best protected by remaining 'autonomous' has been blown apart by the experience of the strike.

Separate industrial action ballots taken in different months resulted in different action being taken at different times.

Engineering members were instructed to cross Clerical picket lines and Clerical members were told to ignore engineering picket lines. These tactics only confused the membership and played into the hands of management. A disastrous split in the union was only narrowly averted.

Militant supporters have consistently argued that union amalgamations based on a federal structure with separate groups having their rule book, executive and policies, is a recipe for bureaucratic mismanagement and

disunity.

The respective group conferences must agree to immediately transfer the responsibility for all major items such as pay, hours, leave and other conditions of service to the NEC and national conference.

The call for a special conference with rule changing authority to discuss the whole issue must be grasped with both hands. Conference must take up the rallying cry of one executive, one rule book, one set of policies—one union!



The NCU Broad Left have secured an outstanding victory in the union elections. On the Engineering group executive they have a majority of 12 to 11, and among the engineering delegates to the NEC (engineering and clerical) a majority of 11 to 7.

Right wing fail test of pay battle

THE BURNING resentment over the result of the 1986 pay battle fought by British Telecom workers earlier this year will colour all debates at the NCU conference.

By Phil Holt

An overwhelming majority of branches and delegates have concluded that the pay dispute showed the strength of the members but exposed the weakness of the right wing leadership.

An abundance of motions of censure and no confidence have been submitted by traditionally middle of the road branches. These do not reflect numerically the actual no confidence votes taken at mass meetings in the concluding days of the strike and lock out, tens of thousands of members took part in these votes—unique in the history of the union.

The right wing executive were installed last year as a direct result of the change in the method of election, forced by Tory legislation. As a result many of the new executive were totally unknown within the union.

However, one person was clearly identifiable to all members, John Golding, elected as general secretary in 1986 with a good majority. John Golding hailed himself as the skill-

ed, experienced negotiator who would deliver the goods.

There would, he stated, be no need to make a national stand in defence of our jobs and conditions. As the Broad Left candidate I argued then, and still do, that such a stand is necessary and inevitable and full preparation should be made.

It is ironic that during the negotiations for the 1986 pay round, much was left to the deputy general secretary, Eric George.

But what was equally incredible to the members was a Breakfast TV interview during the strike in which Golding stated that he didn't know what was happening, he didn't know the name of the hotel where negotiations were taking place and after claiming no knowledge to a third question, the interviewer commented, 'you don't seem to know much at all Mr Golding'. How little knowledge is necessary for £33,000 a year before expenses.

As a result of this and other examples of ineptitude, a good number of motions calling for Golding's resignation have been submitted to conference. Golding is quite rightly being held responsible for the return to work agreement which has left areas of the country vulnerable to management attack, culminating in widespread victimisation and sackings in the City of London District.

But revenge for the sell-out is not enough! We have to learn the lessons of our struggle. It was the policies

and philosophy of the right-wing which let the members down. It wasn't the individual inexperience, ignorance or ineptitude, although no-one would deny that these exist in abundance amongst the right-wing 'NCU 1st' executive.

The right wing do not understand the endemic weakness and sickness of British capitalism which drives even the most profitable firms to attack the wages and conditions of its workforce.

Union leaders

They actually believed that a 'reasonable and moderate' leadership could come to terms with BT. But BT asked why moderate leaders couldn't accept a 'moderate' (ie low) pay offer. The union executive was actually reduced to begging during the negotiations.

The union leadership should have left conference 1986 prepared to campaign amongst the members and so strengthen the hands of the negotiators, also to show they were serious in resisting BT's threats of executive action.

They should have set out wholeheartedly to create unity with the clerical group and the STE, instead of fostering disunity with both. Resolutions along these lines were submitted to the executive by the only remaining Broad Left supporter on the executive, Bill Cox, and rejected by the right wing.

The executive allowed BT to end common table pay bargaining without even a whimper of protest. BT had seen the executive 'sell' a similar deal in the Post Office and they knew time was on their side. In the end the right wing were forced by the members into action as ballot after ballot increased the majority wanting and demanding action.

The members were continually three steps ahead of the leadership. The magnificent vote by members in the final week of the strike showed the intense loyalty of our membership, no union had ever got a 98 per cent vote for continuing action—that loyalty was rewarded with a sell-out! Such members need leaders who will not repeat the mistakes of the past, but will analyse the problems facing us and face the employers with a determined, united trade union front, committed to a common claim and backed by a common programme for action.

At this conference the NCU Broad Left must campaign for an end to artificial obstacles between the Clerical and Engineering groups and move onwards to an amalgamation with the UCW. One union, one industry.

All unions in the industry should unite in joint action in defence of the membership. We must ensure that a 32 hour 4 day week once again becomes the central plank in the defence of jobs.

Giro try to break Skem

NCU MEMBERS in Girobank are facing an increasingly hostile management intent on breaking up, one way or another, the biggest and one of the most powerful of the union's branches.

In the past management have led direct attacks on union activists and on occasions been met with strong resistance from the membership. Now they are trying the more subtle approach.

They want to open a second site away from Bootle, supposedly as a contingency plan in case of 'natural disaster' such as fire or flood hitting the main site, but in reality a carbon copy of the Bootle site.

Intimidation

Skelmersdale has now been identified as this site after months of management hinting at places much further south. They hope that the membership of 4,500 will breathe a huge sigh of relief that it is far closer than threatened, and then meekly succumb to their plans.

But members will see it for exactly what it is—an attack on their union branch. The continuance of one strong union branch led by the Broad Left in the country's most politicised city is a severe threat to any plans to privatise Girobank. Management want to divide the membership, already facing job losses through regionalisation, to make privatisation all the easier.

'Engineering scrutiny' hits jobs

THE 'ENGINEERING scrutiny' work study of NCU members in the Post Office has been a de-staffing and de-skilling exercise carried out by a central post office scrutiny team which has effectively taken negotiations on staffing levels out of the hands of the branches.

Many of the skilled staff displaced have left the Post Office to find work elsewhere. Others face the uncertainty of being kept do-

ing small jobs without being in a budgeted post.

Some have transferred to 'engineering related work' and are painting and hanging doors after spending years training and working as engineers. This and all other work carried out will be under a continual scrutiny and contractual tenders will be used to assess "cost effectiveness."

The ultimate aim of the Post Office is to have a small

hit squad to deal with essential faults, the rest would go to outside firms. This obviously eases the route towards privatisation of the Post Office if the Tories are re-elected.

The union must be prepared to defend the jobs of all NCU members. We must not allow the union to become divided by individual sections being picketed off.


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THE REAL ANSWER TO THE TORIES

The need for a Socialist Labour government committed to restoring the cuts, full employment, and an end to poverty and low pay, has never been greater. The last eight years of Tory rule has seen the rich get richer while the poor suffer. The policies of the party of big business interests has been to con-

stance do young couples have of getting a home under the Tories. However, it must be said that Labour councils, with one notable exception, have given us the same old policies of the Tories. Instead of organising local elections, Town Hall workers, and their Trade Unions, to support



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Industrial Reports

Vote to step up fight for civil service pay

CPSA AND SCPS members are balloting during 27 May to 3 June for further industrial action on their 1987 pay, jobs and services campaign.

Members are to be asked to continue the overtime ban and the policy of non-cooperation; support a two-day national strike on 8 and 9 June, followed by two-day strikes on 18 and 19 June in Scotland, Northern Ireland and the north east; 25 and 26 June in London, the Eastern counties and the south; and 2 and 3 July in Wales, the north west, Yorkshire and the Midlands.

A repeat of this action, or escalation to an all-out strike is also contained in the ballot paper for subsequent action if no settlement has been reached.

Balloting follows the breakdown of negotiations with the Treasury on 18/19 May. The Treasury on behalf of the Tory government refused to increase the 4.6 per cent offer from 1 April, but offered extra money in the context of further negotiations on

a long-term pay system, embracing regional pay, performance related pay, flexible starting pay rates and extra money for certain jobs.

The unions correctly rejected these divide and rule tactics, which would do nothing to solve the severe hardship and poverty faced by increasing numbers of civil servants.

It is important that CPSA and SCPS members vote to continue the fight and do not surrender to the Tories. The majority of CPSA activists and many members in the CPSA and SCPS are bitterly disappointed at the refusal of the union conferences to move to an all-out strike, however the programme before members must nevertheless be supported and a massive vote worked for.

National strike

The national strike will show members their immense bargaining power and build the necessary unity and cohesion in the union. It will also serve as a final warning to the



John Macreadie.

Tories of the anger and determination of the civil servants to secure decent living standards and defend their jobs and services to claimants and the public.

The SCPS, CPSA leadership say that the "Time is not right." The BL84 grouping have argued that this new phase of action will succeed and anyway that they needed extra time to prepare for an all-out strike should it be necessary. *Militant* sup-

porters and the Broad Lefts in the two unions will work to make this new phase of action a success.

At a packed pay rally in Liverpool on Thursday 21 May, John Macreadie told a cheering audience, "To win this campaign we need to do two things. Firstly vote yes for industrial action. We must have confidence in our ability and our power and must be prepared to struggle to defend our living standards, jobs and services.

"Secondly we must vote Labour and campaign amongst our families, friends and in our communities for a Labour victory. No civil servant should vote to re-elect this rotten Tory employer. Our campaign must be taken into every constituency and election meeting and all politicians must be told that they will have to settle this dispute before they can hope to run the civil service."

By Steve Iron

(Customs and Excise, Liverpool, personal capacity)

Liverpool councillor blacklisted



Harry Smith.

HARRY SMITH is one of the 47 surcharged Liverpool councillors. As well as facing removal from office and surcharge, he now faces permanent unemployment as a result of blacklisting. He's married with three children, two dependent, and an electrician by trade.

"Polycol Viaduct Works in Marple, had a vacancy in a factory another seven miles away. When Sue, my wife, phoned, they asked me to come for an interview. This lasted two hours with the plant manager, site foreman and maintenance supervisor.

"It's a chemical factory, dealing with silos, which I've done before. I was offered the job, given a starting date and £15 for new boots. As it's too far to travel every day from home so I explained I'd stay with my brother-in-law nearby and travel home at weekends. I told them about the City Council. They asked me a few questions about that.

"Next thing was a phone call to see a Mr Cox, boss of the two plants. That took one and a half hours. He explained they had recently been taken over by a French multinational, he still wanted me, but head office refused.

"He explained the company was not unionised and head office thought I'd start causing trouble. He told me they were still waiting for a reference. After four days we phoned, but got a don't phone us, we'll phone you.

"We've been done in by the courts. Now I'm blacklisted. We've got the threat of bankruptcy and now the unemployed of the 47 are not going to find work."

College lecturers go into action

MANY COLLEGES of further and higher education were brought to a standstill on Wednesday 20 May as a result of industrial action by members of the college lecturers' union, Natfhe.

They are demanding a 20.6 per cent pay rise to bring them back up to their 1974 level in real terms and parity for part-time lecturers in pay and conditions.

The offer consists of a sliding scale to the effect that a basic rate lecturer (on L1 grade) would receive between 4 per cent and 6 per cent whereas a Principal lecturer would receive 13 to 16 per cent.

This would create an even wider gap between the low paid lecturers and the highly paid top senior lecturers.

A secret ballot was held in each of the West-Midlands colleges with the result that almost all took some form of strike action. In Birmingham eight out of nine colleges voted to withdraw from giving lecturers unless covering exams. Also to go on the picket lines in the morning and then attend a rally in Wolverhampton at lunch time.

By Mark Sholl
(Further Education Labour Students national committee and chair, Garretts Green Labour Club)

At Garretts Green college in Birmingham only a handful of members went into teach and most of them were covering exams. Also many students stayed at home due to the students union and Labour club publicising the lecturers' action and gaining them support.

One of the Natfhe branch secretaries said: "The present position for part-time lecturers is intolerable, with many asked to do extra hours for the same pay or

Part-timers

risk not being taken on again. We receive none of the benefits that the full time lecturers get such as holidays and pension schemes.

"All we want is a fair deal



Birmingham Natfhe rally.

for all our members and a decent pay rise that brings us back to the level that we used to be at. This action is just the start, just wait until the new term in September."

A lot of part-time lecturers have to sign on during the summer so the hope is, among many of them, that they can get a reasonable settlement before too long.

About 700 attended the

rally, from all over the region. Most of the speakers talked about the Tories' attacks on education starting with the long running dispute with the teachers. Now it seems Natfhe is in the firing line.

The overwhelming view from the rally was that a Labour victory is needed if there is to be any hope for the education system in this

country.

Natfhe national conference in Blackpool has voted to ballot on stepping up the action, including a rolling programme of selective strikes starting on 2 June. It also voted for industrial action in defence of members sacked by Hereford and Worcester Education Authority.

British Coal attacks Treeton

THE NUM branch at Treeton colliery has been informed by the management of the Coal Board's intention to reduce output and cut the workforce by 200 men.

They say it's because of a lack of reserves. However, in 1979 by the Board's own admission there was 30 years reserves in the colliery and £20 million has been spent on a new drift and washer.

Only last year men were transferred from Cortonwood, Brookhouse, Wath and Cadeby to strengthen the workforce and once again the Board told the men that there was eight to ten years' working life left in the pit.

Last year almost £1 million was spent on a new ventilation shaft. This new investment is now operating at only 50 per cent capacity. More money was spent on an underground electricity sub-station at the bottom of the drift and this is thought to have been the first of its kind in Europe if not the world.

Reserves falsified

By the stroke of a planners' pen coal reserves are being written off by the Board. Currently S-31 face is third in the national league table for faces of this type.

We have also been told that the Haigh Moor seam development is only going

to work on three faces on the right hand side and we know that there is at least the same on the left. There are substantial areas of coal elsewhere but we are told that these are not viable propositions.

A morale shrinking exercise has now begun with almost daily rumours of transfers and redundancies with no known sources. The men at Treeton accept that because mining is an extractive industry pits will inevitably close, however, we also know that there is plenty of mileage left in Treeton and we are determined that it will not close because of the Board's economic madness.

H&D Letchworth win

A THREE day strike by over 40 Asian and white workers at H&D Plastics factory in Letchworth, Herts looks to have won a victory against victimisation. A TGWU member, R. Ullah was suspended after refusing to operate a machine. The foreman was breaking an agreement that no worker should be moved to another machine after working six hours on it. In this case R Ullah had been on the machine for ten hours.

He was sent home and then suspended. It took three hours for management to decide to send him home. On the Thursday morning when he arrived for work the works manager took a statement from him and then suspended him without pay. Anger mounted in the factory and led to a walk-out and picket. The assistant works manager said "off the record" that the foreman was in the wrong but if R Ullah would say he was in the wrong the company would squash the suspension.

The union representatives delivered their demands to management and were agreed. The demands and the worker's appeal will be heard with a district union official and union representatives in attendance.

By Stephen Mulholland (TGWU 1/0771).

Militant

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Broadgreen rallies to Labour

"I DIDN'T join the Labour Party to manage capitalism, but to represent the class I came from" declared Terry Fields MP to enthusiastic applause, at the launch of his campaign for re-election as the Labour MP for Liverpool, Broadgreen.

Over 400 local people, only half of them managing to get seats, packed into a school hall in Liverpool Broadgreen, to hear Terry Fields and Tony Benn MPs call for a Labour victory on 11 June.

Kids on bikes, families with babies, elderly couples, firemen in uniform fresh from canvassing and many other men and women from the Dovecot area.

All these people turned out on a sunny Saturday evening at only a day's notice. The feature of the meeting was the understanding and enthusiasm of ordinary people for socialist ideas.

Enthusiastic

Paul Lucock, chairing the meeting, introduced himself as "one of the surcharged and disqualified 47 Labour councillors" and was greeted with prolonged applause. That set the tone for the whole meeting.

Terry Fields: "One elderly woman asked what Labour was going to do about the people who really control society - the bosses. I pointed out that a Party conference resolution was once passed to nationalise 25 of the top monopolies. She asked 'what's happening with the other 75 per cent?' (applause and nods of agreement).

"You're an extremist if you fight for jobs, for hospitals, you're all militants for fighting back." (nods of agreement).

LABOUR 53 per cent, Tories 25 per cent, Alliance 19 per cent of those who intend to vote. This result of a poll in Broadgreen for Radio City in Liverpool echoes the enthusiasm of voters to kick out the Tories, demonstrated at the Broadgreen meeting.

The result represents a strengthening of the Labour vote. Canvassers for the Labour Party however, will not leave it to the pollsters to decide the result of the general election, but this will encourage them to work all the harder to ensure Terry Fields' victory.

"I'm not a careerist...elect a Marxist, a socialist" (deafening applause, cheers, whistles).

Howard Lewis from the Labour Party Young Socialists described the misery of youth unemployment and appealed to the young people at the meeting to join the YS campaign to get Terry re-elected.

Tony Benn made his position clear: "I will not rest until the 47 councillors have their disqualification removed, along with the sacked and victimised miners" (prolonged applause, cheers).

He took up the Tory preoccupation with 'Defence'. "Everyone in Britain pays three times as much for the army as they do for the fire brigade, the ambulance service and the police. Does anyone here seriously believe you are three times more likely to be invaded by the red army than to need an ambulance or fire engine or the police?" (laughter, loud applause)

Tony finally received a standing ovation when he called for every



The march around Dovecot, in Broadgreen, generated a huge amount of support and interest in the public meeting later that day.

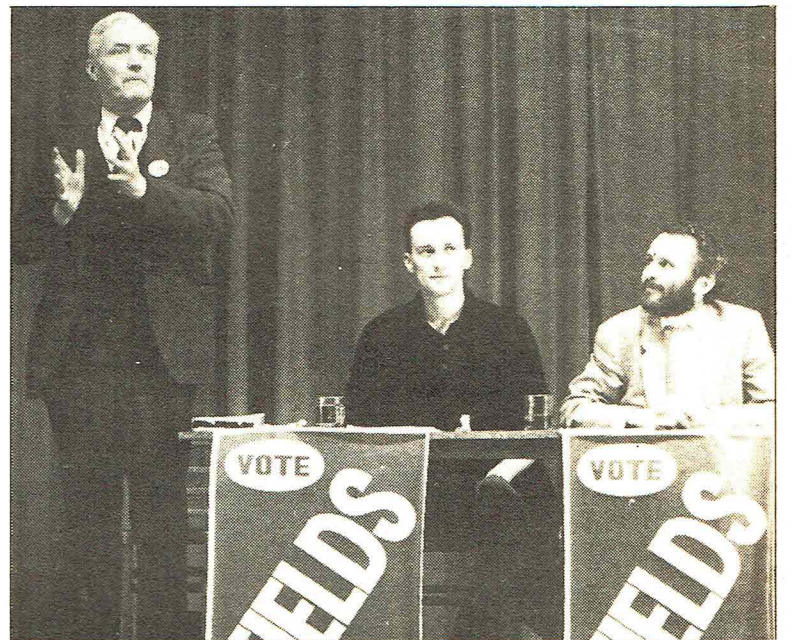
section of British society and for workers in every country to unite "We have the power to change society" (applause, standing ovation).

The enthusiasm of working class people, ordinary voters, for socialist ideas was plain to see. The meeting was a crushing answer to all the sceptics who believe that socialism scares voters away.

"I haven't voted in 15 years" said one woman leaving the meeting "but when Tony Benn said the people in South Africa were dying for the right to vote I made up my mind I had to do something."

If Labour campaigns like this throughout the country, the only people who will be 'scared' away will be the Tories. They would be scared away not only from Merseyside but from 10 Downing Street too!

By Anne Lewin

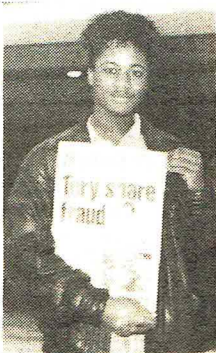


The socialist ideas put forward by Terry Fields and Tony Benn were greeted with rapturous applause—so much for socialism 'scaring voters off.'

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- A minimum wage of £120 a week tied to the cost of living for all, including sick and disabled people.
- A socialist plan of production democratically drawn up and implemented by committees involving the

- trade unions, shop stewards, the unwaged 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 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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