

Militant

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Labour Party Conference
Militant Meeting

Tuesday 29 September,
7.00pm. Wagner Hall, Brighton

Speakers: Peter Taaffe,
Ted Grant, Tony Mulhearn,
John Macreadie

TUC Conference '87

Workers need right to strike

John Macreadie speaks to Militant

"THE TRADE union movement is the only thing standing in the way of Thatcher's cheap labour economy," said John Macreadie, deputy general secretary of the Civil and Public Services Association after the debate at this week's Trade Union Congress on 'no strike deals.' "If we want to fight for decent pay and conditions, we can't negotiate away our right to strike."

Some right wing union leaders, particularly Hammond of the EETPU, have been negotiating single-union deals with employers, promising strike-free workplaces in exchange for marginal benefits. The TUC took no action against these union leaders apart from referring the question to a review body looking at ways of projecting "positive images of trade unionism."

"They have been papering over fundamental differences," John Macreadie said. "They are more interested in a show of unity at the top than in building real unity in action against the millionaires and Tories."

"The EETPU leaders are crystal clear they are not going to change their policies of cynical collaboration with the employers, throw-

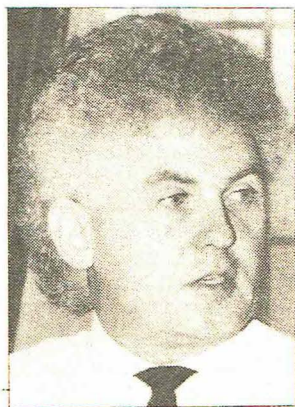
ing themselves at the bosses' feet to get a few members. Workers have always had to fight for their rights, for decent wages and conditions; they have never got anywhere by throwing away their right to strike.

Pressure

"We want unity but not the type which wipes out the gains made by trade unionists over a century and a half.

"The left leaders on the general council and review body need to keep up the pressure to make sure this review is finalised quickly with no concessions to the class collaborationists.

"The TUC can be a million miles removed from the problems of the work-



John Macreadie.

ing people it is supposed to represent." John Macreadie concluded. "So many visitors' tickets have gone out to the press and employers that any working people on holiday in Blackpool here wouldn't be able to get in."

Trade union members should keep their leaders in touch with reality by sending resolutions demanding that the TUC bans 'no strike' deals and uses the strength and solidarity of the trade union movement to defend workers' interests.

★ ★ ★

★ 55 delegates and visitors heard John Macreadie and Tony Mulhearn speak at the TUC Militant Readers Meeting on Thursday. £1050 was raised for the Fighting Fund.

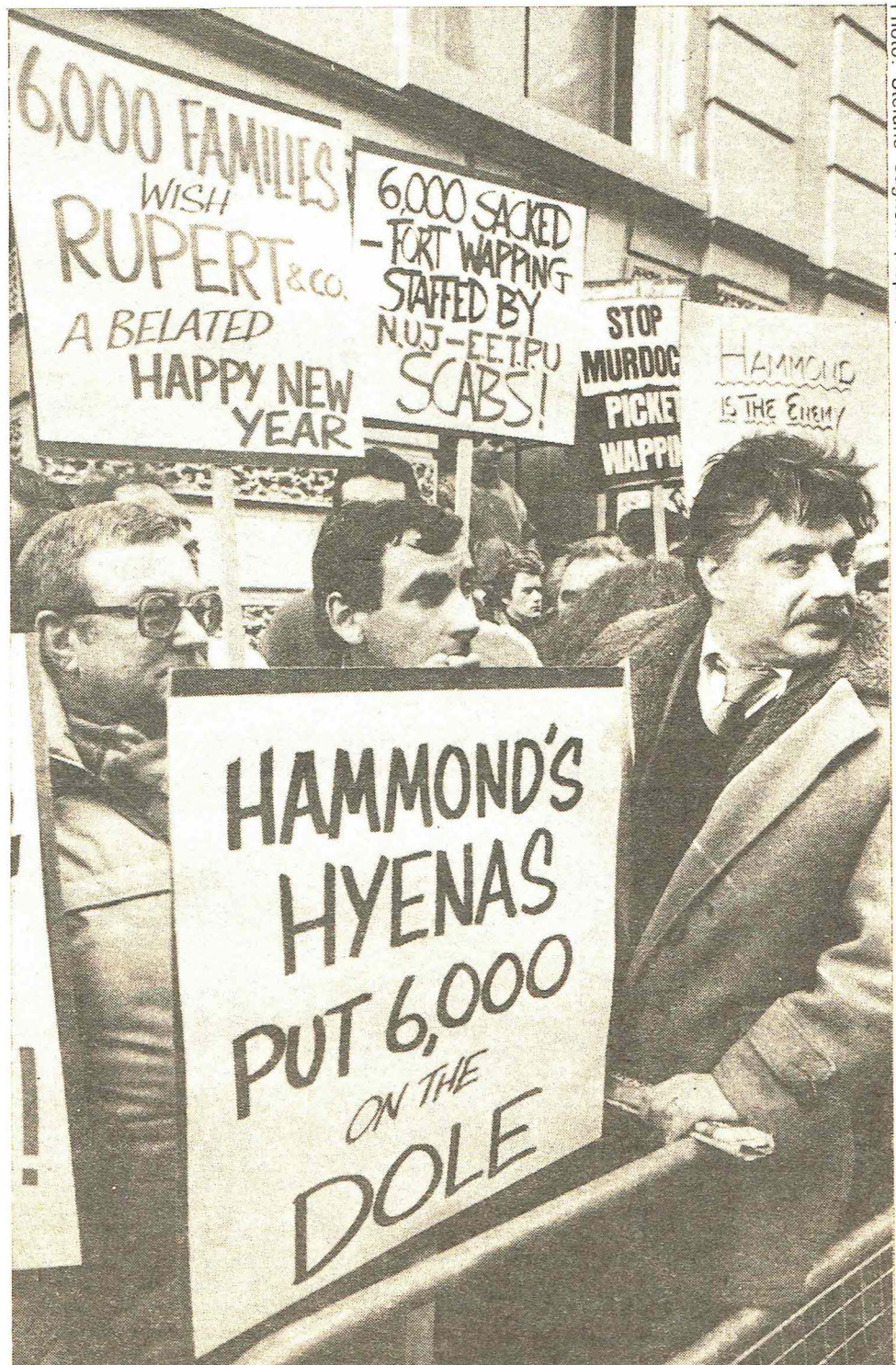


Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)

Printworkers lobby TUC last year for action against EETPU leaders organising scabs at Murdoch's Wapping Plant.

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Militant

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Class collaboration—old unrealism

THE CONTROVERSY over 'no-strike' agreements should have been the opportunity for the TUC leadership to re-assert its commitment to the basic principles of trade unionism. Instead the issue was ducked by referring it to a review body which will examine all aspects of trade unionism.

These agreements are not some new Japanese-style innovation, bringing the unions up to date, but an attempt to return to very old ideas of class collaboration. Like the Japanese capitalists today, Sir Alfred Mond, Chairman of ICI in the late 1920s, after the defeat of the 1926 general strike, put it to the TUC that "the common interests which bind us are more powerful than the apparently divergent interests that separate".

The right-wing leaders of the TUC in 1928 swallowed his argument, and the 'Mond-Turner' talks which followed set the pattern for right-wing unions leaders to collaborate with management for years to come.

At the heart of this approach is the lie that workers and management have a common interest in increasing production and profits. If an employer is prepared to be reasonable and negotiate with the unions, the argument goes, then the workers will have no need to resort to strike action and all will benefit from the firm's success. Rather than relying on the indispensability of their labour and the strength of their organisation, workers are asked to trust their bosses to safeguard their interests.

In boom periods, some large firms can maintain the illusion, by giving their workforce a small share of their rising profits. But when recession comes, and the bosses are looking for redundancies and wage cuts, the workers are left with no protection.

Freed from the threat of strike action, employers can trample on workers' rights in the pursuit of profit. Wapping is the inevitable outcome of such class collaboration. As Murdoch's *News International* breaks all records in profitability, squeezed from the labour of its 'strike-free' workforce, even one of the EETPU's recruiting sergeants of scab labour has packed in his job, in despair at the tyrannical regime in Fortress Wapping.

The TUC has condemned its general council for refusing to act against the EETPU. But if more Wappings are to be prevented, it cannot be left to the general council. Their dodging of the 'no-strike' issue will give the green light for unions like the EETPU to press ahead with more such deals over the next six months. Even members of unions which oppose them, in the absence of a clear lead from the TUC, may be forced by their employers to accept similar agreements.

A campaign must be launched to ensure that the TUC's review body comes out firmly against any more deals which deprive trade unionists of their birthright, the right to strike. Union activists, through the building of strong Broad Lefts within every union, need to take the issue to every worker. The rank-and-file activists must step into the breach left by the TUC's abdication of leadership and rally the membership in a fight to defend trade unionism.

That is the way that the decline in membership will be halted. Low-interest credit cards, discounts and fringe benefits are all very well, but they will not recruit the lowest paid workers who are most in need of trade unionism. A fraternal address to the TUC was given by Lane Kirkland of the AFL/CIO, the American union federation, which has relied heavily on such 'marketing services' to build union membership.

He claimed that "this is the most stimulating time in modern trade union history" and Norman Willis seems to want to model the TUC on the AFL/CIO. Yet even other right-wing union leaders were warning of the danger of the TUC suffering the same drastic decline in members as the US unions. This decline is the result of a right-wing (even gangster) leadership, which has negotiated huge wage concessions from their members to save their bosses' profits.

There is no short-cut to a strong trade union movement. Only a commitment to struggle against the bosses for a living wage and decent conditions, backed up by strike action if necessary, will inspire the unorganised to join the ranks of the unions.

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Reject bosses' deals

FROM THE very start it was clear that the main issue at this year's Trades Union Congress was what kind of trade unions did workers need.

Would the unions fight or would they throw away their hard won rights in a vain attempt to beg the capitalist class for a better deal?

This key question came to the fore on the first morning as miners' leader Arthur Scargill and CPSA deputy general secretary John Macreadie challenged the platform on the issue of 'one union' deals with 'no strike' provisions.

The CPSA had put forward a motion firmly opposing one union deals and committing the TUC to build solidarity action in support of other unions who breached Tory laws. But the composite did not mention 'no strike' deals or solidarity action!

When the composite was discussed, Jimmy Knapp of the largest railworkers' union NUR, attacked the

From Ian Parker in Blackpool

government's ban on unions at GCHQ. But there was no strategy for stopping future Tory attacks.

John Macreadie pointed out that it was the lack of coordinated action after the first ban at GCHQ which gave new courage to the Tories and the employers and led to later attacks such as Wapping.

In moving reference back John Macreadie made the point that the CPSA NEC had not agreed to the composite and insisted that the resolution stood by itself. More importantly the TUC needed to make a decision now on this issue. There could be no fudging.

What did the millions of workers watching the TUC think of the debate on trade

union organisation? Most would have been annoyed and puzzled over the Congress' decision not to hear the CPSA motion and vote upon the eight separate resolutions. The Tories and bosses will be delighted by the result.

Inaction

The TUC leaders hoped that their inaction would present a united moderate image. But as the delegate from the SCPS pointed out, the TUC is merely storing up trouble for the future. John Macreadie explained that all our experience shows if you give the employers an inch they will take a mile.

Very few delegates seemed to recognise the fundamental division between the working class and capitalism which produces the class struggle, the "confrontation" which the right wing (and some of the left) were trying desper-

rately to avoid.

They may have avoided a real debate at this conference but they will be unable to avoid the ravages of the Tories. Despite years of the TUC leaders begging the bosses to listen to them, delegates recited an almost endless catalogue of Tory attacks which have been made more savage by the timidity of the generals of the TUC.

The ruling class's response to the 1984/85 miners' strike showed they had carefully planned to take on the whole trade union movement. If the movement does not now aggressively prepare to defend its members' rights, then the next year will be another year of bitter struggle for large sections of workers.

Commitment

Left leaders like Ron Todd, Rodney Bickerstaffe etc, alongside Arthur Scargill and John Macreadie now have to continue the fight within the general council, not only against one union deals but to give an unambiguous lead to millions of workers waiting for the word.

John Macreadie's call should be the guideline for workers: "Not one inch further. We must repledge our commitment to fight the Tories and the employers, with industrial action if necessary."

Whose conference is it?

THE THOUSAND delegates are way outnumbered by the 1600 visitors from the press and bosses' organisations. Over 50 stands from various organisations and companies are on show.

Although some of these are organisations like Guide Dogs for the Blind and GCHQ trade unions, it reflects the TUC's present new realism (try and get the bosses on our side) that capitalist firms are given a showcase.

A number of strikers lobbied Congress

for support. Whereas ICL, British Telecom, British Nuclear Fuels and even the armed services were permitted stalls, albeit at a cost of £2500, strikers from disputes such as Moat House Hotels and Senior Coleman engineering were refused access to conference and denied permission to set up stalls.

Incredibly Senior Coleman strikers were told it would be £20 to gain admission and £1500 to set up a stall!

Surcharged councillors need your support

A BOMBSHELL letter has been received by each of the 47 surcharged Liverpool councillors. Their solicitors have starkly reported that the repayment of the surcharge and costs will be linked and must be repaid at £4000 a month.

These are much harsher terms than accountants had said were possible. Bankruptcy faces the 47 individual councillors and their families. They must now make a decision or face immediate bankruptcy proceedings. Even at this extortionate rate the debt of £350,000 would take over six years

to repay. Any month that was missed would mean that the full debt was enforced.

"The auditor is acting ruthlessly and showing no sympathy or understanding of our fundraising efforts" says 47 defence fund treasurer Tony Hudd. "Ex-councillors and their families now face the real and immediate prospect of losing their homes, possessions and livelihoods. These are councillors who were elected to protect the living conditions of the working class in Liverpool. They must be defended."

The surcharged councillors meet on 21 September to make their collective decision. It is now the responsibility of the movement to raise the cash and standing orders urgently. The 47 got in this position as a result of carrying out election promises. Now the labour movement has a duty to defend them.

Rush cash donations to: Liverpool 47 Defence Fund, c/o MTCURC, Hardman St, Liverpool.

Standing orders to a/c no 502 111 95 at the Co-operative Bank Liverpool branch.

Labour Conference Agenda

Stop the 'Pessimist Tendency'

INEVITABLY THE general election dominates this year's Labour Party Conference agenda, which has just been published. Of 495 resolutions, 65 deal with the lessons of the election or with electoral reform.

By Davy Brown

But some sections of the Party (the 'pessimist tendency') have drawn entirely the wrong conclusions from the election, and want to water down further the Party's socialist policies. Thus an amendment, which undoubtedly has the backing of the Party leadership, from the soft-left led NUPE, calls for a 'review of the Party's poli-

cies...In this review the Party must listen to the groups we hope to win".

This is the thinly disguised code for the Kinnock/Gould approach to determining Party policy - socialism is reduced to what cannot be neatly packaged and sold to the electorate.

In stark contrast the resolution from Coventry SE Labour Party notes "the largest overall swings to Labour where the socialist message was most clearly and distinctly championed". It urges the Party to avoid presidential-style campaigning, cease purges and attacks on members and to clearly exclude any idea of a pact with the Liberals.

Given the dire crisis facing the



Will they keep the Red Flag flying here?

world economy and the experience of failure of socialist governments in Europe, how could Labour hope to solve the problems of working people without full socialism? And the section of the agenda on the economy is dominated by resolutions putting forward the programme of Marxism.

Socialist policy

Liverpool Walton Labour Party demands the nationalisation of the major "companies together

with the banks and insurance companies under democratic workers' control and management".

Local government could also be a key debate at the Conference with all the attacks being waged by the Tories. Liverpool West Derby calls upon the leadership "to convene a conference of Labour councillors and trades unionists to co-ordinate opposition to the Tories' proposals".

In the Party structure section the majority of resolutions are opposed to any tampering with

the rules for mandatory reselection of MPs, and reject one member, one vote. Sheffield Heeley, for example, reminds the Party leadership that by raising this issue again they are "in defiance of Composite Resolution 39 which was carried by a substantial majority at the 1986 Conference."

While on witch-hunting socialists from the Party there is a single resolution, from the infamous Ogmores CLP currently involved with the attempt to expel Welsh NUM activist, Ian Isaac.

Bangladesh floods

Who is to blame?

ONE IN five Bangladeshis, 24 million people, have been made homeless or left without food, by the worst floods in 40 years to hit this, one of the poorest countries in the world. Yet in northern and western India, 250 million are short of drinking water, thousands of animals have died and crops are at risk, from a desperate drought.

By Jeremy Birch

Despite all the skills, the science, technique and vast resources that the capitalist world has developed, the poor of the earth are still as much at the mercy of the elements as they must have been in biblical times.

What could be achieved in irrigation, dams, reforestation and schemes to protect and preserve topsoil, if some of the \$1,000 billion squandered each year by the nations of the world on arms, was devoted to rural development?

In Bangladesh four and half million acres of land have been devastated, at the very time when the vital rice crop should be planted. When floods deluged agricultural land in 1974, half a million perished in the ensuing famine. Those most at risk are the landless who will now be unable to find paid employment from which to buy food. The poor small farmers will be compelled to sell cheap their waterlogged landholdings to get food.



Flood damage in Bangladeshi village.

But the flood waters are not just some 'act of God'. The annual monsoon floods in low-lying Bangladesh have been dangerously exacerbated by the destruction of the forests in Nepal and North India. Half of Nepal's woodlands have been cut down in the last 25 years. With the trees that bound the topsoil to the hillside gone, the rains wash away more than 10 tons from every acre of bare slope.

Unstoppable tide

This soil clogs up the shallow channels of the Ganges basin in Bangladesh. An unstoppable tide of brown rain water drains south, leaving the people of the north with too little and those in Bangladesh swamped. Within 10 years every Indian state will face a water crisis due to deforestation.

But a single rainforest tree is worth \$1,000 in precious foreign exchange, and up to \$17,000 once it has been put to use in expensive panelling or luxury yachts. The big logging companies make their killing out of dead wood.

The landless, desperate to find somewhere not owned by the big landlords, push on further into the forest. They have no choice but to damage their future, cutting back the woodland and depleting the soil, in order to stay alive today. Others with no access to alternative fuels, burn up the precious timber stock.

Dire poverty and lack of modern agricultural technique is ruining the very land that millions depend on. For the impoverished of India and Bangladesh, socialism in the under-developed and the developed world, really is a matter of life and death.

Racism strikes Dewsbury schools

TWO YEARS since the affair surrounding Bradford headmaster, Ray Honeyford and his racist comments, another row has broken out in nearby Dewsbury involving racism in schools.

By Jai Agarwalla

White parents of 26 Dewsbury children are refusing to allow their children to attend Headfield Middle School where 93 per cent of pupils are Asian. Instead they wish to send them to Overthorpe Church of England School at Thornehill, which is predominantly white.

The parents who are at the centre of the row had selected Overthorpe school as their first choice. They claim that Headfield School will "affect the educational and cultural upbringing of their children". They have even called for a boycott of Headfield School and one white parent who has refused to respect this boycott has apparently received considerable harassment.

They deny any racism, saying they are merely concerned to preserve English culture for their children. But apart from some allegations about Headfield which have been refuted, they cannot explain this, other than prejudice about their children being educated with Asians.

Headfield is a Church of England school, where Christmas is celebrated, and all lessons are taught in English. In fact not one teacher can even speak an Asian language. Most of the Asian children are second or third generation immigrants, some of whose parents are ex-Headfield pupils. The parents claim there is an empty classroom at Overthorpe. But the local educational authority is refusing to give way. Even Tory Education Secretary, Kenneth Baker, has had to accept that the authority is not acting 'unreasonably' under existing law.

But right wing reactionaries have jumped on the affair. The town's former Tory MP, John Wickfield, has been leading the

campaign. Honeyford has also intervened, claiming that his stand against multi-cultural education is now justified. Kenneth Baker has utilised the press hysteria to promote his parental choice policy. By saying that with the new powers he intends to give himself he would support these parents, he is effectively condoning their actions.

With his Education Bill, due to be enacted in 1989, parents will be able to insist on the school of their choice providing it has the capacity. This would only aggravate situations like Dewsbury, and it would allow a freer rein to any racialism among white parents. Many will believe this was Baker's intent. After all there are not many Tory votes to be won from working class Asians.

Labour must defend multi-cultural education

Over the Dewsbury case, some local orthodox Muslim leaders have said they support white parents and are demanding separate Muslim schools. This divisive demand must be completely opposed by the labour movement, it would only feed racial disharmony.

But the backdrop to the whole affair is not just racism but the whole rotten Tory education system. With proper funding of all schools, with more staff and resources, a good education could be guaranteed for black and white children. Genuine multi-cultural education would be possible where children benefit from the best aspects of different cultures, and special problems like language teaching could be adequately dealt with.

WORKERS FOR SOCIALISM



Campaign for Labour Movement Democracy & Socialism

Meetings: - Cardiff Saturday 12 September 2.00 p.m. St. Asaph Room, St. David's Hall. Hear - Dave Nellist MP, Muriel Browning, Doreen Purvis.

ASTMS/TASS Merger Conference, Harrow. Saturday 19 September, lunchtime. Joint WFS/BLOC meeting, hear - Terry Fields MP & BLOC speakers. Brighton, Eve of LP Conference Rally. Sunday 27 September

7.30 p.m. Brighton Youth Centre. Hear - Eric Heffer MP, Dave Nellist MP, Terry Fields MP, John Macreadie.

Maesteg Monday 5 October 7.30 p.m. Maesteg Town Hall. Hear - Terry Fields MP, Ian Isaac.

Get your Labour Party or union branch to sponsor Workers for Socialism. Contact - Organising Secretary: Dave Campbell, 256A Halley Road, London E12 6UA.

Fight for a socialist Scottish assembly

AS THE Tory Party in Scotland still bathes its wounds after the massacre of 11 June, the momentum for a Scottish assembly has continued to gather force. Opinion polls show that four out of every five Scots are in favour of some form of devolution, an enormous increase in support for an assembly since the 1979 referendum.

At the same time every major political party in Scotland except the Tories has called for some form of home rule. The Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC), the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), the Church of Scotland, the Catholic Church and virtually every section of the media have added their voice to the growing clamour for an elected assembly. Even a section of the Tory Party, "a minority within a minority", has appealed to Thatcher to concede some measure of autonomy.

On the surface this would appear to be an impressive display of unity across a wide social and political spectrum. In reality, however, this broad alliance is no more than a fragile facade, concealing a variety of conflicting interests.

For the pro-devolutionist minority within the Tory Party, an Edinburgh parliament would be no more than a toothless talking shop, economically and politically subservient to Westminster. On the other hand, the Scottish National Party see a Scottish assembly as a stepping stone to the political and economic dismemberment of Britain.

For a section of the middle class and especially for a layer of ambitious political activists, the compelling attraction of devolution is that it would open up a glittering new career structure of parliamentary seats, research posts, and administrative positions.

On the other hand the vast majority of Labour supporters in the working-class heartlands of Scotland are in favour of an assembly because they see it as a potential escape route

By Alan McCombes

from the nightmare of rising unemployment, growing poverty, crumbling social services and industrial dereliction.

But the prospect of another tier of government in and of itself will generate little enthusiasm. Only if the idea of a Scottish assembly is linked to the social and economic transformation of Scotland can there be any possibility of drawing the mass of the population into an active campaign.

Yet astoundingly, the leadership of the labour and trade union movement has contrived to 'depoliticise' the campaign for an assembly by reducing it to a purely constitutional question deprived of any social or economic content.

Collaboration

A recent statement by the 'Campaign for a Scottish Assembly'—now dominated by the Labour Coordinating Committee (LCC) declared that "the campaign cannot be associated with a single party or a particular social or economic interest." Similarly the Communist Party, which retains some influence in the Scottish trade union movement has issued a leaflet calling for "all political parties in Scotland to put aside legitimate differences on this and other issues in the interests of a united campaign for a Scottish Assembly."

At the 'Festival for Scottish Democracy' on 12 September, organised jointly by the STUC and Labour Party, the two main speakers are Brian Gould MP and Russell Johnston,



Demonstration in Glasgow in support of the workers' occupation of the Caterpillar factory. Photo: Patricia Moore

Chairman of the Scottish Liberals and an arch enemy of the labour and trade union movement.

This unifying strategy of collaboration with the most vicious opponents of the labour movement represents a step backwards. Even in the 1979 referendum Labour ran its own independent campaign.

In a recent interview in the magazine *Radical Scotland*, Glasgow Hillhead MP, George Galloway, attacked the 1979 campaign on the grounds that the decision to run a separate campaign was 'disastrous'.

The failure of the referendum to produce a decisive pro-devolution majority was undoubtedly a setback, but it is preposterous to suggest that this was as a result of Labour running an independent campaign.

In reality, Labour failed to inspire massive enthusiasm for an assembly in 1979 firstly because of the ineffectual milk-and-water character of the proposed

assembly, and secondly because of the extreme unpopularity of the right-wing Labour government which produced these proposals.

The prospect of an emasculated Edinburgh parliament dominated by Labour's right wing aroused little passion among the Scottish working class and led to huge abstentions in the referendum.

Confusion

Moreover, the sabotage by Labour leaders like Robin Cook, Brian Wilson, Tam Dalyell and Norman and Janey Buchan, who combined with the Tories to obstruct Labour's devolution proposals, undoubtedly created further confusion and scepticism among Labour's supporters.

Today after eight years of Thatcher government in Westminster, virtually all of the former opponents of devolution in the Scottish labour movement have belatedly come round to accepting the idea. And La-

bour has achieved an almost unassailable position in Scotland, winning 50 out of 72 parliamentary seats, and in the period after the election, further increasing its support to 53 per cent, according to recent opinion polls.

From this powerful position, the leadership of the labour and trade union movement must declare openly that the Tories have no mandate to implement their ruinous policies in Scotland. A socialist crusade should be launched immediately to mobilise into action the 30 Labour-controlled local authorities, the 913,000 trade unionists and the 1,250,000 Labour voters, linking the fight for a Scottish assembly with the struggle to transform society in a socialist direction.

The Scottish labour movement is at a decisive turning point. Since 1979, one industry after another has been flattened and local authorities and health boards systematically starved of resources.

Up until now, the leadership of the movement has organised no serious resistance. Even in the last few weeks the two largest local authorities, Strathclyde and Lothian Regional Councils, have both agreed to massive cutbacks totalling tens of millions of pounds.

Diversion

Moreover, to the immense relief of Thatcher and Rifkind, COSLA, with a crushing Labour preponderance, has now decided to end its policy of non-compliance with the notorious poll tax and to resume talks with the Scottish Office. This shameful strategy of capitulation must be forcibly challenged by the rank and file.

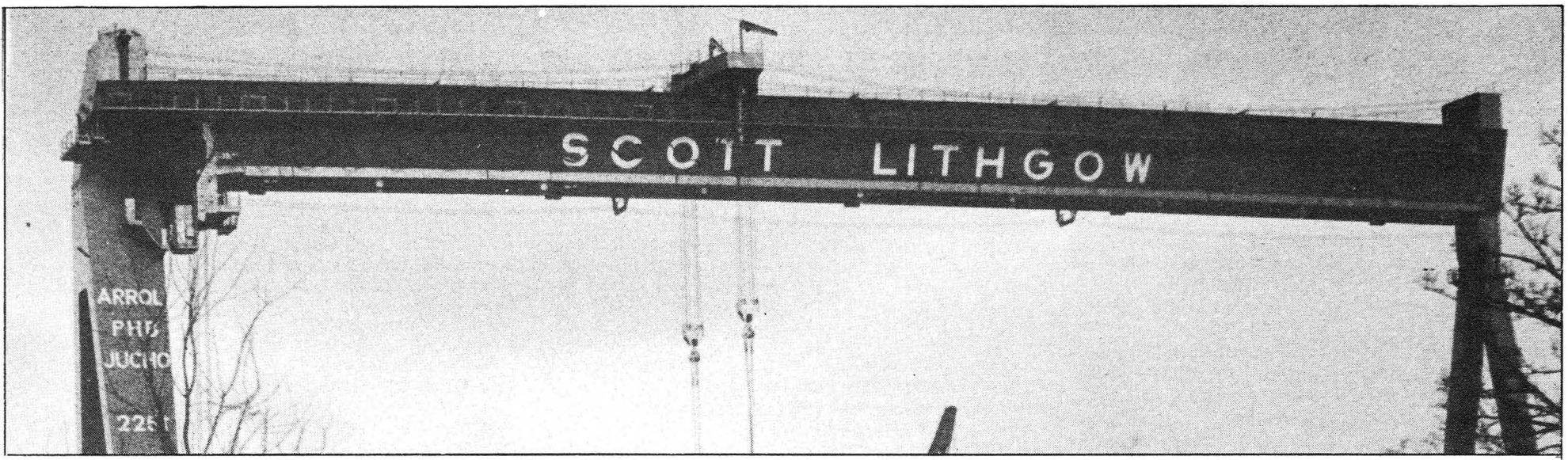
Strathclyde Regional Council alone represents a population larger than that of Nicaragua. With a gigantic majority of 87 to the Tories' six, it could have been turned into a mighty bulwark of opposition to the Tory government.

But Strathclyde's 'mode-

Most deprived part of Britain

UNDER THATCHER, many areas of Scotland have been reduced to near third world conditions. The Grieve Report, published at the end of 1986, described Glasgow as "the most economically and socially deprived area in Britain." The same report revealed that 70 per cent of all households in the city have a gross total income of less than £100 per week and one in three homes have an income of less than £50 per week. As one Glasgow MP described the situation: "Thousands of families are living only a giro cheque away from starvation."

These poverty conditions are paralleled in Dundee, in many parts of Edinburgh and in hundreds of devastated ex-mining communities throughout central Scotland. Scotland now has the highest number of children in care and the largest prison population in western Europe. It also has the highest mortality rate of any region of the UK, and Glasgow itself has the distinction of being the lung cancer and heart disease capital of the world.



Scott Lithgow shipyard, under shadow of closure.



Tam Dalyell—anti devolutionist.



Malcolm Rifkind—Secretary of State.



Glasgow street scene.

Photos: Dave Sinclair

gether with the LCC left, appear to have been cowed rate' Labour leaders, to-by the Thatcher government.

Ironically the LCC vociferously advocates the setting up of a Scottish assembly while simultaneously quaking in fear at the prospect of an all-out confrontation with the Tories. What is the purpose of an assembly if not to defend Scotland against the ravages of Thatcherism?

Even if there had been an assembly since 1979, if it had acted in the same way as Strathclyde Regional Council and slavishly submitted to every decree and dictate of the Tory government in Westminster, then for the vast majority of people in Scotland, its existence would not have made a millimetre of difference.

For certain sections of the labour movement, the campaign for an assembly has served as a convenient diversion from the harder task of engaging in battle with the Tories in defence of jobs, services and living standards.

Moreover, by separating the question of devolution from the burning day-to-day problems which dominate the lives of the majority of working-class people, the campaign for an assembly is itself likely to end in failure.

The idea that Thatcher can be persuaded to change her mind in response to the pressure of respectable public opinion is a complete delusion.

It is interesting to note that in the early 1970s the Tory party itself was emphatically pro-devolution, while the Labour Party was implacably opposed. Over the past decade, however, the attitude of the Tory

Party has changed dramatically. This stems from the collapse of Toryism in Scotland and their understanding that they can never again become the major force in Scottish politics.

As the right-wing Tory MP Michael Forsyth put it: "a Scottish assembly would guarantee a Labour administration in Scotland for the foreseeable future".

For the same reason that the Tory government dismantled the GLC and the metropolitan counties in England, which drew together large centres of population under Labour control and represented potentially formidable bastions of opposition to the Tory government, Thatcher will not now countenance a Scottish assembly.

Hong Kong

A left-wing administration in Edinburgh coming into conflict with a Tory government in London would pose a potentially more explosive situation than in Liverpool in 1984-5.

With twelve times the population of Liverpool and with all the major oil fields as well as a number of key nuclear and non-nuclear military bases located in Scotland, the possibility of a left-wing Scottish assembly, perhaps influenced by the ideas of Marxism, sends shockwaves through the ranks of the British establishment.

In the same interview in *Radical Scotland*, George Galloway draws a parallel with Rhodesia and Hong Kong, claiming that just as Thatcher was prepared to come to an agreement on these issues, she could be made to see sense on the question of Scottish devolution.

However there can be no serious comparison with the situation in Scotland. In Rhodesia the Thatcher government was faced with a mass armed guerrilla movement, the likely destruction of the Rhodesian state and the probable wiping out of all British investments in the country.

At the eleventh hour, in order to salvage something out of the situation, the Tory government concluded a deal with the guerrilla leadership which led to the setting up of Zimbabwe under black majority rule.

In the Far East, the main factor which drove Thatcher to sign an agreement transferring the sovereignty of Hong Kong over to China in 1999 is the potentially vast Chinese market, which is much more important to British capitalism than sovereignty over Hong Kong.

In other words, wherever the Tories have made concessions it has invariably been to safeguard the strategic interests of British capitalism. Setting up a Scottish assembly at this stage would be in direct opposition to the interests of the British ruling class. Rather than make concessions to Scotland, the Thatcher government is more likely to seek revenge for the humiliation they suffered on 11 June.

Already Scotland is being turned into a laboratory for experiments with some of the most hare-brained schemes devised by the Tories. These include not only the poll tax, but the wholesale privatisation of public housing under the 'Scottish Homes' scheme (see *Militant* 861) and now the 'Parent Power' plan, a recipe for chaos in education, under which control

over schools would be removed from local authorities and placed in the hands of individual 'school boards'.

In addition, the Tories have cast a dark shadow over the future of Ravenscraig, Scott Lithgow and Govan Shipbuilders, three of the largest remaining industrial workplaces in Scotland.

Thatcher will not back down on any of these issues, nor on the devolution, which would deprive them of the power to continue implementing any of these 'experiments', unless compelled to do so by a mighty mass movement of the Scottish working class.

Socialism

But if that movement is to be mobilised, the role of the leadership will be decisive. If the Labour Party Scottish executive and the Scottish TUC General Council together issued a call for a mid-week 24-hour general strike and day of action, around the demand for the end to Tory rule in Scotland and for a socialist Scottish assembly, such a call would undoubtedly receive a powerful echo.

Combined with a massive publicity campaign of millions of leaflets and posters, of mass meetings in every factory, office and college, of public meetings in every town, village and housing scheme in Scotland, such a day of action could bring hundreds of thousands on to the streets in a formidable show of strength.

This would transform the political atmosphere not only in Scotland, but throughout Britain and would lay the basis for a sustained offensive against the Tories.

If at the same time, Scotland's 30 Labour-controlled councils refused to implement the poll tax or administer Tory spending cuts, then Thatcher's hirelings in the Scottish Office would be confronted with a political and administrative nightmare.

In the face of such a generalised political and industrial rebellion, Thatcher would inevitably be forced to make substantial concessions. Even if she did not immediately accede to the demand for an assembly, she would at least be forced to jettison the poll tax and to provide additional resources to Scotland's battered industries and devastated communities.

Perhaps most importantly of all, the organisation of a genuine fightback, as opposed to the phoney verbal fightback of the past eight years, would restore the pride of the Scottish labour movement and instil the rank and file with new confidence. This in turn would prepare the way for further victories.

On the other hand, if the labour and trade union leaders now fail to rise to the task of leading a full-scale offensive against the Tories and capitalism, it will be a cowardly dereliction of duty which will not easily be forgiven by the new young generation of socialist activists in Scotland.

The UCS struggle

IN 1972 when the Heath government carried out a dramatic U-turn at the height of the UCS work-in, the decisive factor was not the involvement of Tory councillors and businessmen, but rather the government's fear of the consequences of closing down the Clydeside shipyards.

After two regional general strikes and the mobilisation of hundreds of thousands of workers on the streets of Glasgow, Tory minister Peter Walker described how "there was a genuine feeling that unless some action was taken, social disorder of a type never seen in this country would have taken place in the city".

These fears were echoed by Nicholas Ridley, who attributed the government's climb-down to fears that "civil violence would spread from Belfast to Glasgow" and Jock Bruce-Gardyne, then a junior minister in the Scottish Office, who reported "that the Chief Constable of Glasgow warned us that unless all four yards were rescued, he would need an extra 15,000 men immediately".

At the same time, UCS became a powerful symbol of the growing strength of the shop stewards' movement, and ignited a forest fire of factory occupations which spread throughout Clydeside, Merseyside, Manchester, Sheffield and London.

Faced with this explosive situation, the Heath government beat an inglorious retreat and the Scottish working class celebrated a victory.

Sales drive launched

A record we're proud of

MILITANT IS launching its biggest sales drive ever.

The editorial board has announced a high profile sales campaign aiming to double *Militant's* circulation by the end of the year. It starts during Labour Party Conference.

We are poised to make the most decisive advance in our circulation since starting publication in 1964.

Editor, Peter Taaffe, commented: "We are expecting massive sales. Our aim is to approach workplaces, trade union branches, student organisations and other labour movement bodies up and down the country as well as selling on every housing estate.

"*Militant* is in the forefront of the campaign to keep Labour socialist. Whilst the Labour leadership in Brighton are trying to fundamentally undermine Labour's socialist character, *Militant* is out to prove in this sales drive that the support and interest in full-blooded socialism is stronger than ever.

"Tragically *Labour Weekly* and *Socialist Youth* are under threat and *News on Sunday*, hailed as the new 'left' paper, has been in difficulties since its inception. *Militant* is taking up the mantle of the paper for the labour movement. We are going to show in this sales drive that there is a market for a workers' paper and *Militant* is going to fill it."

Militant—the workers' voice



EVERY WORKER who has stood up to the bosses understands the need for a paper which will answer Tory press lies.

By Ruth Campbell

Militant has built a reputation of being a platform from which workers, unemployed, students and in particular young people can make their voices heard.

Militant has an international reputation for not watering down our policies and taking a principled socialist stance on every issue.

From our very first issues, produced in 1964 just as Labour came to power with a majority of four seats, we warned "Aid the workers not the monopolists" and agitated against any forms of incomes policy. Sales grew massively particularly during waves of mass discontent against the Heath government, during the three day week, during public sector strikes, and the winter of discontent as it became known.

In our first edition we said: "The most important thing is that we wish to tell the truth to the working class against the lies and exaggeration of the capitalist class and half-truths of Labour's officialdom."

We have exposed management lies and this has been appreciated by our growing readership. During the 1974 miners' strike Cotgrave NUM members wrote to us: "We would like to thank the *Militant* for publishing a good and true article on the NCB's productivity deal". Our slogan was: "Victory to miners: Bring down Tories".

A shop steward from Bradford Bakeries in West Bromwich wrote: "The social contract is for the employers and not for the workers and the workers must condemn this idea. The employers we have are very bad...They have told the press completely false figures for our wages. They said we are getting £55 for 55 hours. This is impossible and a blatant lie." The social contract became known amongst workers as the social con-trick. *Militant* described it as: "A friendly agreement between a sheep and a wolf".

From our very first issue when we carried a feature on the motor industry *Militant* has carried numerous articles highlighting demands for car workers and illustrating their conditions. In answer to the *Sunday Times*' "Leyland skivers" article, *Militant* exposed how car workers had to work with machinery which was more than 50 years old, which only worked due to the workers' ingenuity, and how one paint shop was so badly designed that it had never been used.

We put forward the slogan of nationalisation of Leyland and workers at the Rover Solihull plant, TGWU 5/909 branch took up this demand in a resolution which called for "...workers' control with members of the board of management being elected on the following basis: 1/3rd elected by the workers within BLMC; 1/3rd elected by the TUC; 1/3rd appointed by the government."

Miners' strike

The 1984/5 miners' strike saw Fleet Street hacks pouring out their usual filth. Whilst the *Mail on Sunday* screamed out about some scab who supposedly was a "victim of hate" and the subject of an arson attack, it hardly mentioned the results of the police enquiry which revealed that the attack had been totally unconnected with striking miners or their sympathisers!

But when Pete Neelan of Warsop Main had his garage and car burnt out, as he explained to *Militant*, the Fleet Street journalists were outside his house in a flash. When he explained that he was a striking miner: "They seemed terribly disappointed and went away".

Remember how the press hoped to whip up antagonism from miners' wives at the beginning of the strike but were defeated by the miners' wives movement? "If it weren't for this strike I wouldn't be part of the LPYS" wrote Mandy Hawkins, ("proud member of Littleton Miners' Wives Support Group and Great Wyrley LPYS"): "Before the

strike I'd never even heard of the *Militant*! The *Militant* is the only paper that doesn't fill your head with crap. I only used to read toilet papers like the Sun and I honestly believed the bull they printed was the truth. I think the support you're giving to the miners is great."

During the tremendous year-long Silentnight dispute the secretary wrote to us: "I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the FTAT Cravendale 92 branch to offer our thanks for the marvellous support by *Militant*."

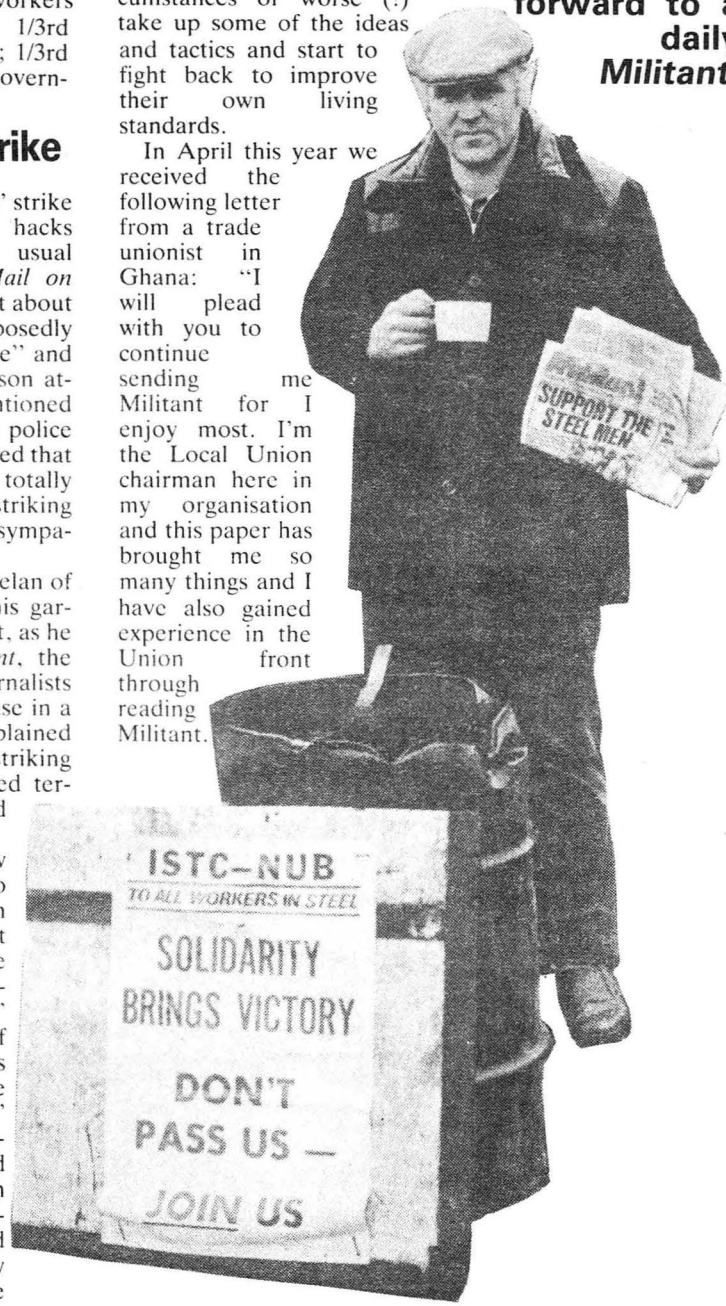
We have also provided unparalleled coverage of workers' struggles worldwide. The kept press of the millionaire tendency would prefer such movements to be kept secret from workers who may relate events to their own circumstances or worse (!) take up some of the ideas and tactics and start to fight back to improve their own living standards.

In April this year we received the following letter from a trade unionist in Ghana: "I will plead with you to continue sending me *Militant* for I enjoy most. I'm the Local Union chairman here in my organisation and this paper has brought me so many things and I have also gained experience in the Union front through reading *Militant*."

"*Militant* is a paper I see that it tells the correct events which happen unlike government ones. Through *Militant* I have been able to organise my Union Stewards...I'm sure with the solidarity of other subscribers we shall achieve our aim. Long live *Militant*."

Militant has grown with the struggles of the railway men, the dockers, the miners, the bakers, the health service workers and students, and the battles against unemployment. Much of our material has been unique, the words of workers in struggle can find a voice through our paper that will truly represent their interests. In the words of the trade unionist from Ghana:

'Long live *Militant*' and forward to a daily *Militant*.'



LEFT and RIGHT

Industrial democracy?

NATIONALISED INDUSTRIES are huge, faceless monopolies over which ordinary people have no control. Privatisation means giving them back to the people and letting the massed ranks of small shareholders take control of the nation's destiny. So says the gospel according to Thatcher.

But this rubbish is strictly for the ads so far as bosses who run denationalised companies are concerned. Sir John Read, chairman of privatised TSB, proposes to stop sending company reports and accounts to small shareholders.

They own so few shares that they are just a bloody nuisance to Sir John and his friends. And arranging annual meetings for these pipsqueaks costs nearly as much as the directors' pay bill. Obviously that's just not on!

So TSB's directors have persuaded the Department of Trade and Industry to look into changing company law so as they can be relieved of this tiresome burden. That's people's capitalism for you!

Happy Birthday, Comrade!

THE RECENT birthday of Ken Gill, chairman of the People's Press

Printing Society, was commemorated by blank spaces in the *Morning Star*, the paper the PPPS owns.

The *Star*, once controlled by the Communist Party, is stumbling from crisis to crisis because of the splits in that organisation. It is selling its premises and is making its printworkers redundant.

The printers are unhappy with the terms they are being offered, and Gill, who is also a union leader himself, has refused talks with their union's regional official.

So, when Gill's union executive and some friends decided to place advertisements in the *Star* wishing him happy birthday, the printers decided to put one in too. But theirs had the added message: "We hope fortune is kinder to you than your management committee has been to us."

The response of the *Star's* editor, who has recently run more than

one article condemning the government's censorship of *Spycatcher*, was to stop all three ads.

Now things threaten to go from bad to worse for the *Star*. It may be blacked by workers at the firm to which its typesetting has been contracted.

Poverty pay at Palace

KENSINGTON PALACE, scene of the recent immolation of Princess Margaret, is not such a grand place to work even for those staff who don't set fire to their employers.

Most staff are forced to take second jobs to make ends meet. A second chef earns about £7,500 and housemaids and footmen earn a lot less. Overtime is unpaid.

And staff have lost their sitting room. Princess Diana has so many clothes that it and another room have been turned into glorified wardrobes for her.

South Korea

Giant of labour awakes

Last Month a virtual brush-fire general strike spread to all parts of South Korea.

The entire car industry was crippled. Car workers in the industrial city of Ulsan led a demonstration of over 100,000 workers, headed by the Hyundai company's fire engines, cranes and forklifts.

Riot police, sent to halt their advance, decided that discretion was the better part of valour, and let the workers into the city centre unhindered.

A strike by 18,000 bus workers in Seoul was only averted when the government forced management to give them a 20 per cent wage rise. At the parliament buildings, MPs' chauffeurs left the reactionary lawmakers stranded.

Engineering workers, miners, taxi drivers, textile workers, shop workers, even the country's 2,500 pop singers—all have taken action.

At the country's largest shoe manufacturers, Kukje-ICC in Pusan, strikers who had occupied the plant were attacked by scabs, armed with iron bars and shields, and forced out of the factory. But the workers regrouped, armed themselves, and beat back the scabs, who by then had been joined by the riot police.

The awakening of the giant of labour has shocked all sections of the ruling class. In 1986 the average strike rate was 10 per month, despite being illegal. This year the strike rate was 20 per month up to May, 29 in June, and 71 in July.

3,600 strikes have been recorded since early July, compared with 226 throughout 1986. At one stage 100 to 200 new strikes were breaking out every day.

The movement will not end here. The death of 21-year-old shipyard worker Lee Sok Gyu from tear-gas shrapnel wounds has further inflamed the mood. The call has gone out for his funeral to be marked by a general strike.

On the crest of the strike wave, as *Militant* anticipated (10 July), workers' organisation is mushrooming.

Only company unions are legal; yet workers have struggled underground for years to build independent trade unions. Despite repression, these courageous unions have not been broken.

Now, following the retreat by the regime and the promise of reforms by the ruling DJP's presidential hopeful, Roh Tae Woo, dozens of new independent unions have been established. In one week in the Seoul area alone 34 new unions were formed!

THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS of shipyard workers poured through the streets of the South Korean city of Ulsan last Wednesday, preceded by 100 forklifts and heavy vehicles, after wage negotiations broke down. In Seoul, striking taxi drivers were clashing with scabs; 31 strikers were arrested. 80 per cent of the city's 17,000 company-owned taxis were idle.

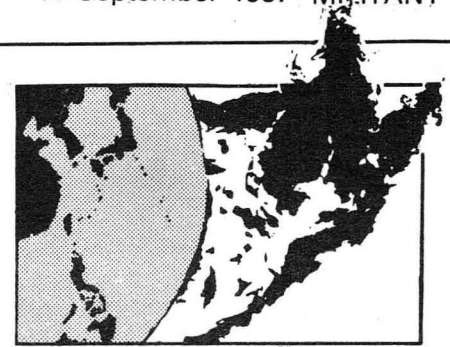
These scenes reflect the revolutionary tremors sweeping South Korea, a relatively industrialised country, following the revolution in the Philippines.

Little more than a year ago, both countries were ruled by supposedly stable right-wing dictatorships, supported, financed and armed by US imperialism. Now that era belongs to history. Once again, East Asia is to the fore in the world revolution.

But unlike the time of the Vietnam War, the urban working class is now playing a central role, as the articles on these pages show. The potential exists for a classical proletarian struggle, and the establishment of socialist democracy in either of these countries, if Marxist leadership can be built in time.

But the significance of the struggles in the Philippines and South Korea go beyond these countries themselves. South and East Asia has become a key area of international capitalism, crucial to the US in particular.

Since 1983, US trade across the Paci-



Revolution in East Asia

fic has outstripped its trade with Europe. Half the international business phone calls in the world are made across the Pacific; four out of every five air flights are to, from or within this region.

Now the effects of the deepening crisis of world capitalism have begun to destabilise one country after another.

A victory for the working class in any of these states would be a major blow against world imperialism. It could have a 'domino effect', toppling all the rotten, US-backed dictatorships that befool the area, and provide the spring board for a socialist federation of South East Asia and the Pacific.



Daewoo car workers prepare for struggle. 160 worker-activists are being put on trial for 'violence', as the strikes continue. On 6 September the Labour Minister reported that there had been 3,000 strikes in the past eight weeks, with 567 still in progress. The official total for the year so far was 3,219.

Management concessions have been too little and too late. Not only are workers demanding better wages and conditions, but also the dismissal of company union officials and the right to elect their own representatives.

Workers in Hyundai's plants in Ulsan dismissed company union officials and elected their own representatives. The government was forced to intervene and order management to recognise the new workers' leadership.

This process will lay the basis for a powerful independent trade union movement organising millions of workers. August's victories will have an enormous effect in transforming the consciousness of the working class, and giving them new confidence.

A layer of class-conscious militants will emerge. Mobilising on issues of wages and conditions, these advanced workers will rapidly advance political demands to liberate their class.

The Workers' Combined Committee for a Democratic Constitu-

tion—an umbrella of different unions and radical workers' groups—campaigns not only for decent conditions but for an end to the ban on political activity by trade unions.

At a rally organised before the August strikes, held in a room with a 500 capacity, 5,000 turned up and applauded the demand, amongst others, for the building of a workers' political party.

These demands will be given jet propulsion by the feverish strike activity.

The regime fears a united movement of the workers and the students, who have been to the fore in the heroic struggle against the dictatorship. Correctly, students in many areas are orienting towards the labour movement.

The events have thrown all classes into turmoil. But at this stage the dictatorship is still intact. Roh Tae Woo has made his promise of reforms not at the eleventh hour, but at the opening of the struggle.

Unlike in Portugal in 1974, or

South Korea's rapid economic growth since the 1960s has been at the expense of the working class. The bosses have kept the masses in poverty in order to compete on the world market.

Car workers, earning 300,000 won (£230) per month are well off by Korean standards. But this is one-fifth of the rate for the job in Japan.

For most workers, real

wages are much lower. Women assembling semi-conductors at Anan Industries earn 17,200 won (£13) for a 55-hour week. Textile workers are paid as little as 100,000 won (£77) per month for a 15-hour day, six-day week.

At 54.5 hours, the average working week in South Korea is one of the longest in the world. The industrial accident rate is the highest in the world.

the Philippines last year, the armed forces are not yet split. The soldiers are not yet ready to come over to the side of the movement.

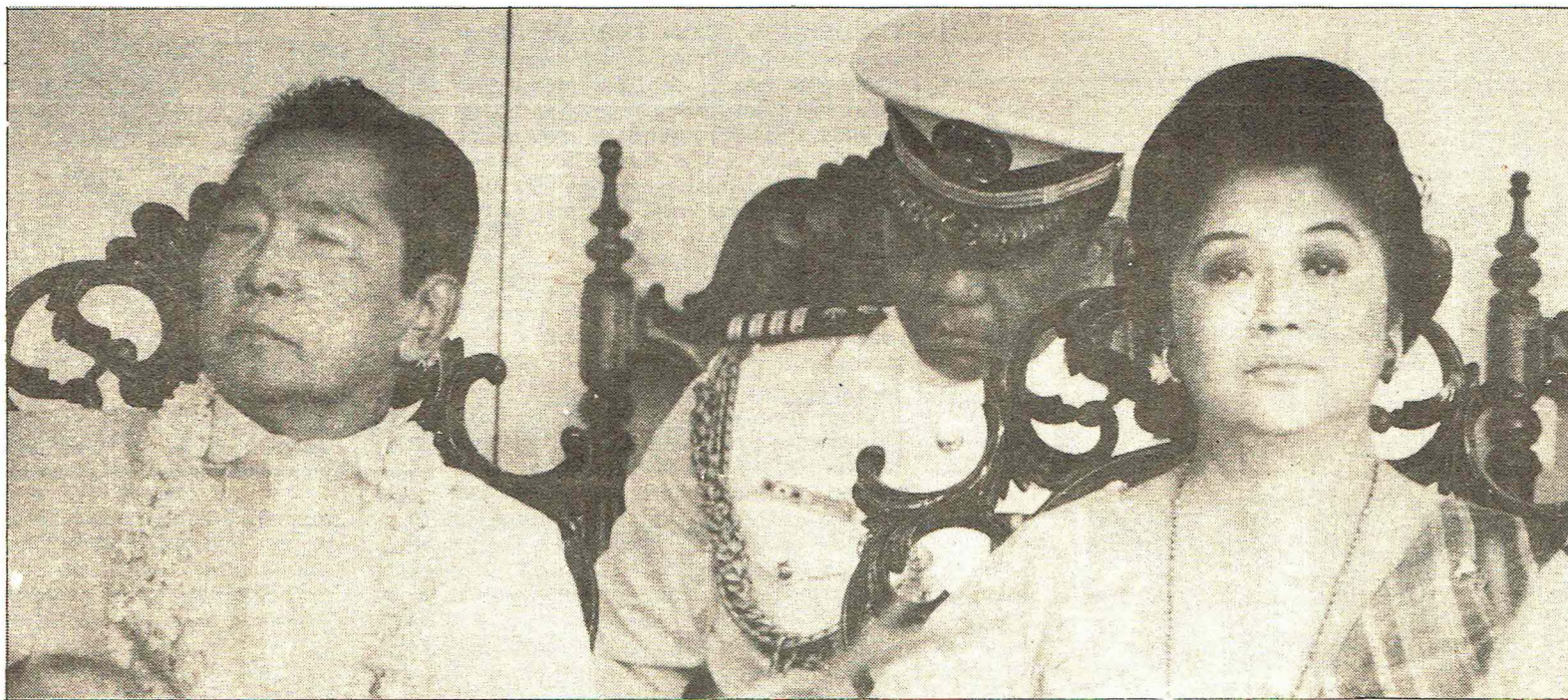
The newly-discovered velvet glove of democracy is an extremely poor fit on the mailed fist of the dictatorship. But a new coup is the least likely perspective at this stage. Attempts to hold the lid down will only lead to greater explosions.

The South Korean revolution

has begun. Under capitalism there is no solution to the problems of the workers and youth. Even basic democracy cannot be guaranteed.

A mass movement of workers and youth, based on the revolutionary traditions of their past and armed with Marxist ideas, would be invincible.

Eye-witness report from a correspondent in Seoul



Ex-president Marcos and wife Imelda with their army Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Ramos—now Aquino's Chief of Staff.

The recent attempted coup in the Philippines, and the general strike which preceded it, underline the instability of the Aquino Government.

By Martin Riley

This coup was by far the most serious of the five to date. There was an armed attack on Malacanang Palace itself, in which Aquino's son was ambushed and shot. Several key installations were occupied, including television stations, air bases, and the principal military base, Camp Aguinaldo.

If it had succeeded, the result would have been a ruthless military dictatorship, led by Enrile, who on the day of the coup went to the US Embassy, hoping to present them with a fait accompli and confirm his credentials as President.

Enrile was not, as misrepresented in the Press, the man who brought Aquino to power by defecting from Marcos. Enrile was Marcos' Defence Minister for 15 years, his chief accomplice in creating a police state, establishing martial law, and murdering political opponents.

In February 1986 too Enrile was preparing a coup to install himself as dictator. But his plans were cut across by the mass movement on the streets, which overthrew the hated Marcos on the slogans of democracy and "people's power".

Hopes were aroused by this tremendous movement; but, in the absence of any alternative, the Marcos regime was replaced with the old bourgeois oligarchy which had previously ruled the country. Cory Aquino, one of the biggest landowners in the Philippines, represented the dissident faction of the bourgeoisie which had been excluded from the orgy of corruption practiced by Marcos's 'cronies'.

Family interests

The Government and the newly-elected Congress are composed of members of the traditional millionaire families. Many of them are personally related to the 'cronies'.

Marcos's chief 'cronies', the billionaire Eddie Cojuangco, is a first cousin of Cory. Marcos's Finance Minister Ongpin has now been replaced by his brother, Aquino's Chief of Staff, Ramos, is Marcos' third cousin.

This faction was horrified at the corruption of the clique in power. Marcos's regime of plunder was eroding the resources of the state and endangering the survival of landlordism and capitalism.

Above all, it had contributed to a meteoric growth of the guerrilla struggle of the 'New People's Army', which began in 1969 with 60 men and 35 rifles, and now has a strength approaching 25,000.

The social base of the NPA lies in the millions of landless peasants, many of them forcibly driven off their land by the giant



Anti-Communist death-squads now openly encouraged by Aquino.

multinational corporations who then converted it into vast estates, growing rubber, sugar, bananas, etc., for the world market.

Aquino and the liberals argued at that time that military means alone were incapable of defeating the insurgency. The Armed Forces of the Philippines grew during the years of Marcos' rule from 60,000 to nearly 300,000. And yet the NPA now control 20 per cent of the barangays (districts), according to military intelligence reports.

Liberals recalled how the earlier Huk guerrilla movement which at one time came close to capturing Manila, was defeated by a combination of brutal repression and massive American aid and investment, enabling the government to grant limited reforms.

Hence the Aquino government negotiated a cease-fire and started peace talks, with the chief Government negotiator Diokno, a veteran liberal, promising "jobs and justice, food and freedom".

But the peace talks were a farce. After three months they had not yet agreed on an agenda! They broke up in chaos.

The NDF team (representing the NPA) had asked for guarantees of their safety, in view of the murder of trade union leader Olalia and other terrorist acts of the Right. The Government team, composed of liberals, had to reply that they too had been the object of death threats and could not guarantee their own safety!

The capitalist-landlord government could offer nothing to meet the fundamental demands of the NDF/NPA guerrillas: land reform, jobs, expulsion of imperialist capital, closing-down of US bases. There was no alternative to a resumption of the war. The talks had achieved nothing.

The police and army have continued to practise their brutal methods of the past. Workers are beaten up and in many cases killed on the picket lines. A serious shock to those with

illusions in the Aquino government came in January with the Mendiola massacre. Delegations of peasants had been camping for a week at the gates of the Ministry of Agrarian Reform demanding "confiscation of Marcos and crony-owned land proven to have been acquired from peasants by means of deceit, intimidation and violence, and their free distribution to the tillers".

Finding themselves ignored, they decided to seek an audience with Mrs Aquino, and marched to Malacanang Palace. On the way they found Mendiola bridge sealed by marines, who promptly opened fire, killing 20 demonstrators and wounding 80.

Liberalism

The inquiry that later reported on the incident revealed all the limitations of capitalist liberalism. In spite of the evidence of video recordings, photos, eye-witness reports, and gunpowder tests on each of the Marines, the inquiry reported that it could not discover which troops had fired the shots: so no prosecutions could be recommended.

However, the inquiry apparently found, it takes two sides to make a massacre. The Marines were at fault for shooting, but the peasants were at fault because they were there. Looking at the question from every angle, the commission recommended—the prosecution of the peasants' leader, Tadeo, for sedition!

The President's Executive Secretary, Joker Arroyo—generally considered a leading liberal—branded the demands of the demonstrators as 'socialistic', and commented: "For so long as we live under a capitalist system, nothing can be taken without just compensation." The most 'liberal' member of the Administration thus put the need to 'compensate' the crony gangsters before the need of the peasants for land to feed their families.

The irony is that the demand for land is far from 'socialistic'; it is an elementary bourgeois-

democratic demand. The contestation by Arroyo that it cannot be achieved under capitalism is the best possible confirmation of the Marxist argument that 'liberal bourgeois democracy' today, especially in the colonial world, is incapable of carrying through a single one of its own urgent tasks.

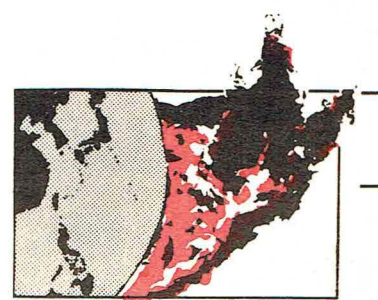
Soon afterwards came the first war atrocity scandal since the resumption of fighting: the massacre at Nueva Ecija, where 17 villagers—old people, women and children—were lined up and shot by the military, enraged at their inability to retaliate for an NPA guerrilla attack.

The military reacted angrily to public criticism and even to Cory's expressions of regret. One officer said: "This is not a conventional but a guerrilla war. The enemy is largely unseen, moves soundlessly, hits us when we least expect it, and then vanishes into the populace before we can say boo."

From a military point of view, these officers are more correct than the liberals. A guerrilla army is based among a civilian peasantry. To crush it means to terrorise and demoralise that base of support. One can have civil war. Or one can have 'human rights'. One cannot have both.

The officer caste were enraged by the cease-fire, which they considered had given the NPA time to recuperate and regroup, and the futile peace negotiations. The very existence of this government, brought to power by a mass movement of protest at the murder of a liberal politician by the Army, and led by his widow, represented a humiliation and a standing reproach to them.

Every successive Army massacre, of demonstrators in Manila or villagers in the countryside, led to a public wringing of hands by the liberals. Cory regularly appeared on television, weeping and promising inquiries. This was a constant irritation to the officers, who had enjoyed great prestige and privilege under Marcos's martial law regime. In spite of the 'black propagand-



Revolution in East Asia

for order



Roman Catholic nuns join in 6,000 st

da' about alleged successful military operations against the NPA, and mass defections from the NPA, the truth is that the army is increasingly frustrated at the successes of the NPA. In contrast to the local press, the serious journals of American imperialism have stated plainly that "the army is divided and demoralised, and Cory is losing the war against the NPA". (Newsweek, April 1987.)

It is this impotent rage of the officers which lies behind the repeated coup attempts—despite the fact that Aquino has utterly capitulated to the military and yielded to every one of their demands, including a virtual military veto on government policies.

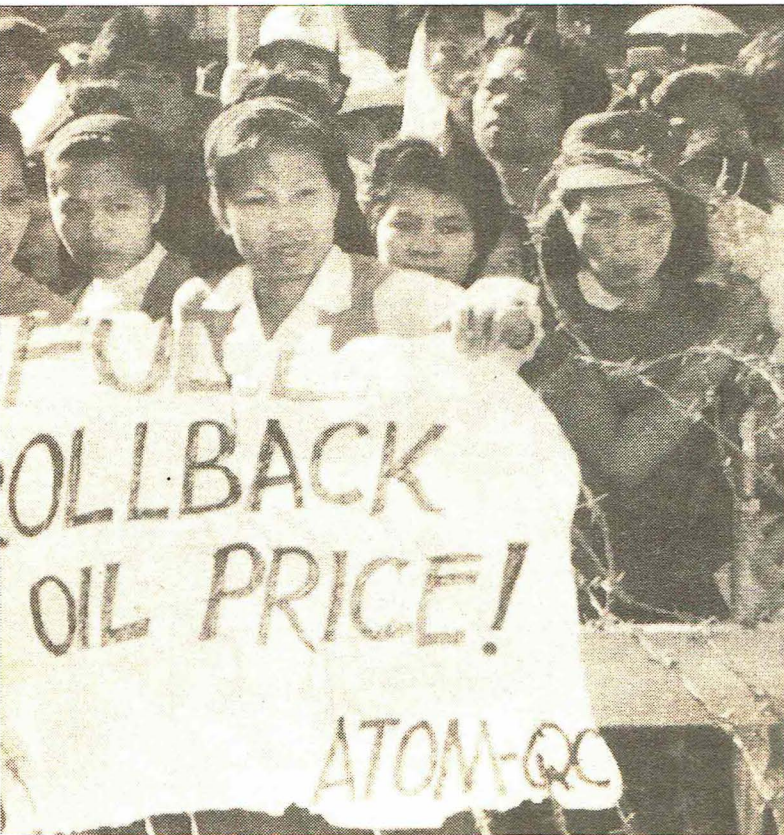
No differences

Following the resumption of the war, there are formally no more differences between the government and the military leadership. In utter contradiction to earlier rhetoric about the "need to solve the underlying social problems of the people", Cory Aquino has begun to talk very differently: "The answer to the terrorism of the left and the right is not social and economic reform but police and military action.... I want a string of honourable military victories to follow up my

Photo: Reflex

The Philippines

No room capitalist democracy



Protest rally protesting the price increase of oil and other petroleum products.

proclamation of war."

This government is incapable of solving any of the problems of the people. Aquino's late husband said shortly before his death: "If you made me President of the Philippines today, in six months I would be smelling like horseshit. Because there's nothing I can do. I cannot provide employment. I cannot bring prices down."

This rather inelegant prediction applies very accurately to the Presidency of his widow. Apart from a belated and ineffective decree last month, no serious attempt has been made to tackle the question of land reform. Starvation and unemployment continue to plague the population, and give added momentum to the struggle of the NPA.

Aquino's reference to "action against the Right" was entirely hypocritical. She dare not take serious action against the mutinous colonels. She is faced with the dilemma of every so-called liberal bourgeois government: she cannot afford to attack the state machine on which she rests.

In fact, the government has been 'liberal' only towards those on the Right who have tried to overthrow it. Not one member of Marcos' murder and torture gangs has been arrested. Even after repeated coups, no serious

action has been taken against the officers responsible. The penalty imposed on soldiers participating in the July 1986 coup was...30 push-ups!

The only casualty of last year's November coup was Defence Minister Enrile, who was dismissed from government, but left at liberty to try again, and even presented with a special medal in honour of his past services!

Balance of forces

Colonel Honasan, Enrile's chief accomplice, who was also the principal figure in last week's coup, was merely transferred to a new posting. The colonels who led the January coup, like Honasan this time, were also allowed to escape. It is clear that the government is afraid to put them on trial and risk provoking new mutinies.

The January events clearly showed the real balance of forces. Mrs Aquino appeared on television promising decisive and drastic action. She warned civilians to stay away from the Channel 7 television station, which was occupied by rebel troops...but nothing happened.

When, after a siege of several days, one tear-gas grenade was lobbed in, Colonel Honasan and his henchmen surrounded General Ramos, threatening him with

a wider revolt if further military action was taken. As a result, Ramos defied the clear orders of President Aquino to storm the building, and meekly complied with Honasan's demands.

Meanwhile, former NPA leader Salas, who was arrested months after the amnesty for political prisoners, is facing a probable death sentence on a charge of "rising publicly and taking up arms since 1969 for the purpose of overthrowing the present (sic) government"!

Real power

Nothing could show more clearly where the real power still lies. Death for those who tried to overthrow Marcos's regime; immunity for officers who try to overthrow the present 'revolutionary' government!

Marcos has been replaced, but the old murderous Marcos state machine remains in place, prettified by the Presidency of a nominal democrat. Aquino has rapidly become a puppet of the officer caste.

Worse still, during the last few months there has been a rapid growth of sinister anti-Communist 'vigilante groups', in addition to the existing 260 private armies of the landlords organised as the 'Civilian Home Defence Force'.

US General Singlaub, President of the 'World Anti-Communist League', has been busy in the Philippines, ostensibly 'searching for treasure' in the wreck of a sunken Japanese ship, but actually to advise the 'liberal' government on 'low-intensity operations', including the formation of death squads.

Under the patronage of the police, army and government, hypocritically praised as a 'manifestation of people's power' by Mrs Aquino herself, paramilitary vigilante gangs have been springing up all over the archipelago. One example is the so-called 'Tadtad Gang' ('tadtad' means 'to chop'), a fanatical religious sect which chops its victims to death with machetes.

These auxiliary gangs, which have mobilised tens of thousands of human scum, are financed and armed by the police to hunt down NPA sympathisers, and given a free hand to perpetrate the most horrific atrocities.

Far from bringing peace and 'reconciliation', Aquino's government has been leading society along the road away from scattered guerrilla encounters to full-scale civil war. So much for 'libe-



Communist guerrillas in Negros.

ralism'!

In spite of this, not only the officers but most of the troops are indifferent or hostile to the government. One soldier fighting against the rebels was quoted in the British press: "I support whichever side wins." The low-paid, exploited soldiers, cannon-fodder for the landlords in the hopeless war against the NPA, starved of proper equipment and ammunition due to corruption and misappropriation of funds, have gained nothing from 'people's power'. For want of any serious appeal from the NPA, the troops are prey to the reactionary propaganda of the officers.

Reactionary military 'fraternities' like the 'Guardians' Brotherhood and the 'Reform the Armed Forces Movement' are supported by the vast majority of the ordinary soldiers.

In an attempt to restore their former glory, the demented colonels will make repeated new attempts to seize power and establish a new military dictatorship. The government will still do anything to avoid a head-on confrontation.

If they capture Honasan, or the colonels who led the January coup, they will be faced with the dilemma of either putting them on trial for treason, or retreating and flaunting their pitiful weakness. Either course would risk provoking a new and wider coup.

The rebel colonels have now threatened a full-scale campaign of destabilisation— assassinations, bombings, sabotage—in order to prepare the climate for a successful coup later. The colonels, who were Enrile's principal aides, are experts at such deeds. It was Enrile and his cohorts who organised an intense campaign of similar dirty tricks in 1972, to prepare the way for martial law and the unconstitutional continuation of Marcos' presidency.

Eventually they will succeed in overthrowing the weak and increasingly discredited Aquino government.

At this stage the capitalists and landlords, and American imperialism, support the Aquino government, which is the best they could have. The war against the NPA continues under a democratic facade, which is good for attracting foreign investment and aid.

In the event of a successful coup they will have no choice but to accept it. But at the moment they are alarmed at the constant conspiracies of the officers, who

are playing a very dangerous game. The murder or overthrow of Aquino would inflame the masses and could bring the millions back onto the streets, as in 1983-86.

The workers of Manila will not lightly accept a return to the horrors of a police state. The next time they come onto the streets they may not be unarmed. They may have received no material gains from the change of government, but in spite of police attacks they have achieved certain precious democratic rights: the possibility to organise and strike, free assembly, an end to censorship, etc.

It could be a dangerous provocation to withdraw these rights before the masses have become thoroughly disillusioned and demoralised at the failures of the Cory regime. And although illusions are rapidly evaporating, such a point has not yet been reached.

Alarmed

Above all, the ruling class—and especially American imperialism with huge economic and strategic interests at stake—are alarmed at the impetus that would be given to the guerrilla war by a new military dictatorship. It would make the eventual military victory of the NPA almost inevitable. This would mean a major defeat for imperialism.

However, the guerrilla war will be protracted and bloody, causing mass suffering and devastation. An eventual NPA victory would end the dictatorship of capitalism and landlordism, but in the absence of working-class leadership it would result in a military-bureaucratic regime on the basis of the state-owned economy.

The key to the situation lies in the hands of the working class, which played the decisive role in bringing down the Marcos regime.

Last week's general strike, which forced Aquino to withdraw most of the planned increase in petrol prices, was the biggest mobilisation of workers since the downfall of Marcos, with all the trade-union centres—including the pro-government TUCP—compelled to participate, following the initiative of the left-wing KMU. Mobilised on a clear socialist programme, the workers could organise an uprising which could sweep the divided ruling class aside and establish a workers' democracy.

Socialists to stand in Belfast by-elections

THE NORTHERN Ireland Labour and Trade Union Group will be contesting two city council by-elections in West Belfast on 22 October.

By a Militant reporter

Michael Duffy, an executive member of the Belfast Trades Council, and Davy Officer, an activist in community politics in West Belfast, will be standing in Upper Falls and Lower Falls respectively.

Both candidates are socialists and believe that there is a need for the voice of labour to be heard in these elections. Both have a long tradition of fighting to protect the interests of the working class, particularly in West Belfast.

They are therefore only too well aware of the many problems facing the unemployed, low-paid workers, women, youth and the disadvantaged in the area.

The twin scourges of poverty and state repression are visible for all to see. But these problems can only be tackled through a programme for a fundamental socialist change. Belfast needs a socialist council fighting for the interests of all sections of the working class.

MICHAEL DUFFY is 31 and has worked in the Royal Victoria Hospital since 1980, during which time he has been an active trade unionist. He is currently secretary of the North and West Belfast Joint Shop Stewards' Committee and an active member of the Belfast Trades Council.

He has been at the forefront of the fight for the interests of NHS workers and patients. This has included the organisation of public meetings with community groups throughout Protestant and Catholic areas of the city. Recently he led the victorious struggle to keep open the South Link Day centre.

DAVID OFFICER is 50 and lives in the Lower falls area of West Belfast. He was active in the civil rights struggles of the 1960s. Since moving to the Lower Falls he has been involved in community politics.

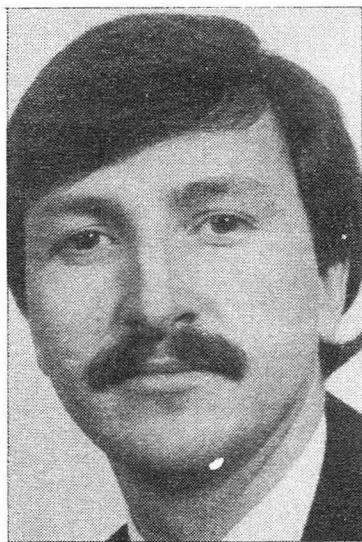


The Divis flats in West Belfast.

Photo: Martin Shakeshaft.



David Officer.



Michael Duffy.

Since 1977 he has worked in the NHS as a driver for the social services and is senior shop steward. He recently led a successful struggle against

cutbacks in transport for mentally and physically handicapped clubs. Over the last ten years he has fought tenaciously in defence of the NHS.

Keep Labour socialist

Expulsions threatened

ALL OVER the country, socialists in the Labour Party are fighting off attempts to expel them. As part of the right wing's attempts to shift Party policy to the right, they are trying to purge the ranks of those members who insist in defending the party's socialist traditions.

IN STEVENAGE, Jackie Mulholland, a Labour Party member for over ten years, has become the witch-hunters' eleventh victim.

She was summoned to an investigating sub-committee and confronted with accusations of sub-editing a feature in *Militant*. "And we have a photo of you attending a demo against the expulsion of Theresa and Roger MacKay in Ipswich," she was told: "how did you know about that demonstration?"

Jackie refused to answer these and other intimidating questions, as she had been given no time to study the evidence beforehand. The meeting was adjourned. Any Labour Party member who has known Jackie should send messages of protest to: The Labour Party Offices, 121B, Bedwell Crescent, Stevenage, Herts.

IN CREWE and Nantwich, seat of veteran witch-hunter Gwyneth Dunwoody, an AEU delegate has complained about *Militant* being sold at Party meetings, which are held on AEU property. Disciplinary procedure has been started.

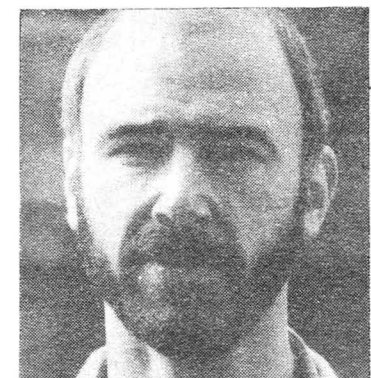
A petition against this blatant attempt at expulsions is readily being signed by local workers. One told us that the attacks on *Militant* supporters and socialist policies had deterred him from joining the Labour Party.

An extra 80 papers have already been sold.

THE RIGHT wing in Bromsgrove Labour Party are trying to expel Bill Murray, a party activist for 16 years. He has held numerous positions in the movement, including vice-chair of his Party branch, senior steward at Cadbury's in Bourneville and delegate to Birmingham Trades Council.

The charge brought against this dedicated, long-serving member was that he allowed his telephone number to appear on a poster advertising an official national LPYS demonstration against the Tories in October last year.

A public meeting is planned for 1 October to launch the campaign to defend socialist policies and socialists in Bromsgrove. Please send letters and resolutions to Ian Reilly, Secretary/Agent, Bromsgrove Labour Party, 174 Worcester Road, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire.



Keith Simpson

KEITH SIMPSON, the Marxist councillor who was the only Labour member of Lothian Regional Council to oppose spending cuts has, for this crime, been stripped of his chairmanship of the Drainage and Water Committee and two vice-chairmanships of social work bodies.

The matter is also to be referred to the Lothian Regional Labour Party where further action may be taken, and the East Lothian Constituency Party, which is right-wing controlled, has called a special meeting in two weeks' time to discuss the stand he has taken.

The Party met only a few weeks ago, and normally only meets every three months. It is a pity it cannot spring into action more often to defend workers from attack.

However, Keith Simpson's local Party in Musselburgh has passed a motion of confidence in his action by 16 votes to five.

The left within the East Lothian CLP will not stand back and see individuals victimised for standing by their manifesto commitments.

Fighting Fund

We want cash, not credit

MILLIONS OF workers looking for a clear lead against the Tories will have been disappointed once again by the manoeuvrings and lack of fight from the TUC 'do-nothing' leadership.

Lane Kirkland of the American AFL/CIO advises British trade unions to offer their members credit cards in an attempt to win new recruits. *Militant* appeals to workers and youth to fund the real fightback by donating to our Fighting Fund.

To continue our work we need the financial support from our readers, who recognise *Militant* as the only effective voice in the fight against the anti-working-class policies of the Tory

government.

A good example this week is H Deeney who sent us £44.50 with his subscription to the paper.

Thanks should also go to these trade unionists who donated a tenner: Gwyneth Cullen, COHSE, Wakefield; Kim Leach, ASTMS, Fulham; and Cath Thomas, APEX, Caerphilly.

Can you match these donations? But don't just send us something yourself; approach everyone sympathetic to our ideas to give a fiver, tenner or more to ensure the successful achievement of reaching the £70,000 fighting fund target by November.

Now that the holiday period is drawing to a end,

we need to take full advantage of every way to raise the fighting fund. What events are coming up where you can use the appeal sheets and rattling tins?

Remember the schools and colleges are going back and labour movement meetings will be starting again.

Thanks this week to: J Mason, ASTMS, Birmingham, £25; Colin Jones, £25; David Watts, Hull, £10; Joe Donnelly, Strathclyde, £10; video night in Brent, £10; £50 of IOUs from the Summer Camp paid; extras from a sale outside Six Bells colliery, £5; and a reader in Brent who paid £5 from the paper.

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 Wales	773		4850
2 South East	322		2250
3 Eastern	374		3050
4 London	1046		9400
5 Northern	391		4600
6 East Midlands	274		3250
7 Southern	214		3100
8 Yorkshire	584		8450
9 Manchester/Lancs	176		4050
10 Scotland West	137		3500
11 Scotland East	90		2800
12 Merseyside	131		7500
13 South West	43		1950
14 West Midlands	101		4850
15 National	1309		6950
Total	5,965		70,000

Young Socialists fight back

The system claims another young life

ON SATURDAY, 22 August, Ron Danskin died tragically after falling into a chemical tank and being overcome by fumes and corrosive materials. He was just 17 years old.

The life of yet another working class youth was brought to an end by this rotten and corrupt bosses' system.

It was Ron's first job since leaving school. He had been exploited on YTS for a year by Valterm (UK), a double glazing sister firm of Velux. After a year's slave labour, Ron was kept on. But with conditions like having to work overtime on Saturdays, unsupervised in fatally dangerous working conditions.

No wonder his grief-stricken parents are demanding a fatal accident inquiry! Ron's dad, a distillery worker, said to a Glasgow paper: "We feel there are definitely a lot of unanswered questions

By a Glasgow LPYS member.

which we hope will be cleared by an inquiry. It will not bring Ron back, but it might save someone else in the future."

The parents of over 20 trainees who have died tragically on slave labour schemes have felt this way. This carnage has to stop.

Last Monday, Kenneth McDickens had his foot crushed by an iron girder. He was on the second week of his YTS course at Commercial Coach Builders and, disgracefully, was not given any protective clothing while he shifted the girders.

At least one of his toes has been broken. His foot

is so swollen that the hospital cannot tell what other damage has been done.

To add insult to injury, his mother has been told that after being off three weeks, he will simply be paid off. She is taking legal advice.

Kenneth recently joined Pollock Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS). His injury is yet another reason why other young people should join.

Our youth cannot go on being exploited and murdered on these death-trap, slave labour schemes and dead-end jobs. But what else is there?

For the Labour Party Young Socialists and the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign (YTURC), tragedies like Ron's death renew our determination to organise young people into

a force to beat Thatcher.

In Glasgow on 1 September, over 60 young activists attended an organising conference of YTURC. A new committee was elected with three school students and two YTS trainees on it. It will campaign against YTS conscription and JTS forced labour and for the unionisation of YTS trainees.

In 1985, the school strike forced Thatcher to back down over conscription. This time we want a victory over wages and conditions too. Action must be widened to colleges and YTS schemes.

We hope that union leaders who opposed Tory plans will turn their words into action. To those who called us dafties in 1985, we say look at Ron Danskin and all the other deaths, and think again.

YTS horror stories

I am a guest house slave

LAST year I moved away from home after leaving school because I knew I'd never get a job where I lived. I thought I was lucky when a couple said they would give me work in their guest house. So one day a week I'm on the Youth Training Scheme and the rest of the time I work in the guest house. Since I got used to the work, the couple have both taken part-time jobs. So on some days I'm

left alone with up to 14 guests, preparing meals and doing everything else—even cleaning loos. My day lasts from 8am until 10pm and I have had only four days off since I've been here. My parents say I'm being used and that I should demand proper time off and holidays. What are my rights? THE YTS, Southend, Essex. ■ SUE SAYS: The YTS schemes vary from area to area, but you should NEVER be left alone at work or forced to work so many hours. You are entitled to holidays and time off and have every right to complain. Alert your Job Centre to the situation and you may be given a new YTS vacancy.

THIS LETTER appeared on the Sun's youth problems page. The only advice the Sun could give was to "alert the Job Centre and you may be given another YTS vacancy."

The best advice for Trevor from Southend would be to join a union and the Labour Party Young Socialists and fight for union rates of pay and a guaranteed job at the end of the scheme.

The Sun has set up a YTS horrors section for trainees to write in to. But don't write to the scabby Sun, write to Militant. We can offer real advice on how to fight slave labour conditions.

Labour's youth proposals

Vote of confidence in LPYS

THE PROPOSAL to reduce the LPYS age limit to 21 has received a resounding thumbs-down from all sections of the Labour Party.

Labour's youth consultation exercise, which ended on 31 July is to be discussed at a special National Executive on 15 September. The NEC aims to put constitutional changes to a Party Conference.

Labour Party members have made it clear that any changes to the Party's youth structures must be in line with the views of the majority as expressed in the consultation.

350 organisations, an overwhelming 85 per cent of those replying, opposed any reduction.

Every reply from union branches, student Labour Clubs and regional Labour Parties opposed the idea, as did 98 per cent of LPYS branches.

The NEC has no mandate for reducing the LPYS's age limit.

Democracy

The three other proposals were the establishment of national and regional campaign committees, widening the franchise for the election of the NEC youth representative, and an annual youth conference with delegates from the LPYS. Constituency Labour Parties, Women's Sections, Labour Students and unions.

These were supported, but with qualifications. The LPYS's replies were in fact the most accommodating. Over 70 per cent of them supported each of the proposals, a much larger pro-

portion than among other organisations.

The LPYS officers have demanded democracy and accountability, for example democratic elections for the campaign committees and conference delegates.

Resolution

Bearing in mind that 42 per cent of organisations, apart from the LPYS, actually opposed the idea of widening the franchise to elect the NEC youth representative, these provisos are very important.

To allay these fears, the NEC will have to agree not to remove LPYS Conference's right to elect the NEC rep, but just to expand the conference along democratic lines.

It seems that the majority of submissions follow the lines of the LPYS officers' proposals. These are listed in resolution 48 to this year's Party Conference from Leeds North-East Labour Party. Conference delegates should vote for this resolution so as to ensure that the spirit of the youth consultation is implemented as soon as possible.

The exercise has shown that Party members want to see the LPYS supported and encouraged, and its democratic methods built upon.

Anyone who had hoped to use it for launching an attack on the youth must be disappointed. The NEC must recognise this when drawing up constitutional changes.

By an LPYS member.

Schools go back to cuts

FOR THOUSANDS of school students who returned to school this week, the future looks bleak.

For the lower years the Education Bill threatens to attack them by undermining the very principle of free education and by sneaking selective education.

In Kent, we still have the eleven-plus. Rather than having superior standards, as the Tories always claim, Kent has one of the worst records in the country. The pupil/teacher ratio is 104th. out of 104 local education authorities.

Thatcher's dream of selective schools may be a paradise for the rich—but it is a nightmare for working class kids. The Tories plan to let schools charge for education. Their freedom of choice will be decided by the size of your parents' bank balance.

Four years are starting their GCSE courses without enough books to go round and with teachers not properly trained to teach them.

Fifth years feel cheated by the government. They are worried about how they will cope with the new exam, after a year of teachers trying to scrape by without adequate resources for it.

And those of us staying on into the sixth form are constantly aware of the burden we place on our parents. We have to combine schoolwork with part-time jobs to help them out.

The school students' union is the place for students who want to fight the Tories' attacks. By linking up with trade unionists in the schools, we can turn our anger into an organised fight to beat the Tories.

By Zuleika Beavan
Secretary, Medway
School Students' Union
(personal capacity)



London school students strike against redeployment of teachers earlier this year.

ILEA's phony democracy

AT THE end of last term, I was elected as my school's representative to ILEA's pupil parliament. I stood on Militant's programme.

From the start of the first meeting, it was obvious that it was not a genuine attempt by ILEA to give school students a say. For example, many delegates had not been elected but picked by their head teachers.

The meeting was chaired by an ILEA bureaucrat, who warned us at the start: "Don't expect what you say to necessarily be put into practice. Be content that we will listen carefully to your advice."

I criticised ILEA right from the start and soon everyone was joining in, attacking the parliament's lack of power and democracy. A resolution condemning ILEA's implementation of Tory cuts through redeployment of teachers and demanding they defy the government was passed all but unanimously.

After the meeting, all the delegates I spoke to signed up for the SSU, angry at this ILEA publicity stunt. One, who has now joined the LPYS and now supports Militant, explained how she had organised accountability in her school.

She reported back to all the class rooms and got pupils' suggestions on what should be done.

Now it seems that because of the pupils' militancy, ILEA are abandoning the parliament. But, on their own initiative, the pupils in this girl's area have organised an area meeting without any ILEA involvement. I will be speaking at it.

This just shows young people's initiative. With or without ILEA, we will continue the parliament, and build it into a real democratic, fighting organisation for pupil rights.

By Dan Lewenstein.



Western navies protecting tankers have brought together the biggest concentration of naval fire-power since the Second World War.

Oil and the Gulf war

Dear Comrades,
I find your article "Gulf War crisis" (*Militant* 859) ridiculous since an expansion, escalation or ending of the war in the Gulf would mean higher oil prices. This would cause a new capitalist crisis. I don't think that the capitalists would allow 'Raygun' to do such a thing, thereby risking even a direct confrontation either with the Citizens' army or the Soviets' red army.
The other thing is that, I think, the Iranian revolution can't any more 'spread' itself in the regime since it has been showing its real face, ie high inflation rates, high unemployment, torture and terrorism. It is against the inte-

rests of the working masses.
Yours comradely
Asghar.R.Basoft

EDITOR REPLIES: It is not necessarily true that 'an expansion, escalation or ending of the war' would mean higher oil prices. If the war led to greater instability in the Gulf, or, worse still from the point of view of imperialism, a collapse of the Iraqi regime and the spread of revolution to the Gulf Arab states, then this would almost certainly cause a cut in oil production and a tendency for a price rise.
Given the large world oil glut at the present time, however, it is debatable to

what degree prices would increase and significantly damage the world economy. This scenario, however, is precisely the most risky and the one the imperialist powers wish to avoid. Whether or not they can now achieve a stable Gulf peace is doubtful, but what they are seeking is an end to the war that would not mean an Iranian victory or an Iraqi collapse.

Explosions

If this were possible, it would almost certainly lead to a restoration of oil output creating a tendency for the price of oil to fall.
It is not clear what the comrade means by the

spread of the revolution to the 'regime'—perhaps the word 'region' is intended—but in either case the point is valid. The war and consequent dislocation in Iran could—as the comrade suggests—lead to discontent and a new revolution in Iran. But equally, an Iranian victory, combined with the social and economic instability in the Middle East—especially in states with a significant Shiite population, like Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon—could lead to revolutionary explosions not unlike those that overthrew the Shah in 1979. The latter prospect is a nightmare for imperialism.

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

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

Owen climbs off fence

Dear Comrades,
In an article in the *Financial Times* recently on the conversations of David Owen which are revealed in a new book, he recalls working on a building site in Plymouth during the Suez crisis in 1956, just before going up to Cambridge: "My working mates were solidly in favour of Eden. It was not only that they taught me how people like that think; they also opened up my eyes to how I should think myself". He goes on to say "...during the Falklands crisis, when it seemed that there were too many establishment people who really wanted us to lose. In order to get Thatcher out, you feel, they would willingly have seen the country defeated."
Owen clearly detests working people when they are in struggle, but will bow down to their every prejudice when it suits his own personal politics.
Yours fraternally
Mike John
Newport, Gwent

Summer camp superb

Dear Comrades,
This year was our first time at summer camp. Every minute of the day was filled with something to do. The debates, courses, especially those on the origins of the family and the International were overwhelming and inspiring.
We met people from other countries and built friendships that will carry us through until we meet again next year.
The last night was the pinnacle of the week and expressed everything the week had been about, the comradeship and solidarity was unforgettable.
Our contribution on stage with our song we felt was outstanding (Manchester modesty) even though our singing left a lot to be desired. Pilar, a Spanish comrade, was very brave to be associated with us.
We have brought the enthusiasm home with us and can't stop talking about it. We know next year will be even better if that is possible and look forward to rekind-

ling the friendships we made there.
A bag of clothes was found underneath our caravan. Would the person who has lost these please contact us on: 061 945 3093.
Yours fraternally
Jackie and Lynn
Wythenshawe

Unionists victimised

Dear Comrades,
One of my paper sales complained bitterly that her husband had been unemployed for over a year and still could not find a job. She said that he had gone to countless interviews and been convinced that the interviewer was suitably impressed and recommended him to be hired, but just when the letter of appointment should have arrived, a written request



Business as Usual, based on the dispute at Lady at Lord John goes on general release next week. We recommend all our readers to go and see it. Next week's paper will include a 4 page supplement reviewing the film, explaining the dispute and includes interviews with Lezli-An Barrett the Director and Audrey White—about whom the film was made.
Militant and the LPYS are featured prominently in the film so sellers should sell the paper and the supplement outside their local cinemas as the film tours—and don't miss it yourself!

Classified ads

20p per word, minimum 10 words. Semi-display £3 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.

- A3 size posters available depicting the outstanding revolutionaries Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg, 50p each. Available from the Fighting Fund Dept, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB. For all orders add 25% post and packaging.
- 'Militant for Labour & Youth' Enamel stud badges now available £1 each. Red plastic fighting fund collecting tins £1 each.

- NALGO Broad Left annual conference. Saturday 19 September 11am to 5pm. Swarthmore Centre, Woodhouse Sq, Leeds 2. Creche available. Further details from Chris Hill (w) 0532 431344.
 - Found at Summer Camp—a camera—write with description to WEG. Got a social coming up? We've got plastic cups, plates, bowls and beer glasses at wholesale prices. Contact WEG PO Box 332, London E15.
 - Cassette tape debate. Richard Venton (Merseyside *Militant* spokesman) and John Blevin (features editor *Morning Star*). 'Way forward after the election' (10 July). £1.75 (inc. p&p) from M Cock, 309 High St, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1VU.
- ### Militant meetings
- Southampton Marxist discussion group. Wednesdays 12.30pm. 7 Goodwin Close, Millbrook, Southampton. Creche provided. Thursdays 7.30pm. Tel 786879 for details.

No guns—no grouse

Dear Comrades,
TV viewers will have been shocked and horrified by the accounts of the Hungerford massacre. They will have been disgusted by Thatcher's ghoulish arrival the following day to see if any votes were going begging for an act of sympathy.
This bloody mass murder will be used as an excuse for widening police powers providing this in no way interferes with the multi-million pound small arms business.
The Tories, many of whom were blasting the living daylight out of the

for 'references' came. This is the catch.
At his last job he was a shop steward. He was victimised after a dispute and because of lack of support from his union officials, management got away with sacking him. Therefore, no reference, no job.
This is one of millions of different examples of the way the bosses rub out noses in it and though it is hard on the individual, when it affects a whole class the bosses are playing with fire.
Yours fraternally
Vic Dale
Southampton

grouse population on the 'Glorious 12.11th' may introduce restriction on who may acquire a firearms licence. (The current suggestion is that a doctor's certificate should be required—despite the fact that there is no guarantee that Ryan would thus have been prevented from obtaining a certificate). However, they will do nothing to close down the gun shops and the gun clubs.
Workers can have no confidence in the ability of the state to protect them. Only by their own actions can they defend themselves. Tenants' Associations and trade unions can compel local authorities to create 'gun free zones', crack down on these would be Rambos who amuse themselves in gun clubs.
Yours fraternally
Derek McMillan

Bosses shun immigrants

Dear Comrades,
A young Asian woman I know moved to this country just under three years ago from Kenya. For most of that time she has been looking for a job. Job application after job application and interview after interview bring the same results: "Sorry, you do not have enough experience". This is ignoring her eight years of experience in east Africa doing many jobs.
"I have tried for all kinds of work" she comments, "all these jobs I could easily cope with, but employers in Britain do not see my experience as relevant and often imply that I have made it all up, and further that I did

nothing since leaving school."
"The agencies are the worst. They treat you with contempt only being interested in making money and not with helping you get a job that matches your capabilities. Furthermore when they do send you to places to work it is as a shelf filler or crate packer, and not on jobs using your full experience. The only way I can see people like me getting a real job that matches our abilities is to sack Thatcher and her friends."
Yours fraternally
A Page
Middlesex

Attempt to keep out socialists

Dear Comrades,
On Tuesday 25 August I saw just how far the right wing are prepared to go to smash socialism. After my arrival at Kensington ward Labour Party I saw a young comrade in front of me holding an application form to become a member of the Party. He was rudely told to come back when he had been invited.
Another comrade who tried to enter was also stopped by a man who went into a boxing stance. We got the picture then, so myself and the other comrades let some sympathetic Labour Party members take the application forms into the meeting for us.
When the meeting finished

we were told that the officers of Kensington ward were not accepting applications for membership! This is despite over 60 applications being accepted by other wards in Broadgreen, and national officer David Hughes stating that applications could be accepted by wards and passed on to the national Labour Party. I urge all socialists to write letters of protest to: David Hughes, Labour Party, 150 Walworth Rd, London SE17 1JT. And to bring pressure to bear through your local Labour Party or union branch on Kensington Labour Party.
Yours fraternally
George McGovern
Liverpool

New term, old troubles

AS A new term begins, teachers in England and Wales return to face the initial consequences of Kenneth Baker's educational counter revolution with only their union organisation as a defence against the 'reforms' underway. But the existing union leaderships have proved woefully inadequate in leading any campaign to prevent our loss of negotiating rights and the introduction of new, drastically worsened conditions of service, which take effect from the first day of term.

Baker now feels emboldened to proceed with his new Education Bill—a mishmash of reactionary, utopian, harebrained schemes. These will signify, if carried through, a break with the idea of the free state education service that has existed since 1944, to be replaced with...what? No one knows—not even Baker's cronies in the DES admit to confidence in understanding exactly what will be the face of the education system in five years' time.

The introduction of unrestrained free market ideas into school organisation will result in one disaster after another for countless schools, teachers and school pupils. Those few that prosper will only do so at the expense of a much greater majority that suffer. The consultation period for the key proposals of the bill is over by the end of September—yet the issues at stake have not yet been discussed, and many school governing boards will be unable to consider, let alone respond to the proposals because of lack of time. The bill should be signed, sealed and delivered by next summer.

Central to the bill will be the 'opt out' clause. In this way a simple majority of balloted parents can vote (the staff who actually work in the school don't get a vote) to secede from the local education authority. In time they will be allowed to change the character of the schools—introduce special entrance exams, fees etc.

From the outset many such schools will put pressure on parents to cough up 'voluntary donations'. In predominantly middle class areas such developments will occur—and working class parents will be forced to move their children to other schools, maybe miles away.

In practice such 'parental choice' will be no choice for the majority. As the recent developments in Kirklees indicate, when 'opt out' becomes formalised there could also be a racial undercurrent in many areas.

Meanwhile schools will no longer have limits on the numbers of pupils admitted. 'Open enrolment' will mean a school can take the highest number of pupils for which there is physical space. This can only be done, however, by completely undermining LEA efforts to plan equitably the size of all schools in the area to the

By Bob Sulatycki
(West London NUT Personal capacity)

benefit of all. While some schools will expand their role, others will therefore, necessarily contract—with dangerous results:

Because schools will be funded according to their roll, their budgets will be cut if they lose numbers. As they lose numbers, they lose resources and staffing, their curriculum offered shrinks, they become more unpopular, lose more pupils and so on. Thousands of schools will be faced with a downward spiral towards inevitable closure.

Schools will become involved in desperate battles against each other in order to maintain their roll. The way will be opened for the advertising and marketing 'experts' to come in to help sell the schools.

The school itself will become responsible for its budget. The LEA, which can allocate resources according to the need of all the schools in the area, will be made quite marginal. If the school cannot make ends meet it will have to either get contributions from parents and local business (Baker himself welcomes this, as long as businesses then get some sort of return) or make cuts.

Curriculum

Heads are effectively to become school accountants. Since many have difficulty running schools at the best of times, it seems unlikely that they will cope effectively with this new responsibility. No doubt many heads will find they run out of money before the end of the year. After cutting back on the 'frills' (textbooks, health and safety) they would be forced to make cuts in staffing, which accounts for about 80 per cent of any given schools running costs.

Given the unpredictable variations in a school budget now that it is planned for school funding to be tied to a fluctuating school roll, there will be only one means of ensuring such a system could work. Vast numbers of staff would have to be placed on temporary contracts so that they can easily be discarded when the money runs out.

The icing on Mr Baker's cake is the introduction of a national



NUT members deserve a better lead in their fight to maintain education.

Photos: Militant

curriculum, to be supplemented by a system of testing at 7, 11, 14 and 16. Although there are arguments made in favour of a national curriculum, its introduction by Baker is designed for reactionary purposes—to return to a rigid, conservative, uncritical curriculum where the Government will deem what is and what is not to be taught.

The test results from schools will be published and compared to instill a spirit of competition. The discredited Eleven Plus, by which children were branded for life and schooled accordingly, is now replaced by the seven plus. Maximum pressure will be placed on teachers to achieve the best results. Their schools and even their jobs (with the new teacher assessment scheme) depend on it. As with 'payment by results' which came and went in the 19th century, teachers will be expected to return to the methods of rote learning.

The *Guardian* (3/9/87) suggests that these test results will not be the only index of 'matters relating to value for money'. The confidential DES circular here quoted continues to say that measures of schools' success should be 'specific, quantifiable and standardised'. According to the *Guardian*:

"Social behaviour and the level of extra-curricular activities would be used along with exam results to assess schools, in plans being considered by the Department of Education and Science.

"Behaviour would include staff and pupil demeanour, children's criminal records, truancy and lateness."

In the meantime, as if these plans were not enough, we are already now contending with the development of the City Technology Colleges and the expansion of private education through the Assisted Places Scheme. The crude elitism of such schemes is only

the most naked expression of the whole Tory approach.

The teachers' unions are strategically placed to lead the resistance to the unfolding strategy. Central to this will be the capacity of the unions, and especially the NUT as the largest, to give confidence to its own members that a serious campaign can be waged. In the immediate term that means rallying union members in a proper struggle in defence of pay and working conditions.

The bill will signify a break with the idea of the free state education service...

Bakers' removal of teachers' negotiating rights and imposed settlement still can, and must, be fought. Already there is talk of the introduction of regional pay and indications that a complete 'no strike' law might be imposed. More immediately, the massive cauldron of discontent in staff rooms, as the realities of the new working conditions hits home, needs to find expression in a nationally led campaign.

However, as the union leaders see their own strategy for waiting for a Labour government bite the dust, they now wholeheartedly embrace the ideas of 'New Realism'. This modernised outlook consists of telling members that there is not a lot we can do. In terms of activity, all members can expect is to fill in the new timesheets so that working hours can be mentioned.

It's true that the NUT have called for members to work a 35 hour week, but if members consistently find themselves working above this then there is certainly nothing to suggest they would be supported in taking action. The timesheets could be used as part

of a campaign in defence of hours—but the current approach means they will only be a monitoring exercise, individualised and toothless—a substitute for a campaign.

Alongside the lack of a campaign goes the swing to the right—the continued attacks on left associations, a ban on LAPAC and the cutbacks and reorganisation at Hamilton House (see *Militant* 863). It is imperative that the local divisions of the Union receive backing from the union nationally when they prepare for action in defence of members' rights. Real support must be given to these members who are willing to defend a 35 hour week, union policy on class size or local cover policy.

A nationally led campaign on these issues would genuinely inspire members, reactivate the tired layers of both major unions and signal the start of resistance on all fronts. Linked to such a campaign must be the pressing on of the faltering steps made in the direction of one TUC affiliated union for all teachers. Such a union, democratically controlled by its members would end years of futile and counterproductive inter-union sectarianism. The NUT must also follow the EIS (the major Scottish union) on balloting for the establishment of a political fund to give the political voice now which is required more than ever.

Baker's proposed education bill, due to be passed next summer and to come into force in 1989 casts a shadow over all we say and do. It demands that teachers play the leading role in, firstly, explaining its implications to the labour movement and the public and then in coordinating the struggle against it. From the grassroots we must now transform our unions into the united, campaigning organisations required for that task.



Teachers have made their feelings on Baker's legislation very clear.

Industrial Reports

Council manuals must reject offer

LOCAL AUTHORITY manual workers must decisively reject the 1987/88 pay deal currently on offer from the employers.

By a Nupe member

Union leaders are claiming that if this offer is accepted then manual workers will get pay rises averaging 10.6 per cent. On the surface this will be seen as very attractive to some. If it is examined more closely, however, it is far from attractive.

Divisions

The money on offer is not in the form of flat rate increases for all as demanded, for example, by this year's Nupe conference. Based on a review of the grading structure through job evaluation wage increases will range from £5 per week to £16.40 per week. Those at the top will get more and those at the bottom, less.

It's a recipe for setting worker against worker, men against women and women against men—creating divisions in the workplace exactly when maximum unity is needed.

And what is offered with

one hand is to be taken back with the other. Plus rates are to be abolished. There will no longer be any obligation for employers to at least give us two weeks holiday in the summer. Instead it is to be by "mutual agreement".

Even school caretakers, who stand to gain most in money terms at first glance, will find a sting in the tail. The abolition of the minimum floor area for a full time caretaker will almost certainly lead to the abolition of many full time jobs. The deletion of enhanced rates for weekend work, bank holidays and night rates will also seriously erode their rise.

The most ominous part of this proposed deal is the section entitled "Working Arrangements/Premium Payments". This section states that "The standard working week is 39 hours exclusive of meal times, spread over five days. Normally, all hours worked on Saturday shall be paid time and a half; and on Sunday at double time".

But it then goes on to say that variations from these standard provisions may now be negotiated locally. These negotiations can include "the number and spread of hours (which can be spread over periods other than a week) and the

level of enhanced rates that may apply to weekend work which is a part of the normal working pattern, excluding overtime."

This is clearly about giving Local Authorities the ability to reduce council workers' pay as part of the tendering process under the government's new privatisation legislation. Using the threat of private contractors, Local Authorities will seek to "negotiate" an end to enhanced payments for weekend work or overtime payments when more than 39 hours are worked.

Fears

Council workers could find themselves working 30 hours in the winter and 48 hours in the summer—all on basic rates.

This will mark the beginning of the end of the national agreement. Before the General Election the Tory Local Government Minister, Nicholas Ridley, declared his intention to scrap the national agreement which lays down minimum conditions for local authority workers.

Now it seems we are to be asked by our own leaders to begin to scrap it ourselves.

The fears of many local authority workers will be



Local Authority manual workers face a grave threat to their national agreement.

further enhanced by the "grading/training Link", part of the agreement which proposes that in future "the link between training received/qualifications held and grading will be discontinued for all manual workers. Grading will instead be linked to the duties which manual workers are required by local authorities to perform".

This is undoubtedly also designed to give employers even further job flexibility in preparation for tendering. The national union negotiators have admitted themselves that this agreement is about giving employers more flexibility so that there is no "margin" for contractors. But this "margin" represents our living standards.

Where will all this leave

the campaign against privatisation? The experience of the Health Service has shown that if we are to be left on our own to try and compete with private contractors through "in-house" tenders then this will mean massive job losses and cuts in our wages and conditions. If we allow the government to pick us

off one at a time then we are certain to be defeated.

This pay deal represents the biggest threat to our jobs and wages ever. It offers no way forward in defending our standard of living and fighting privatisation. We must overwhelmingly throw it out.

THE NUPE Broad Left has called a lobby against the pay deal of the Nupe National Local Government Committee and the Nupe National Executive on Wednesday 16 September.

Assemble at 9.30 am outside the Great Northern Hotel, Kings Cross to lobby the National Local Government Committee; and at 2.30pm outside Congress House, Great Russell Street to lobby the National Executive.

All Nupe members are urged to attend.

HFW Plastics Blacked

AFTER 20 weeks SOGAT have pulled out of the HFW Plastics dispute withdrawing strike pay, and promising to find work for the 47 sacked—although so far nothing has materialised. Every one of the strikers involved at the beginning stayed solid to the end. They will now receive a pittance in compensation from Jackson, their ex-boss, of £75 plus £35 for every year at the company.

The longest serving worker concerned will receive £500 after 14 years service. Understandably the mood is extremely bitter. Although a small dispute, the list of casualties demonstrates that this was the sharp end of the class struggle.

There were 68 arrests, half of them women and 20 injuries including six hospitalisations.

Gateshead Workers Support Group, set up during the strike, will now be raising money for those sacked in preparation for Christmas. HFW goods are still being blacked by Liverpool and Hull dockers. The company won't be forgotten by any of those who have been involved over the past five months.

By Bob Harker

Wakefield Hospitals: Workers show their muscle

ON FRIDAY 28 August over 600 hospital workers in Wakefield took a day's action over the disciplining of Nupe branch secretary, George Rusling (see issue 862).

By Wakefield Hospital workers

Even management were forced to concede there was 80 per cent support from the staff—porters, domestics, cooks, clerical staff were out on strike. Security men at Pinderfields when asked what it was like in the hospital replied: "Like the Marie Celeste".

The strike was the most solid ever in Wakefield hospitals with even more taking part than in the 1982 pay dispute.

Pickets were manned at the three main hospitals—Pinderfields, Stanley Road and Clayton from 5.30 am.

At Pinderfields no-one

would go into the kitchen to work so management had to cook the meals. The District Catering Manager complained he had not done any cooking for two years, only to be told he was going to get a lot of practice today!

The pickets gave out leaflets explaining the issues behind the strike to workers not involved and to out-patients and visitors. The response was excellent.

An ambulance driver and shop steward said he'd instruct his members not to cross if the pickets wanted. A lad with a broken leg, going to see the physio, asked us if we wanted him to go home and come back another day.

Sympathy

Many people wished us well, such as the sympathy we had built up with our week-long press campaign prior to the strike.

On the Stanley Road



Wakefield hospital workers showed management they wouldn't be intimidated.

picket all staff and visitors were asked to pay an entrance fee to get in and a further donation to get out. Lorries carrying non-essential supplies were turned away. Some drivers didn't need to be asked.

A rally of 200 strikers and local activists was held in the afternoon in an atmosphere reminiscent of the miners' rallies. Speakers included Molly Pinder, a Nupe steward who described the disgraceful manner in which old people were transferred from the County to Fieldhead Hospital—the incident which sparked the whole dispute off.

Dorothy Richardson, a local councillor and retired health worker, was followed by Wakefield La-

bour MP, Dave Hinchcliffe, who was cheered when he called for the resignation of Jack Smart, the Labour right winger responsible for carrying out Tory cuts as chair of the Health Authority.

Strike

Another cheer went up for Pat Doodey, a domestic, when she asked, "Who's going to fight for us hospital workers doing a lousy, dirty job for £1.92 an hour?" and then called for a strike over ancillary pay.

The rally was brought to a resounding finale with a call to action against low pay, cuts and privatisation by the chair, Adrian O'Malley, from Cohse Pin-

derfields. "We are the backbone of the service. Without us nothing moves, nothing is cleaned the service cannot function," said Adrian. The strike and the rally were perfect responses to the so-called "New realists" in the movement.

Far from subduing the workforce the management have stirred them up and now face a thriving Joint Shop Stewards Committee and workers ready to fight.

As one porter said in the bar afterwards, "Today's events have made me really proud to wear my union badge."

More than 30 copies of the *Militant* were sold on the picket lines.

Industrial Reports

Kilnhurst pit threat

Brum council dispute

IN APRIL British Coal announced the closure of Kilnhurst Colliery in South Yorkshire. The men at Kilnhurst decided to go through the review procedure as a method of saving the pit. At the time we were warned that British Coal would do their best to persuade us to pull out of the review and let the pit disappear quietly. However, most men were surprised by the manner in which British Coal acted in order to get their way.

In a blatant attempt to blackmail they put an offer to the miners—a job at the pit of your choice—if you pull out of the review. But in true British Coal style they announced

this offer on a Friday, only six days before the review. As a result a special general meeting took place on the Saturday morning which meant the men had less than 24 hours notice.

Formality

At the meeting there were some doubts and some confusion. After all, going to the pit of your choice appears a good deal, especially when bad geology on the working face is further threatening your future. Also some men had already accepted the fight as pointless.

Fortunately the mood of the

majority at the meeting was that we weren't on strike 12 months against pit closures, for nothing. Because of this the vote was in favour of keeping with the review.

When the review meeting took place it was only a formality. The South Yorkshire British Coal management, the NUM and Nacods all outlined their proposals for the pit. The national officers of British Coal listened and asked a few questions but the whole meeting only lasted 20 minutes. We now await the inevitable outcome of British Coal's decision which will doubtless be to go ahead with

closure.

If this is the case the NUM has to stand firm and go to the Independent Review Body. However, this is not enough. A more vigorous campaign has to be fought. This means taking our case out to other branches.

It is essential that they play a part because ultimately Kilnhurst will only stay open if other branches give full solidarity with any action called by Kilnhurst miners once they know the outcome of the whole review procedure.

By a South Yorkshire miner

AT THE time of writing 300 clerks in the City of Birmingham Housing Department are taking industrial action over a claim that was first submitted to management as long ago as last November.

In August last year the union (Nalگو) and management reached an agreement concerning restructuring proposals. One of these included a joint review of all scale 1 and 2 posts with the aim of creating through grades (scale 2/3). Management have taken several months to reply to the claim and their proposals have fallen well short.

The question of low pay figures highly in Nalگو. The last two national pay claims in local government have sought to relieve members of the burden of poverty wages. In fact the increase being sought by the clerks amounts to a modest £10 to £15 a month!

Following management's unsatisfactory offer the union held a secret ballot on the question of industrial action and received a 'yes' vote in excess of 90 per cent. The Housing Department clerks have now begun a series of 48 hour strikes (Tuesdays and Thursdays) over a 4 week period with the prospect of escalation of the dispute. As a result there will be a delay in the payment of Housing Benefit claims as well as a withdrawal of other housing services.

It would seem that this particular right-wing dominated Labour council will not acknowledge the fact that it is paying some of its own workforce poverty wages and yet this same administration has immersed itself in multi-million pound projects such as an Olympic bid, convention centre and a road race, the latter resulting in a £400,000 loss last year.

By Ian Leech

Nalگو Shop Steward
(personal capacity)

Moat House workers want a union...

THE TGWU has a national week of action from 19-26 September as part of their "Link-up" campaign to organise the unorganised.

19 September is also the day for a joint LPYS—Moat House strikers day of action. Throughout the country Moat House hotels have been targeted for pickets and demonstrations to publicise the strike.

Already LPYS branches have had a positive response from local TGWU officers keen to assist in this campaign, where they have been approached.

This campaign is not only a marvellous way to support the Moat House workers but also an opportunity of answering those right wing critics of the LPYS who say it has no links with workers. On the contrary it was precisely because of those links and the work already done by the LPYS, locally and nationally, that the approach was made in the first place by the Moat House strikers.

By Ian Parker



Sacked Moat House workers on the march.

Torrington strike

WORKERS AT the American-owned Torrington Company in Coventry are now in their second week of strike action. This is the first strike in the company's history.

Over the past eight years, a 1000-strong workforce has been depleted to only 240. Low wage rises have been accepted in the past as the firm has pleaded poverty. Consequently Torrington is the lowest-paying engineering company in the city. Toolroom fitters and machinists are getting £20 below the average rate.

Flexibility of working has also been accepted in the past. This year things have come to a head with a management offer of £5 be-

ing rejected as the workers go for £20 across the board.

The union implemented a ban on paperwork and a work to rule. Last Thursday a worker was sent home for abiding by the ban and the workforce walked out with him.

The mood now is very good and although low offers have always been accepted in the past this time the overwhelming feeling is to stay out until there's more on the table.

Support/donations to Shop stewards committee, Torrington Co., Torrington Ave., Canley, Coventry.

Melanie Storer spoke to Torrington workers

Liverpool GMB

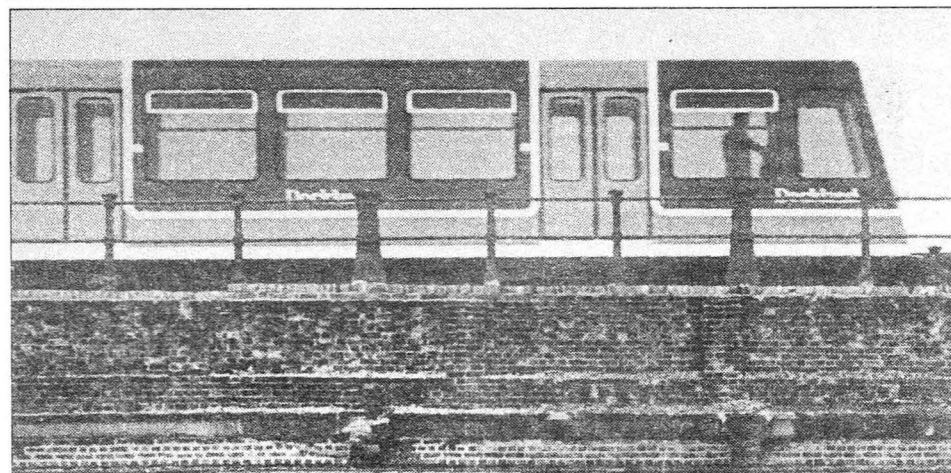
THE DISPUTE between GMB branch 5 and Liverpool council continues. Discussions are now taking place between councillors and the unions. This is a step forward.

At one stage it looked as if an agreement was in sight, however, ominously the council was not pre-

pared to withdraw its plans to make all drivers 'driver-gardeners'. It is feared that this change in job description would be a forerunner for job cuts in the future.

Quite rightly the GMB are not prepared to concede this point.

..DLR workers need one



Docklands Light Railway management are obstructing unionisation of the workforce.

THE MANAGEMENT of the Dockland Light Railway have further hardened their attitude in their attempts to prevent union organisation of the new workforce.

After a recent ballot in which the staff voted by 43 to 11 for trade union representation, the company have refused to approve any union agreement on the basis that it never received the backing of 50 per cent of the workforce. Millions of people will wish that this logic had been applied to the Tories in the

general election!

The rail unions must make it a first priority to campaign amongst the company workforce. They should not only leaflet about the benefits of joining either the NUR or ASLEF, so establishing links with the London Underground workers, union reps should try where possible to discuss personally with the workers involved.

The lessons of the Wapping dispute should also be rammed home about the complete bankruptcy of the

EETPU's position and their company union attitude over no strike deals. They have shown an interest in organising on the DLR.

It would be futile to wait for the nod from management in order to organise. It can only be done with direct input to the workers concerned. Then negotiations can begin with management facing a fait accompli.

By Bob Russell
(NUR)

Broad Left Organising Committee

London Labour Movement
Conference, Saturday
24 October, York
Hall, Old Ford Road,
Bethnal Green, E2
10.30 am to 5.30
pm Speakers include
John Macreadie and
Tony Mulhearn

Fee: £3 per
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Militant

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Kilnhurst miners-Page 15

Miners set to ban overtime

National Miner's Broad Left Conference
Saturday 26 September 10.30am
 Graves Cinema, Sheffield University Students' Union, Western Bank, Sheffield.
 Credentials £2 from Miners' Broad Left, c/o 39 Gold St, Barnsley, South Yorks.

THE NATIONAL Union of Mineworkers have set 21 September as the deadline for the imposition of our national industrial action. British Coal will have to make substantial concessions to avoid our overtime ban going ahead. The NEC are prepared to negotiate on the basis of the firm mandate they've been given. There can be no back door deals.

Of course, Sir Robert Haslam can always choose to believe his own propaganda that miners are as yet unwilling to struggle. But the 77.5 per cent vote for action reflects the genuine anger of rank and file miners at management's attempts to introduce a draconian disciplinary code. Nor should British Coal be under any illusion that they can drive a wedge between the National Officials and more 'moderate' elements within the NUM Executive. Even if such a split exists over the issue, the membership will not allow British Coal to establish this vile code as a fact

By Joe Owens
 (Chairman Bilston Glen NUM personal capacity)

And, in their drive for profitability, stability and privatisation, that is exactly what Sir 'Bob' and his cronies want to avoid. Furthermore, the disciplinary code is itself in the eyes of the bosses a diversion from British Coal's main task of imposing so-called 'flexible working'.

Morale

For the union to stand firm now and gain a victory over the code would be to raise morale and prepare the ground for the major struggle ahead.

Six day production cannot be allowed to creep into our industry. The overtime ban to be introduced over the disciplinary code should be regarded as the first shots in the battle to preserve ALL our hard-won rights and conditions.

The Broad Left conference on 26 September is an ideal opportunity for rank and file activists to have their voices heard, to exchange ideas, plan and prepare.

The left must rally around... the finest fighting traditions of our union

Any settlements unfavourable to the miners would result in the outbreak of unofficial and guerrilla action throughout the coalfields wherever management sought to use the code. It would be a recipe for continuous conflict and unrest.



The chairman of British Coal may have changed, but not his attitude to miners.

Many of our Area leaders have shown in recent months that they lack the confidence and perspectives to lead the struggles that are unfolding. The left must rally around those who are prepared to stand by the finest fighting traditions of our union.

Scargill has declared "They have come so far. They go no farther". The miners themselves must make these words a reality. Forward to the overtime ban. Prepare for wider action.

Smash Pinochet
For a socialist Chile
 London LPYS Chile rally: 7.30pm
 Friday 11th September 1987
KINGSWAY PRINCETON COLLEGE
KINGS CROSS
SPEAKERS INCLUDE: PAT WALL MP

Stop press
 Knowsley North CLP suspended at this week's organisation sub-committee of Labour's NEC. Three officers, Jim McGinley, Alan Kelly and Dave Kerr to be sent to National Constitutional Committee. Charges, some of which changed during course of investigation, pushed through hurriedly on flimsy "evidence". Report goes to full NEC on 23 September.

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What we stand for

- The immediate introduction of a 35-hour week without loss in pay as a step towards the elimination of unemployment.
- Reversal of all Tory cuts and a massive programme of public works on housing, education, the health service, etc.
- A minimum wage of £120 a week 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.