

Militant

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Marxist Weekend School

London 27-29 November
Peter Taaffe, whose new book *Liverpool, the city that dared to fight* appears in January, will be speaking on the historic struggle of Liverpool Council.

Scargill

His re-election will be a blow to the morale of the Tories and their class

must win

ARTHUR SCARGILL'S decision to stand for re-election as president of the National Union of Mineworkers has received a tremendous echo among rank and file miners.

Miners are threatened with six-day production, flexible working, the iniquitous disciplinary code and pit closures. After several frustrating months of an ineffective overtime ban this election will clear the air for the battles against them.

The Tories and British Coal want a compliant NUM leadership, which will give only token opposition to their attacks. They will do all they possibly can to prevent Arthur Scargill's re-election.

But who will oppose him? The former left area leaders have all been put on the spot by this election.

Put up or shut up

They have been conducting a campaign for statesmanlike negotiations over the disciplinary codes and the concept of six-day production. They have made insulting personal attacks on the style of Arthur Scargill's leadership, playing into the hands of the Tories and British Coal management.

But so far, no area leader has been prepared to pick up the gauntlet. Miners have watched a game of pass the parcel in which no-one wants the prize. All the area leaders have been desperately imploring each other to stand.

Frantic manoeuvrings to find a candidate with some credibility are taking place behind the scenes. The possibility has been put forward of the ex-left leaders supporting the Yorkshire right-winger, Walsh. So has the idea of there being no other

By Ian Isaac

Secretary, National Miners' Broad Left

candidate at all! The fact that these area leaders have yet to find a candidate speaks volumes about their isolation from the rank and file.

"Put up or shut up!" That is the message of the rank and file.

I have received reports from every coalfield showing the overwhelming desire of ordinary miners to retain Arthur Scargill as their president and maintain the fighting socialist traditions displayed in the historic battle of 1984/5.

The miners' Broad Left calls upon all rank and file miners to organise as never before for a victory for Arthur Scargill. We should not take victory for granted. The whole weight of the capitalist establishment will be thrown into this election, including the Tories, the millionaire press, the Coal Board and right-wing Labour MPs.

Let us involve every rank and file miner in mass meetings, discussion and debate in order to secure a crushing victory on 22 January.

The re-election of Arthur Scargill will give a massive boost to the developing confidence and militancy among miners. It will be a severe blow to the morale of Tories and their class. It will lift the mood of workers in all unions in the fight to defend living standards, jobs, and trade union and democratic rights.



Photo: Dave Sinclair

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Militant

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

Scargill and new union offensive

A SAVAGE battle for the presidency of the National Union of Miners looms ahead in the next few months. This battle will not be left solely to miners. Already the capitalist media and right wing Labour MPs have involved themselves in the scramble to find a credible candidate to stand against Arthur Scargill.

The ex-left NUM area leaders have been increasingly vocal with demands that the NUM should seek a middle road and be more flexible in its relations with British Coal management and the Tories.

But there is—it seems—a generalised reluctance among these leaders to put their moderation to the test. The reason is clear: despite all the hysterical abuse heaped upon Arthur Scargill, not least by some of these ex-lefts, he is seen by the mass of ordinary miners as a leader who is unbending in defence of their jobs and conditions.

Any candidate standing against Arthur Scargill would be looked upon as an ally of the management and the Tories in the run-down of the industry and mining communities. His re-election will be a crushing blow to the idea that militancy and socialist ideas are unpopular among rank and file workers.

Following the defeat of the miners' strike—due above all to the refusal of the trade union and labour leaders to build effective support for the miners—strikes throughout industry hit a 50 year low. In this very temporary climate 'new realists' in the NUM and the unions generally believed they had discovered a new permanent fact of life: 'the workers will not fight!'

Already this pessimism is being answered. In recent months widespread defensive action has taken place in the public sector. Postal workers have been in the forefront, with 91 disputes nationally since April, 61 in London alone. Now, despite a hesitant, low-key campaign by the UCW leaders, postal workers have recorded a 55 per cent majority for an offensive strike for a shorter working week.

A significant industrial offensive is also brewing in the private sector, where workers are moving forward to reclaim some of the ground lost in the last few years. Vauxhall workers won a victory in a dispute on bonus payments and have since had a one day strike over pay. A similar mood of militancy is growing in Ford and in nationalised Austin Rover.

As with the 1984/5 miners' strike, young workers are in the front line. In the drive by management for maximum efficiency, in most industries it is the young workers who have been thrust into the most arduous and back-breaking jobs. The massive postal sorting offices are staffed almost exclusively by young workers. So are the assembly lines in the car industry where workers are considered old at 24.

Young workers in particular will not be used like machines. They have been pushed beyond the limit.

The young miners themselves have more than recovered from the 1985 defeat. Last year there were 35 times more strikes per worker in the mining industry than in the economy as a whole. On average miners lost eight times more hours in industrial disputes than other workers.

At this time, a renewed mandate for Arthur Scargill is thus charged with enormous widespread significance. Believing their own propaganda about the unpopularity of fighting leaders, the Tories designed sections of their new Employment Bill specifically to force Arthur Scargill into an election. But now he has taken the fight to them, they are panicking.

His victory will stiffen the resolve of every miner against six-day working, pit closures and the disciplinary code. It will give a massive impetus to the developing confidence of workers in all unions.

A deep industrial recession is on the way. Clearly it will be met by a newly embattled working class. A renewed avalanche of redundancies and lay-offs will provoke unparalleled resistance.

Militant supporters will do their utmost to ensure the re-election of Arthur Scargill. And in the struggles ahead Militant supporters will play a decisive role in helping to rearm all the organisations of the labour and trade union movement with fighting socialist leadership.

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Labour women's conference

LABOUR WOMEN at their conference on 14 and 15 November, made clear to the Party leadership there is no support amongst rank and file women for the abandonment of socialism.

By Margaret Creear
Delegate Southwark
Women's Council

They were only able to deliver this verdict, however, after Militant supporters had successfully moved reference back of the attempt by the majority on the National Women's Committee to impose workshops on the conference. Originally just Sunday morning was to be devoted to discussing resolutions—22 minutes had been allocated to debate Alton's Abortion Bill!

As it was, important resolutions were carried on child abuse and women's safety, demanding increased expenditure on social services, transport etc, but looking firmly to a socialist society as the basis for better human relationships.

But it was Alton's Bill that really set conference alight. The emergency composite from Pollock and Coventry women's sections was overwhelmingly carried. Their delegates stressed the need to campaign against the lack of NHS facilities and against the poverty which can drive women to abortion, as well as against the legal restrictions.

Several delegates demanded a lead from the NWC and from the labour and trade union leaders in calling a national demonstration against Alton. They also demanded that all Labour MPs abide by Party policy and vote against the bill.

This fighting mood continued throughout the conference. In the poll tax debate the EETPU delegate found little support for attempts to derail discussion by witch-hunting. She quoted from Militant's poll tax leaflet, and de-

Victory for Marxism

manded supporters be "dealt with" for advocating breaking the law. "What about the suffragettes," and "Liverpool" came back the cries.

An emergency motion called for a labour movement conference to launch a national struggle to defend local council democracy. It also pointed to Liverpool's local election successes and despite attempts by the right to repeat the old slanders, was carried.

The major blow to 'new realism' came in the nationalisation debate, however. Public ownership of the pharmaceutical industry was carried, and then delegates turned their attention to the banks and financial institutions. Muriel Browning, from Llanelli Women's Council, pointed to the millions made in speculation, whilst manufacturing industry continued to collapse. "The stock market crash is a forerunner of world recession, and we will be made to pay".

Nationalisation

Another delegate explained that for the last few years conference has discussed the increasing number, especially among women workers, of part-time jobs and temporary contracts, who can be pushed out of the workforce at a minute's notice. "Why put so many on temporary contracts, if capitalism has a stable future?"

The privatisation composite demanded renationalisation of hived off industries but also the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies. Moving it, the Ber-



Labour women demand that the Party leaders organise against Alton's Bill.

mondsey delegate threw out a challenge to anyone who wanted to oppose it, to come up and defend the record of any of these monopolies. It was not taken up, and the resolution was passed on a card vote.

The conference was a victory for Marxist ideas. 70 attended the Militant readers' meeting, £400 was raised in fighting fund and a quarter of delegates bought

the paper. Perhaps Neil Kinnock should 'listen to' the Party's women members.

THE TUC General Council has agreed to participate in a demonstration against Alton's Bill on 19 March. John Macreadie has demanded that the TUC call and lead a labour movement demonstration in defence of working class women's abortion rights.

CP's terminal decline

THE 40TH Congress of the Communist Party was a dying gasp from an organisation which once attracted the country's most militant workers.

It confirmed the expulsion of most of the Party's best known trade unionists including TUC General Council Member, Ken Gill. It heard that membership was at its lowest since the war, "reflecting recent years of crisis and longer-term membership decline," according to general secretary, Gordon McLennan.

And it discussed what one delegate called the "death" of the YCL, the Party's youth wing, whose total membership is now 44 in just three branches.

The only 'success' the Communist Party could record was the increase in sales of its journal, *Marxism Today*. The executive congratulated it on "a big increase in media coverage...the vast majority of which is favourable." They omitted to mention that it has won this praise for providing the arguments that Labour leaders, from Neil Kinnock to David Blunkett, have used to justify their defection to the right.

But McLennan's keynote speech was to the right of Neil Kinnock's address to Labour's conference.

A few references to class politics and unilateral disarmament were thrown in to fend off criticism from other factions in the Party. But McLennan's message on every issue was that the labour movement should submerge itself in alliances with anyone.

Support Liberals

He praised empty gestures like Hands Across Britain as the way to fight unemployment. Campaigning against the poll tax should include "Liberals and sections of the SDP and the Tories." Labour must end its "negative and sometimes hostile attitude" to the Alliance parties, with whom "electoral agreements might well emerge."

One delegate even criticised "both right and left of the British labour movement" for having "aspects of sectarianism about them." Apparently Labour's right is ultra-left for not organising pacts with the SDP traitors, and dissident Tories!

The CP leadership accepts that capitalism will exist indefinitely and that the working class is too weak to do anything about it.

In the unions too, the CP's policy is more and more openly right-wing. An

executive member criticised Arthur Scargill for "sticking to rigid formulas" and industrial organiser, Peter Carter, attacked "those union leaders who use militancy to create divisions within the working class".

Such horrifying right-wing phrases, and the failure of the CP's policies to measure up to events, have resulted in a series of splits and expulsions. The leadership has been prepared to use the crudest Stalinist methods to defend their liberal 'Euro-communist' politics.

While encouraging the trendies of *Marxism Today* to run theoretical riot, they have purged the faction who control the *Morning Star*, the daily paper set up by the CP.

Essentially there is no principled difference between the 'Euro-communists' and the *Morning Star* faction, who are also committed to cross-class alliances and support for the bureaucratic dictatorships in Russia and Eastern Europe. This congress shows that incorrect policies have led both wings of the 'Communist' Party to a state of terminal decline.

By Tony Cross

Racist repatriation of the homeless

FOR THE last month the Labour council in the North London borough of Camden have been repatriating Irish families whom they claim they cannot house.

By Colin de Freitas

The families have been issued with airline tickets and told to return to Ireland. A pregnant woman who was repatriated by Camden is now squatting in a Dublin flat without heating or electricity and with little prospect of being housed for three or four years.

This is a scandal which must be utterly condemned by the whole labour movement.

Intentionally

Council leaders justify the policy on the grounds that these families have made themselves intentionally homeless when they came to Britain in the first place. The council is considering whether to do the same with Bangladeshi families claiming housing in the borough.

Camden have gone even further than Liberal-controlled Tower Hamlets council, who earlier this year turfed out 80 Bangladeshi families from bed and breakfast accommodation and threw them on the streets. According to the Liberals they too had made



March against racist deportations in North London last Saturday.

themselves deliberately homeless by leaving Bangladesh. But Camden are actually sending families 'back home'.

Labour's national executive committee (NEC) passed a resolution, moved by the Young Socialist representative, Linda Douglas, condemning "the racist policy of the Liberal and SDP council in Tower Hamlets" and accusing them of using racism "to implement cuts and attack the conditions of black and white people in Tower

Hamlets".

The actions of Camden, a so-called 'left' council, make it harder for Labour activists to fight the callous evictions of the Tower Hamlets Liberals. They are

Callous

also opening up the way for the racists and bigots in the Tory Party to call for the repatriation of blacks because British capitalism cannot offer them houses, jobs, health care, etc.

The NEC must now call

on Camden to abandon immediately any further repatriations and to reverse all those already instituted and ensure that no other Labour authority ever sanctions such policies in the future.

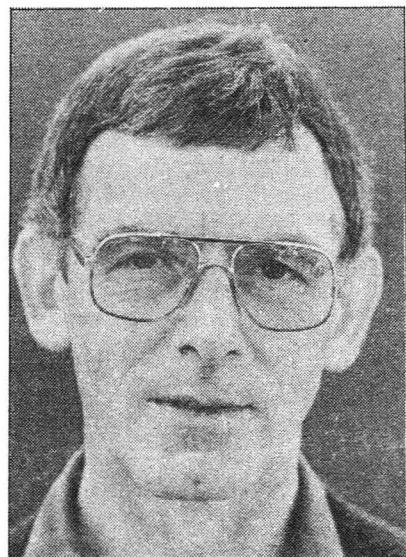
IN THE face of Thatcher's anti-working-class offensive and the actions of councils like Camden and Tower Hamlets, the need for black and white unity in the struggle against the Tories is essential.

The Marxists and the Labour Party Young Socialists are exposing the dangers of racism to black and white workers. The Black Youth rally to be held in Lambeth Town Hall on 5 December will take this message out to the black communities and the labour movement.

Invited speakers include Arthur Scargill, Bill Morris, Paul Boateng MP, Keith Vaz MP and Linda Douglas.

Don't stand on the sidelines

MILITANT



Roger McKay

MILITANT'S CAMPAIGN to win thousands of new supporters in November continues with this statement by Roger McKay, president of Ipswich Teachers' Association and delegate to this year's National Union of Teachers conference.

"The only way to answer the hypocrisy and double standards of the Tories' attitude to teachers and state education is with a clear and positive socialist alternative.

"This is what Militant has always done and why I have supported the paper for a number of years.

"Education under socialism would mean modern well-resourced and properly staffed schools providing true equality for working-class children, which we have never had yet in this country."

Broadgreen right gains

THE ANNUAL General Meeting of Liverpool Broadgreen Constituency Labour Party, postponed for practically 18 months, saw a big shift to the right.

By Dave Cotterill

The party bureaucracy, who act in concert with the right wing, is trying to prepare the way for the reselection of Terry Fields MP.

Their aim has been to dishearten the active membership. They expelled Derek Hutton (chair) and Roger Bannister (secretary).

Then they debarred the newly-elected officers, Josie Aitman (chair) and Elaine Bannister (secretary). Both have been referred to the national constitutional committee (for probable expulsion) and for this 'crime' were disallowed as delegates.

Since the general election a dozen new members have been rejected, some on the grounds that they were not on the electoral register, one girl just because she used a shortened version of her name on the application form.

Yet at Friday's meeting some new delegates who are not on the electoral register in Broadgreen, were allowed in.

One ward membership secretary was insisting that he see new members personally before accepting their applications.

The party has been suspended since August 1986, yet nine trade union branches were allowed to affiliate up to December 1986 and

send 10-12 new delegates. In other words, ward parties were disenfranchised immediately, but certain trade unions managed to add new delegates.

In all likelihood a 'prison regime' will develop—the newly-elected secretary, Malcolm Kennedy, is well-known as a witch-hunter. The new Youth Officer, Frank Dunn, was recently quoted on the radio as saying he would be outside the Militant rally to watch if Terry Fields attended and that if he did he would be reporting to the national executive.

Unfortunately many of those on the left have now stampeded to the right and joined them in an entirely unprincipled alliance against the Militant.

The comments of John Hamilton, the former leader of the city council, who was elected as chairman of the Broadgreen party, are indicative of how far they have travelled away from a left position in the party.

He has already through the pages of the media threatened Terry Fields' position, declaring: "If Terry Fields is hoping to retain his seat as MP, he will have to take note of the new membership of the constituency, particularly the executive and work closely and harmoniously with them if he wants to have their confidence. This can happen to any MP—he has got to recognise the winds of change".

Former lefts in the Transport and General Workers' Union have declared themselves as a 'third force' (the 'Progressive Left'), rising above the right and the Militant. Yet on the night they cast their votes with the right.

The genuine elements within the

Broad left throughout the city are now appalled at the consequences of these actions and without a doubt action will be taken to replace these people who parade under a left banner but in reality block with the right.

For months now the party machine in Liverpool has been acting in tandem with the trade union bureaucracy to achieve a result for the right in Broadgreen. Neil Kinnock's cypher, Peter Kilfoyle, has personally ensured that the machine of the labour movement was mobilised for the right wing.

The 47 surcharged councillors may be fighting to avoid bankruptcy, Ford workers may be out on strike, but the right and former left have ignored these struggles in order to mobilise everything to defeat Militant in Broadgreen.

Yet the hold of the right wing is precarious. Some positions were won by only one vote. For the time being they have secured their aims, but their attempt to deselect Terry Fields will come up against a brick wall. As one woman put it the next morning: "We are militant people in Liverpool; that is why we want MPs like Terry Fields".

THREE MEMBERS of Glasgow Springburn Labour Party—Stephen Lees, Emma Phillips and Charlie Robertson—have been referred to the national constitutional committee for expulsion.

They are charged with bringing the party into disrepute, misrepresenting Springburn Labour Party, collecting money and having the LPYS banner without permission.

Local MP Michael Martin referred to a lobby of the general management committee as 'scum'.



Out of order

Attack on the poorest

THE LABOUR MP for Coventry South East, Dave Nellist, has condemned the government's Social Security Bill, which "attempts to make the working class of this country, especially the poorest sections of the working class, pay for the crisis in the capitalist economy which is not of their making".

He said in Parliament that the social fund, which is to replace supplementary benefit, will make the poor pay yet again: "The budget that will be allocated to local offices to administer the social fund will include the amount that claimants must pay back on the loans that they may be granted.

"Therefore the social fund will become a local poor box for people on low incomes. Future unemployed people will have no right to extra help with major expenses such as children's clothing, cookers or repairs which are not covered by their weekly benefit.

"The system of single payments will be replaced by a system of loans rationed through the fund" he added: "I strongly advise all those who might read the debate, or extracts of it, to seek assistance from their local law centre or citizens advice bureaux so that they can claim their rights before they disappear in April 1988." "The Tories" he said "have set weekly benefit rates at a miserly level. Inevitably the social fund will be overrun by people who cannot make ends meet. The Bill gives the administrators greater discretion to decide who deserves, or does not deserve, help."

"Local offices will be expected to keep within their budgets and not to operate waiting lists or review those cases turned down, because of the lack of money, for a minimum of six months. The draft manual states: 'Single applicants or a couple without children would generally have lower priority' and 'Loans should not be made to those unable to pay'.

"Once again," he concluded "the poorest group of those on benefits will face the severest cuts."

**Labour Party
Young Socialists**



Booed

"YOU'RE TRYING to make YTS sound luxurious. What do you know about it? I know loads of people who've been on them! There's no training and none of my friends have got a job at the end of the scheme," shouted a school student in a debate at Parliament Hill School, Camden.

She was having a go at the MSC representative, who debated with Paula Hanford of the LPYS National Committee on YTS. 450 school students turned up to hear the debate.

When the chairperson introduced the MSC speaker she was booed and hissed. But when Paula was announced as an opponent of the schemes, the audience clapped cheered and stamped their feet.

The MSC speaker started by saying, "I know everyone here will disagree with what I have to say, but please bear with me." So much for YTS being popular with young people!

And everybody was in stitches when she went on to say, "Yes, I know there are deaths on YTS, but people die in all workplaces."

The LPYS speaker got a brilliant response. There was an electric atmosphere with nearly all the students really angry about the Tories' proposals.

The school students' union has to turn this sort of mood into action.

By Dan Lewenstein
London School
Students' Union

**Idle
buggers?**

YOUNG SOCIALISTS might be surprised to find some other people with doubts about YTS.

Leslie Kemp, ex-chairman of the Construction Industry Training Board, has criticised the scheme.

But don't go thinking he is standing up for free choice and all the other Tory virtues they're always on about!

"The last thing you want is to have a lot of idle buggers dumped on you for training they don't want," says Mr Kemp.

His board was the biggest training agency in YTS. Young building workers would no doubt tell him: "We don't want training in making the tea, but we would like a scheme that pays properly and gives us proper skills."

Stop the Tories'

Needed: Socialist leaders for students

THE LABOUR Campaign for a Socialist NUS was launched at a recent meeting called by Langside College Labour club in Scotland.

It was the first step in starting a debate in the Scottish student movement on how to defeat the Tories' attacks on education.

The meeting concluded that a new leadership was needed for students in the region, and decided to contend for the Labour nominations for the NUS Scotland executive elections in 1988.

They decided to campaign on a programme of joint action between students and workers to defeat education cuts.

But building a fighting leadership for the Scottish student leadership is inseparable from the struggle to democratise National Organisation Labour Students. The meeting also decided to conduct a campaign for a democratic selection procedure as a prerequisite for mobilising maximum support around the Labour candidates.

By John Jennings



Photo: Mick Carroll.

YTURC lobby of Parliament in 1985.

Just Temporary Slavery

THE NEW Job Training Scheme (JTS) became Just Temporary Slavery for John Millar of Whitburn in West Lothian.

Harassed by the Job Centre into going onto JTS, he was placed in Glenburne Security Ltd of Glasgow as a 'trainee' security guard, along with several other 'trainees'.

After an initial quiet period, they came under pressure from management to do more work, until eventually they were expected to do 70 hours a week! They were threatened that if they left the scheme, their benefit would be stopped.

At one point, John worked from 7 am to 12 midday, and then from 2 pm to 12 noon the next day, a 27 hour shift over a weekend! All this just to get his benefit!

When he contacted the local MSC office, they admitted that Glenburne Security had been stopped from running JTS three times before.

During the four weeks he was working on the scheme, John only received one week's giro, due to a 'hiccup' at the local DHSS.

The MSC regards Reid Consultants, the managing agency for the scheme in West Lothian, as the best performing in the country. The MSC's slogan 'Helping you to help yourself' should be changed to 'Helping employers to help themselves'!

By Jim Bennett
Edinburgh

Scottish

OVER 150 young people came to the YTURC rally held in Dundee as part of the Scottish half day strike on 5 November.

LPYS speaker, Terry Doherty spoke of the horrific conditions youth face and the need for them to be organised through YTURC and the LPYS to fight back against the government attacks. Many of those present were attending their first political event.

Over 300 FE students and YTS trainees came out on strike at Falkirk Tech. 50 youth attended a rally in the Falkirk Shopping Centre. The rally was addressed by speakers from YTURC, the LPYS and local trade unionists. Falkirk Trades Council gave their support despite a scandalous letter from the STUC dis-

sociating themselves from the strike.

The Scottish Labour Party and the Scottish Trades Union Council executives opposed the strike without proposing any alternative.

Yet they were forced to recognise its success. When interviewed on TV Margaret Lynch, member of the Scottish Labour Party executive and Scottish Youth Campaign Committee, had to admit that it was a "credible demonstration."



Photo: Militant

YTURC members march against YTS conscription in Glasgow in September.

strike success Hair-raising experience

CPSA DEPUTY general secretary, John Macreadie, has written to the Scottish TUC asking them why they are circulating unions with an attack on the Youth Trades Union Rights Campaign (YTURC).

"The CPSA is currently running a campaign against the unagreed imposition of YTS in the Civil Service and we have found YTURC very helpful, and that we share common objectives in the campaign against YTS," he says.

MORE AND more young people are getting angry about the idea of enforced YTS schemes and their slave-labour wages.

"Christmas is coming up soon, and the money which is left each week is saved—just £3. How can you buy a decent present for that?", five second-year hairdressing YTS trainees wrote in a letter to Bruce Arnott, East of Scotland organiser for YTURC.

"In our salon we do

more work than the stylists. We shampoo, clean the salon from top to bottom every day, pass up rollers, wash windows, run behind everyone, pick up things, wash towels, wash tools, answer the phone.... These are only half the things we have to do", they say.

"We think if YTS money went up to a decent wage, then more young ones will decide to take a YTS rather than laying about the house and wandering the streets."

YTS conscription

YTURC
Youth Trade Union
Rights Campaign

**Labour
leaders
attack
youth**

Conference threatened

THE NATIONAL conference of the Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS) is under threat.

The Labour Party's Youth Subcommittee has decided to have a two week 'inquiry' into the conference and report to the National Executive. Leading right-wingers did little to conceal the fact that they aim to undermine *Militant's* influence in the Party's youth section, but, as leading

official, Joyce Gould, said: "The problem is, if we take away *Militant*, there'd be no conference."

The right's solution is likely to be that the conference is reduced to 'workshops', without the power to take decisions, or even cancelled altogether.

The LPYS's paper *Socialist Youth* is to be shut down, even though this will cost the Party money. The printers insisted that they need three months' notice of cancellation. But the committee was so keen to close *Socialist Youth* on political grounds, that it rejected a proposal to print the paper, which makes a profit, for that period, and decided to pay the printer not to produce it!

The Further Education Labour Students (Fels) are to be rewarded for getting Labour student, Colette Williams, onto the NUS executive by an investigation by the infamous National Constitution Committee. This move, inspired by the leadership of the National Organisation of Labour Students, could lead to disciplinary measures against Fels members.

Protests against the attacks on the LPYS and Fels are expected to flood in to the Labour Party over the next week.

By Militant reporters

Bosses to run FE colleges

THE TORIES' Education Reform Bill contains the most serious attacks yet on the Further Education sector.

Cheryl Varley is the Further Education Labour Students (Fels) member on the NUS Further Education National Committee (Fenc), a body which represents 750,000 FE students in NUS. Cheryl has been arguing for Fenc to campaign against the Tories' attacks, which it has not discussed yet! Below is a summary of a campaigning document produced by Cheryl outlining what the proposals mean:

THE FE sector is already underfunded. Many colleges have very few facilities for students, such as sports facilities and course related facilities like computers.

The Tories have cut at least £2 billion in education. Rate capping has meant cuts in FE colleges since 60-70 per cent of local authority budgets are spent on education.

250,000 FE students do not receive any grant whatsoever. Now the Tories want to force 30,000 16-17 year old part time unemployed students onto YTS.

They are only interested in education as long as it profits their big business friends. With increasing unemployment it is now more profitable for the Tories to reorganise the FE colleges into nothing more than YTS work houses.

Boards of governors will be given the power to run colleges. They will be reorganised to guarantee local bosses at least 50 per cent of the seats. Trade unions and student unions will not be guaranteed any! In effect the colleges will be handed over to control by local

big business, accountable to no one but themselves.

They will have a free rein in determining the content of, and access to, education for the local community. They will squeeze out subjects that they can't make money out of, like art and sociology.

Opting out

There is no guarantee that student unions will receive a budget or even a right to exist! The wages of college staff and power to hire and fire will be determined by the board of governors. This is a clear attack on the unions and the national pay rates they have won.

The idea of 'opting out' will be extended to the FE sector. The Tories' plans will result in the development of elite colleges with resources funded by local industry. Ghetto colleges would develop with poor resources teaching unprofitable subjects. In the long run these colleges would close.

However legislation will not prevent the anger of students and trade unionists over these proposals to privatise further education.

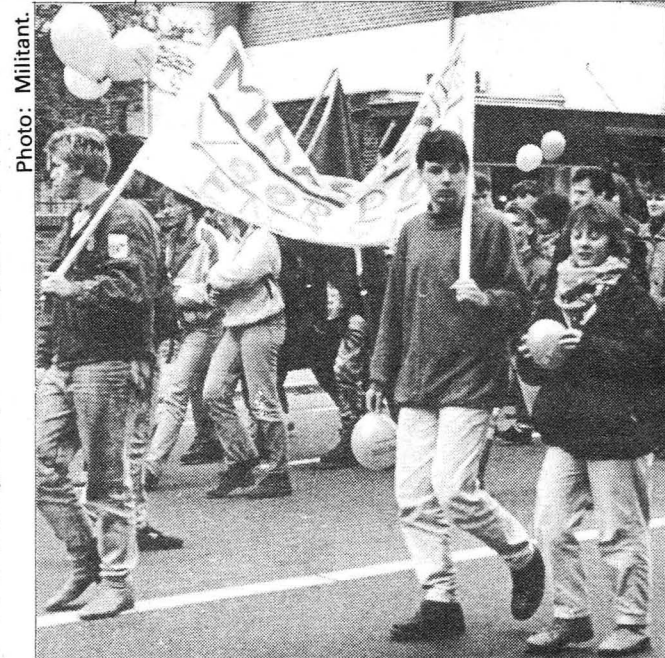
Fels demands that NUS organises alongside those trade unionists who are also threatened. If a national campaign were based on this strategy, with mass meetings being called in the colleges of both workers and students to prepare the way for national joint action, then the Tories could be defeated.

★ **Governors to be democratically elected, 1/3 from the college and student unions, 1/3 from the local authority and 1/3 from the local labour and TU movement.**

★ **No cuts in education spending! A reversal of all cuts made so far under the Tory government.**

★ **Access to education for all!**

★ **A £35 a week minimum grant for all school leavers or full trade union rates of pay and health and safety rights for YTS trainees.**



Dutch youth are on the march! Part of the demonstration.

YTS goes Dutch

BRITAIN IS not the only country where the bosses are introducing cheap labour schemes.

In Holland, youth face plans to conscript them onto YTS-type schemes and a cut in the minimum youth wage. The right-wing coalition government there is obviously following Thatcher's example.

But a Dutch youth trade union wants to follow the LPYS's example in fighting their plans. It organised a demonstration on 7 November and invited Linda Douglas to speak at it on the LPYS's campaigns against YTS.

Another speaker was from the Spanish school students' union. He explained their victory over a so-called Socialist government's attacks on education.

Dutch living standards are much higher than in Britain. But youth unemployment is growing very quickly. As always, youth are the first to be attacked.

But youth all over the world are not going to sit back and accept what the bosses throw at them. We will lead the fight against capitalism.

By a Young Socialist

Union opposes slave labour

THE WORKERS who are supposed to promote YTS think it stinks. Our union, CPSA, is demanding union rates of pay, proper training and guaranteed jobs for trainees before it will cooperate with YTS in the civil service.

In Coventry, West Bromwich and Bolton, workers in the Department of Employment (DE) have been on strike over management introducing YTS.

Now CPSA is balloting its members in the Department to get a one-day strike on 27 November. Returns show an overwhelming yes vote, with areas like Glasgow, where Broad Left members have put our case to the members, virtually unanimous. This is a warning to management and there is likely to be more action if they still insist on bringing YTS in.

Our bosses say that we have to "demonstrate our faith in our own product". But the first trainee at DE headquarters was sacked after a few weeks on the scheme! After bullying him up in their own propaganda as a prospective businessman, they put him to work stuffing envelopes. No wonder he developed what they called a "poor attitude"!

They want YTS so as they can cut back on our already low wages, to



YTS - THE TWO FACED APPROACH:
MRS THATCHER'S GOVERNMENT CUT 150,000 CIVIL SERVICE JOBS AND THEN SAY THEY'RE CONCERNED WITH EMPLOYMENT AND WORK EXPERIENCE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

OPPOSE YTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT

cover existing staff shortages, to weaken our unions and to make YTS "respectable" and hide the fact that a lot of YTS-ers are employed in back street sweatshops.

This is confirmed by a confidential management circular which says: "We all lose credibility if we say it is fine for the out-

side world, but we cannot have it in our own organisation."

With the high staff turnover in the Department, particularly in London, YTS trainees could end up being the most experienced but the lowest paid staff in offices.

By CPSA members



**Join the
Labour Party
Young
Socialists**

Portsmouth Militant seller assaulted by the police

Local party aims to expel five

Sell Militant

Use the articles

WE HAVE recently received a number of examples of how feature articles have been used to boost the sales of *Militant*.

The recent series on Post Office workers has aimed to prepare readers for the possibility of industrial action by the UCW. Sellers in Bridgend approached the local branch of the union with the issue which featured the historic 1971 UPW strike. As a result of this initiative the branch officers bought 25 copies of that issue.

Last week's middle-page socialist analysis of the topical question of child abuse created a great deal of interest. The feature was pasted on the wall outside the national conference of Labour women over the weekend and while almost all other posters were ripped down, the child abuse feature stayed up and one in four of the conference delegates bought a copy of *Militant*.

In Sittingbourne, Kent, one seller managed to sell 12 copies in just 15 minutes after sticking up the middle pages. People were stopping to look at the article, and then raising points of view on the subject. The seller said she had never experienced a sale like it before.

The clear lesson from these experiences is that sales can be much more effective when we read the paper beforehand and use the material inside to help organise the selling.

By Gerry Lerner

FOR A couple of years now, *Militant* supporters in Portsmouth have been holding street meetings of between 50 and 250 people to explain their policies, mainly on issues affecting the young.

A year ago three of them spent 44 hours locked up in Central Police Station for taking a vote in the precinct. Two weeks ago the constabulary struck again. EDDIE TRUMAN describes what happened to him:

NOT AT all happy about the crash in the world stock markets being explained on the streets of Portsmouth, the sergeant decided enough is enough: "I am not having no political meeting on my precinct".

The National Front had recently held a vigil for Rudolf Hess, complete with flags and Sieg Heils. I pointed out that this was not consistent.

"Right, you're nicked." I protested that my two-year-old daughter could not be left on the street. She was screaming "daddy, daddy!"

One of the comrades asked what law I had broken.

"He's next sarge" said a constable.

Hammering

Three of them had both my arms up my back. There were people everywhere putting money in my tin, shouting at the cops.

Then I was on the floor of the van. I screamed at them about my daughter. Fists were hammering at the back of my head.

"My father used to beat me every week," the Sergeant's words were not reassuring.

Blood was coming from my nose. "Ha! His nose bleeds easily" said the constable. I asked him if he was mad.



"I'm not having no political meeting on my precinct".

Photo: Militant



"Right, you're nicked".

Photo: Militant

We got to the station. I smiled at the one who had brought our breakfasts the last time we were in here.

"I could have your daughter taken into care" thundered the sergeant.

"How could that be?"

"Well you're in no position to look after her here, are you sunshine?"

This one had a new depth to sink to every time.

The desk sergeant was

not at all happy. I told him that before I was arrested I was looking after my two-year-old daughter.

"Oh Christ!"

They charged me with behaviour liable to cause a breach of the peace. I asked them when the breach had occurred.

"When we were taking you in for a chat"

In Interrogation Room 2, the sergeant wanted to know what made me think

a world recession would follow the crash: "It can't do; that's what they said on the telly. Don't you believe anything you see on television?"

Because of the prison officers' dispute, all the cells were full. I would have to be let out.

Thanks to everyone who was outside waiting with my daughter Holly

North Peckham disaster area

NORTH PECKHAM, featured in *Militant* two weeks ago, is one of London's huge urban planning disasters, which the government is supposed to be helping through its Task Force.

Yet when Tory minister, Waldegrave, visited the area, he offered only £3m to cover seven estates. The North Peckham alone needs £86m.

"It's a dump" said one young woman with two toddlers who used to live there: "If you're not dying you can't move. I waited over two years just to get on the transfer list. I finally got off because my husband was battering me and my

life was at risk."

Another spoke of the drug problem: "You can't bring families up on this estate. The kids find syringes all over the walkways. My flat has been infested with cockroaches and the council has never been able to sort it out."

One woman has been living in her flat for the past 10 months without hot water or a lavatory door.

"If I thought I had to live on this estate for the rest of my life I'd take a gun, shoot my wife and kids and then myself" said one tenant who bought a *Militant*.

THE RIGHT-WING Labour Party leaders in Brigg and Cleethorpes want to expel five members—Ian and Pat McEwan, Dave Mitchell, Alan Hornby and Gary Morgan.

A party member, with the backing of the full-time organiser, demanded an investigation into the five after he had been replaced by Dave Mitchell on the general management committee for refusing to carry out the decisions of his ward party.

The executive committee agreed to investigate the five on a charge of action prejudicial to the party.

Two of the five were not even informed they were being investigated and members had only two weeks to put forward any evidence, for or against.

In a constituency where the Tories have a 16,000 majority and Labour came third, the election defeat has made the right afraid that the five might win support for socialist policies and take the leadership of the party.

During the general election, officers of the Cleethorpes party refused to canvass with the candidate because *Militant* supporters and others were putting some life into the campaign. At least two of those appointed as investigators did a lot less in the election than those up for expulsion.

Vitality

Ian and Pat McEwan have a letter from the candidate, Terry Geraghty, leader of Humberside County Council, expressing "grateful thanks to you and your comrades for the tremendous effort and work which you put in for my election campaign."

"You proved to me in the election that you have the vitality and the conviction".

Pat McEwan also has a letter from the constituency party secretary congratulating her on her performance as their conference delegate in 1986:

"The delegates were of the unanimous opinion that you had served us well at conference, and they felt that your speech and presentation from the rostrum was first class".

The five's only crime has been to bring workers towards the Labour party and build an active branch.

To fight the expulsions, Workers for Socialism held a successful rally of 100 people in Cleethorpes, with surcharged Liverpool councillor, Tony Mulhearn. A collection for the 47 surcharged Liverpool councillors raised almost £200.

Over 1,000 names of working people in Cleethorpes are on a petition condemning the expulsions. This will make the witch-hunters in Cleethorpes think again. The overwhelming message was 'Fight the Tories, not good socialists'.

By a Militant reporter

Left and Right

Crazy right winger

THE TORY opposition in Lewisham has suggested housing some of the borough's single homeless in the council's underground garages!

Many of them have no natural light or ventilation and tenants often refuse even to put their cars in them for fear of vandalism. But Ken D'Cruze, who once stood as a Labour candidate yet claims he has "always been a right winger", thinks they could be turned into cosy homes.

He even wants to sell some of them off to private developers, but complains that "the council is run by crazy left wingers who won't do what has to be done"

Fund-drainer

MEMBERS OF the Labour Party in Fulham have not been too impressed with the Party's Itinerant fund-raiser. "After working for the Fulham Party for two

weeks the fund-raiser had moved on to another party" notes the minutes: "The Fulham Party had been sent an invoice for £834 for his services. The agent was instructed to reply appropriately!"

Drug danger

ONE SIDE-EFFECT of the huge rise in prescription charges under the Tories has been a jump in the sale of over-the-counter (OTC) drugs, from £246 million in 1980 to £488 million in 1986.

One reason is that some OTC drugs can be cheaper than the prescription charge. But it is not only patients' pockets which are suffering. *Nursing Times* has drawn attention to the recent deaths of four asthma sufferers who took a drug bought over the chemist's counter.

An editorial in the *British Medical Journal* warns that more patients may be buying drugs that are not suitable for them and of an increased risk of harmful interactions with other drugs, "particularly by those using them long-term or giving them to children".

Bulls, bears and bursting bubbles



Marxist Weekend School

WORLD SHARES fell by one trillion dollars on Black Monday 1987. What causes such dramatic collapses, and what role do stock markets play in the capitalist system? **BOB MCKEE** explains.

A **STOCK MARKET** is simply a market for buying and selling securities—company and government bonds and shares. If you buy a security, you get the right to a certain amount of income.

When you purchase a bond you loan money to a company (or central or local government) for a fixed period, say five years. In return you receive a fixed percentage of the loan as interest each year. When the loan period is up, the bond 'matures' and you get your original money back.

Buying a share is different. You receive a variable amount of income each year as a 'dividend' decided by the company and you do not get your original stake back.

When a company issues a new set of shares and you buy some, it looks like you are providing capital for the company which produces a dividend or profit.

Unpaid labour

But your money capital, now held by the company, may or may not be invested in real capital—factories, offices, machinery, raw materials and above all in employing a labour force that can produce commodities for sale.

Human labour is the only source of new wealth—profits are the unpaid labour of the capitalist's workforce. The stock market's relationship to this real wealth production is increasingly remote.

Marx explained, "titles to ownership which entitle the holder to a share in future surplus-value, all of these are not real capital. They do not form constituent parts of capital, nor are they value in themselves." Marx called shares and all forms of interest-bearing money capital "fictitious capital".

Companies rarely use the stock market to raise money capital; most raise funds for production through bank loans or by using profits from previous production. The market mainly speculates on the movement of share prices.

Most people buy shares to sell at a higher price, not for the company's yearly dividend. They are only interested in dividend figures as a guide to the share's price movement.



The 'booming' Stock Exchange in London up to October was miles away from the real state of the world economy, particularly decaying British capitalism.

In a modern stock exchange, the large stockbroking firms set the price for each share according to how many buyers and sellers there are. They move the price up and down to try to balance demand and supply. They may also sell or buy shares 'on their own account' and take advantage of movements in the market.

But the real world can't be avoided for ever. The overall profitability of the productive sector of the economy and its expected growth is still, ultimately, the key to whether there is a 'bull market' when buyers outnumber sellers and prices rise, or a 'bear market' when sellers outnumber buyers and prices fall.

This confidence in the future profitability of the world economy evaporated in October. When that happens, stock market speculators decide almost together that share prices must fall. They all want to sell, so fulfilling their own predictions with a frighteningly rapid slump in values.

The stockbrokers make sure

they unload their own stocks first before their clients, thus forcing prices down even further. In the London crash, shareholders complained that they could not get through on the phone to their brokers, who deliberately delayed acting on their clients' instructions while they tried to minimise their own losses!

Unreal prices

Big institutions like insurance companies and pension fund managers also make sure that their instructions are dealt with before smaller investors.

Between 1982-87 profit rates recovered somewhat from the all time lows of 1979. Renewed confidence in the world economy was expressed in a 'bull market' in all major stock exchanges for nearly five years.

But because the stock market is a market for fictitious capital, prices have wildly outstripped the expansion in real capital values—the growth of commodities, factories, machinery and profits.

Compare average share prices

with the average dividend in the world's stock markets.

Historically, in London this price/earnings ratio has been around 10/1 to 12/1. In other words, it took 10 to 12 years of dividends to pay back the value of the share price.

Before the crash this ratio was 18/1. In Tokyo, the price/earnings ratio had reached nearly 70/1. In some companies it would take 150 to 200 years to pay back the share value from profits!

This speculative bubble was stretching share prices to stratospheric levels compared to the real state of the economy. It could not be maintained.

This explains why the share crash was so severe. And why Lawson's comments about the crash being unreal and unrelated to real economic strength are so ridiculous. What was unreal was the previous high share price level.

The next stage is likely to be the misery of recession as profits, production and investment, i.e. real values, fall as well as stock market prices.

THIS YEAR'S Marxist weekend school is only a fortnight away. It starts on Friday night (27 November) with Tony Saunois speaking on the effect of the October crash on the international labour movement.

The courses themselves start on 28 November at 10.00am. Ian Isaac, (formerly South Wales NUM exec), will speak in the course on *The lessons of the miners' strike and the trade unions today*. John Pickard will speak on *Political Philosophy*. There is a course on the history of workers' struggle under apartheid in South Africa.

For new readers of the paper, there will be discussions on an *Introduction to Marxism* (Jeremy Birch and Bill Boyle).

Saturday night includes a discussion led by Ted Grant on a Marxist view of society, followed by the film *The Killing Floor*, and a disco.

Militant alone spoke of an inevitable economic crash. In the course on *Political Economy*, Bob McKee and Pete Watson will develop these ideas further. In bookings received so far, this course has proved one of the most popular. So make sure you don't miss out—book your place now!

Militant Marxist Weekend School

London 27-29 November, University of London Union, Malet Street, London WC1

The Crash of '87
A new world recession?
Friday 27th 7.30pm Speaker
Tony Saunois

Book now

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Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London	8348		9400
2 East Midlands	3068		3500
3 South East	1660		2250
4 Eastern	1778		3150
5 Scotland West	1713		3550
6 Scotland East	1348		2950
7 Wales	2207		4950
8 Southern	1174		3100
9 West Midlands	2032		5400
10 Merseyside	2900		7950
11 Northern	1617		4600
12 South West	660		1900
13 Mancs/Lancs	1267		4050
14 Yorkshire	2355		8500
15 National	8677		4750
Total	40,803		70,000

Target date; 5 Jan '88

LAST QUARTER'S Fighting Fund finished with a last-minute avalanche of cash. Over £9,000 came in on the final day—including two donations, from Bermondsey and Coventry of £500 and £600 respectively.

But our new FF campaign with a target of £50,000 in eight weeks, to repair our storm-damaged building, means we have to wage a determined campaign to ensure the money floods in. Already in the first three days £1,663 has arrived from readers.

Between now and the end of the year we need over £6,000 a week, £900 a day! So don't leave it until the Xmas holiday period is upon us, send that

donation today.

In 1975 when fire destroyed our press and typesetting equipment donations came flooding in from the labour movement. Within a month we were back in action and by the end of the year had moved to bigger premises!

Raffle prizes

We depend on the support of the working class committed to the idea of socialist change. But if anyone needs an additional incentive to donate then get your *Militant* 'Raise The Roof' Raffle Tickets with £1,000's worth of prizes to be won! It's easy to sell a couple of books of tickets in

workplaces or on the local estate.

As well as the raffle tickets get Xmas FF socials and meals organised now. An Ipswich 'celebration' social netted us £35.50. Or organise an Xmas jumble sale or bazaar—supporters in Dorset raised £30 from a Car Boot sale.

Above all, we ask every reader for a cash donation. Thanks to this week's contributors who include: Eleanor Lees, Strathclyde, £20. Brian Scanlon, NUMAST, £13. K.Jackson, Leicester NUT, £15. S.Humby, Reading, £15. David Watts, Hull, £30. Bill Cannon & Pete, Notts. NUM, £10 & £2.

The Gorbachev falsification

WHY, AFTER decades of silence, does the leader of the USSR feel obliged to launch a new attack on Trotsky and 'Trotskyism'? What is the meaning of Gorbachev's 'reforms'? Does Gorbachev really represent a return to workers' democracy and the traditions of Lenin? In the first of two articles, Alan Woods looks at Gorbachev's speech on the anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

Many western workers have shown an increasing interest in the Russian Revolution and the recent developments under Gorbachev. It is therefore necessary to put the record straight.

Many people, both in the Soviet Union and abroad, thought that Gorbachev would use his anniversary speech to do just that. There is a powerful undercurrent in the Soviet Union for a truthful appraisal of the revolution and Stalinism, not just among intellectuals, but also among workers. Especially among the older generation who can still remember what it was like before the dark mantle of Stalinism descended, there is a growing movement in favour of the rehabilitation of Stalin's victims.

These hopes were rudely dashed by the three-hour speech which represents a hypocritical defence of Stalinism and a cynical distortion of the facts about Trotsky and the Opposition. It is no less dishonest for its more polished formulations, in contrast to the coarse lies of the past.

Gorbachev performs a piece of sleight-of-hand which puts all Houdini's feats in the shade. The leading role played by Leon Trotsky in the revolution is well known. Indeed, such was the identity of Lenin and Trotsky as the leaders of October, that to many contemporaries they almost appeared as a single personage.

One only has to cast a glance at the numerous re-prints of the newspapers to see that the Bolshevik Party was usually described as the party of Lenin-Trotsky. Even Stalin, before he was consolidated in power, grudgingly admitted: "All practical work in connection with the organisation of the uprising was done under the immediate direction of comrade Trotsky, the president of the Petrograd Soviet. It can be stated with certainty that the party is indebted primarily and principally to comrade Trotsky for the rapid going over of the garrison to the side of the soviet and the efficient manner in which the work of the Military Revolutionary Committee was organised."

Trotsky

Yet Gorbachev, without blinking an eyelid, passes over Trotsky's role in the revolution in silence. Still more incredibly, he manages to deal with the civil war and the founding of the Red Army without mentioning Trotsky's name.

"A worker-peasant Red Army was formed by Lenin's decree," he says. "It was an army of a new type, which covered itself with undying glory in the civil war and in repulsing the foreign intervention."

Quite right. And the founder of this army, the Commissar for War who enjoyed such confidence with Lenin that the latter presented him with a blank sheet of

paper with his own signature at the bottom, was none other than Leon Trotsky.

Gorky, in his memoirs of Lenin, quotes Lenin's words of admiration for Trotsky's brilliant work building up the Red Army virtually from scratch: "Show me another man," he said, thumping the table, "capable of organising in a year an almost exemplary army and moreover of winning the esteem of the military specialists."

Gorbachev, the 'educated' bureaucrat, pretends to know nothing of all this. Without blushing, he can state: "We need truthful assessments of this and all the other periods of our history," before plunging ahead with even more breathtaking distortions.

The whole of Gorbachev's speech is a dishonest attempt to apologise for Stalin, and above all, to exclude any possibility of Trotsky's rehabilitation.

He is well aware that Lenin, in the last years of his life, was involved in a fierce struggle against the incipient soviet bureaucracy. Lenin's genius understood the danger. He clearly saw the fatal role of Stalin, warning: "This cook will prepare only peppery dishes."

From his deathbed, Lenin broke off all comradely relations with Stalin. According to his secretary, Fotieva, Lenin was "preparing a bombshell for Stalin" at the forthcoming party congress. He formed a bloc with Trotsky on the basis of a struggle against the bureaucracy.

Tragically, Lenin died before he could launch his attack. But he left behind his testament, in the form of a letter to the congress. Despite the pleas of his widow, Krupskaya, Lenin's testament was sat on by the ruling clique and not published in the Soviet Union until after Khrushchev's 'de-Stalinisation' campaign more than 30 years later.

Published abroad by Trotsky, it was denounced by Moscow for decades as a forgery. Now no-one doubts its authenticity. Yet Gorbachev, in the true tradition of the Stalin school of falsification, deliberately misquotes it to misrepresent Lenin's attitude to Trotsky.

Gorbachev claims that after Lenin's death, Trotsky "displayed excessive pretensions to top leadership in the party thus fully confirming Lenin's opinion of him as an excessively self-assured politician who always vacillated and cheated."

In fact, Trotsky could have easily taken power in 1924, had he wanted to. He was the best known and most popular Bolshevik leader after Lenin. He had control of the Red Army. In later years some of his erstwhile supporters, like Max Eastman, were

to brand him hopelessly naive for not doing so.

Trotsky, however, met such objections in advance. The movement of society is not determined solely by the subjective will and intentions of individuals but has a logic of its own. If Trotsky had taken power after Lenin's death, that would not have altered the fundamental conditions which produced the rise of the bureaucracy. That is to say, the isolation of the revolution in a backward, peasant country, with a small, largely uneducated and exhausted working class.

Far from preventing the rise of the bureaucracy, it would have enormously accelerated it, merely changing its form from civilian to military dictatorship. Trotsky would have been the prisoner of the military caste, which would have eliminated him and anyone else who attempted to stand in its way.

That is why Trotsky relinquished his post as head of the Red Army without any resistance. To a superficial observer this smacks of 'naivety', but a Marxist must understand the deeper social relationships which underlie and ultimately determine political events.

Trotsky refused the offer to deliver the political report to the Twelfth Congress, a role usually reserved for Lenin. Does this show "excessive pretensions to top leadership"? The very way of posing the question smacks of the mentality of a bureaucratic social climber and not at all of a Marxist.

What does Lenin really say about Trotsky and Stalin? "Comrade Stalin, having become general secretary, has unlimited authority concentrated in his hands and I am not sure whether he will always be capable of using that authority with sufficient caution. Comrade Trotsky on the other hand, as his struggle against the CC on the question of the People's Commissariat for Communications has already proved, is distinguished not only by outstanding ability. He is personally perhaps the most capable man in the present CC, but he has displayed excessive self-assurance and shown excessive preoccupation with the purely administrative side of the work."

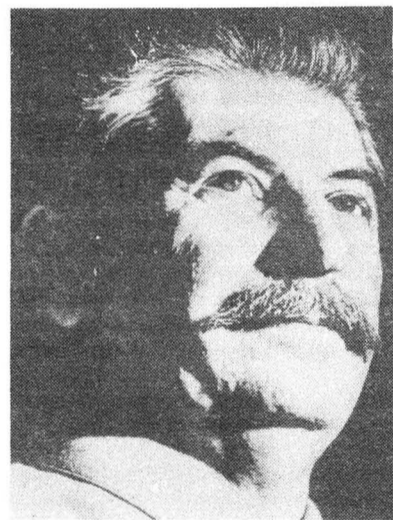
The 'objective' Gorbachev singles out Lenin's (relatively minor) criticism of Trotsky's "excessive self-assurance" but omits Lenin's characterisation of him as the most capable member of the Bolshevik leadership. Nor does he explain that Lenin broke off all relations with Stalin and demanded his removal as general secretary.

These omissions are not accidental. Monstrously, Gorbachev asserts: "In short, the party's leading nucleus, headed by Joseph Stalin, had safeguarded Leninism in an ideological struggle."

Despite his strictures on Stalin's "excesses" (which he also attempts to minimise) the whole of Gorbachev's speech is a disho-



Gorbachev.



Stalin.



Under Stalin Trotsky was erased from Trotsky 'was there', but deliberate!

onest attempt to apologise for Stalin and, above all, to exclude any possibility of Trotsky's rehabilitation. A river of blood separates the real traditions of Leninism, represented after 1924 by the Left Opposition of Leon Trotsky, and the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy, of which Gorbachev is the most consummate expression.

Stalin murdered his victims in cold blood. But the 'refined' Gorbachev prefers the method of political character assassination. He lies in his teeth about the programme and policy of the Left Opposition. It was not Stalin, but Trotsky who first advocated industrialisation by means of five-year plans, for which he was denounced by Stalin and his cronies as a "super industrialiser".

Attempting to ridicule Trotsky's proposal for a programme of electrification (the Dnieperstro project), Stalin retorted that this was like "offering a peasant a gramophone instead of a cow." Up to 1929, the whole of Stalin's policy was directed, not to five-year plans, industrialisation and collectivisation, but to trying to base himself on the rich peasants, or kulaks.

Gorbachev lies about the Opposition's policy towards the peasantry, which he caricatures as "tightening the screws on the peasants." What Trotsky advocated was increased taxation of the rich peasants and a policy of gradual collectivisation, by example. Linked with a programme of industrialisation this could have preserved the vital link be-

tween the workers and peasants, providing the village with the necessary products of industry in exchange for food.

The policy of the ruling faction towards the peasantry, summed up in Bukharin's famous slogan 'Get rich!', led to the strengthening of capitalist tendencies in the countryside. The kulaks enriched themselves at the expense of the workers and poor peasants.

By 1926, almost 60 per cent of marketable grain was in the hands of 6 per cent of peasant proprietors. Stalin was even preparing to denationalise the land. The danger of a kulak counter-revolution alarmed Kamenev and Zinoviev, who broke with Stalin and joined with Trotsky in the United Opposition.

It made its stand against Stalin for collectivisation of agriculture, five-year plans and industrialisation, defence of the interests of the workers and poor peasants against the kulaks, bureaucrats and 'NEP men' (speculators), and against the anti-Marxist idea of 'socialism in one country', for international socialism as the only hope of preserving and consolidating the gains of October in the long run.

"Aware that they constituted a minority," says Gorbachev, "the Opposition leaders had again and again saddled the party with discussions, counting on a split in its ranks."

"But in the final analysis, the party spoke out for the line of the central committee and against the opposition which was soon ideologically and organisationally defeated."

ev school of ation



This photograph of Lenin speaking in 1920. Gorbachev accepts
distorts what he stood for.

Gorbachev presents the struggle of the Leninist wing of the party against the bureaucracy as a polite ideological 'debate'. His real attitude to inner-party debate is revealed by the accusation that the Opposition 'saddled' the party with discussions!

Yet the entire history of Bolshevism is characterised by open and democratic discussion. Even in the most dangerous moments of the civil war, when the fate of the revolution was in the balance, party congresses took place every year, with sometimes the most stormy debate between different opinions and tendencies.

Left opposition

Only now, after six decades of Stalinist reaction, is it possible for Gorbachev to present this as unnatural and undesirable.

The struggle between the Opposition and the bureaucracy was not determined by the logic of debate, but by crude physical force. Violating the most elementary norms of Leninist democracy, Opposition speakers were shouted down, harassed, sacked from their jobs, beaten up, arrested and imprisoned.

Not a hint of this in Gorbachev's 'balanced' analysis, which seeks to prettify the ugly reality of Stalinism.

Gorbachev correctly defends the colossal historical gains of the rationalised planned economy, but does not explain how these came about.

The growth of the counter-revolutionary kulak class pa-

nicked Stalin into a sharp turn to the left, ditching his erstwhile ally Bukharin. Stalin did a 180 degree turn, from 'socialism at a snail's pace,' to the ultra-left slogan 'achieve the five year plan in four years.' From 'face to the village', he announced in November 1929, the end of individual farming and the 'liquidation of the kulaks as a class'.

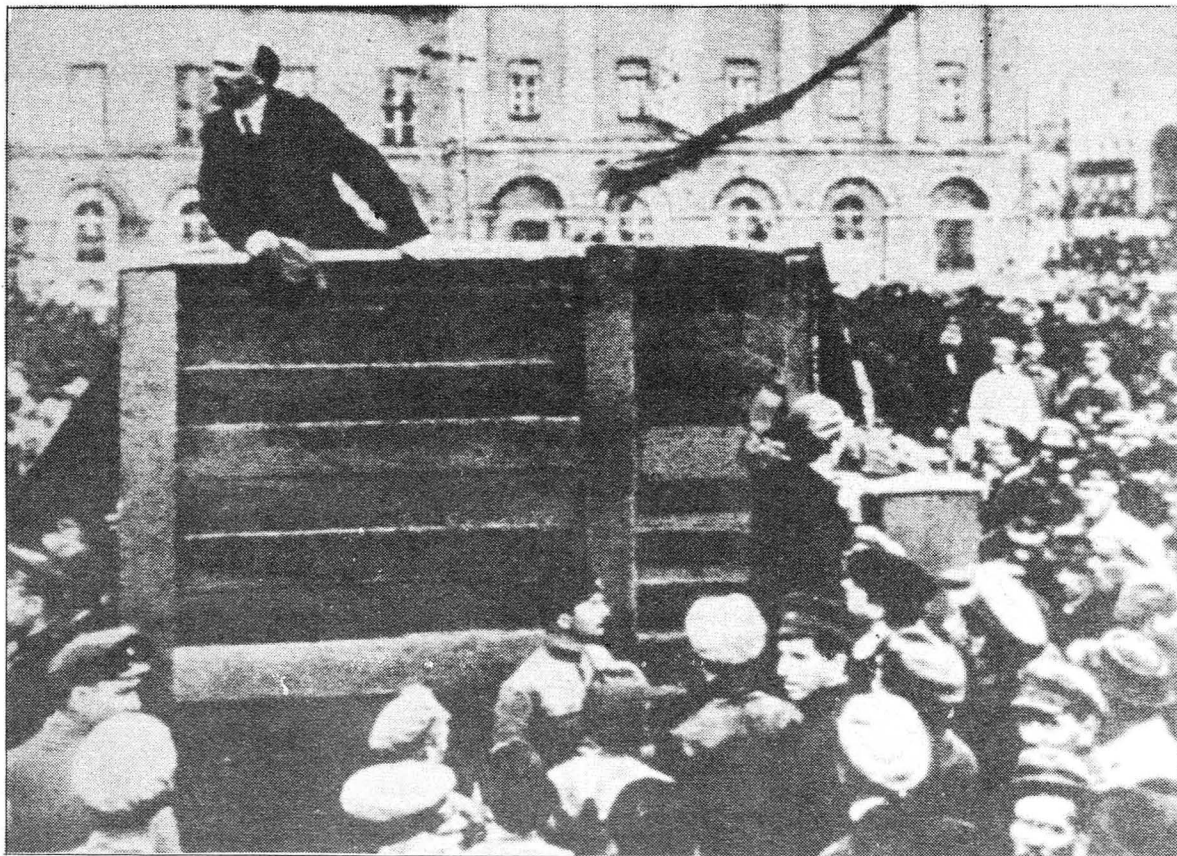
In 1929 the proportion of collective farms was 1.7 per cent. By 1932 it was 61.5 per cent. But this was done by administrative decree, with no reference to the real conditions in town or country.

Collectivisation presupposes a certain development of industry permitting the supply of tractors, fertilisers and other equipment. Collectivisation on the basis of the wooden plough was madness which was bound to cause and did cause, a catastrophe.

How ironic is Gorbachev's false accusation that the Opposition's policy amounted to "tightening the screws on the peasantry," while he praises the Stalinist lunacy of forced collectivisation "down to the chickens and the felt shoes which they dragged from the feet of little children."

Predictably the peasants resisted. The Red Army had to be sent to the countryside. For three years civil war raged with untold victims. The peasant responded by slaughtering livestock.

"The number of horses fell 55 per cent, from 34.6 million in 1929 to 15.6 million in 1934. The number of horned cattle fell from 30.7 million to 19.5 million—that



is 40 per cent. The number of pigs, 55 per cent; sheep, 66 per cent." (Trotsky: *Revolution Betrayed*).

In the famine and epidemic that ensued, millions perished. Stalin later told Churchill that 10 million people died during the period of forced collectivisation. All this is dismissed by Gorbachev in one word "excesses".

The policy of bureaucratic forced collectivisation dealt Soviet agriculture a terrible blow, from which it has still not fully recovered. It did untold harm to the Soviet economy, but worse still it placed an intolerable strain on the relationship between the workers and peasants and aggravated the national problem, particularly in the Ukraine.

This was doubly criminal at a moment when the USSR was being threatened by the danger of a new war.

On the monstrous Purge Trials which led to the murder of most of the Bolshevik Party leadership and the subsequent extermination of hundreds of thousands of workers in Stalin's death camps, Gorbachev tries to minimise things by referring only to "many thousands". No explanation is given as to how such atrocities could occur in a 'socialist' country.

Apparently it was all down to the whim of one man! A Marxist would ask: in the interest of which class or caste in society was Stalin acting? To this Gorbachev offers no answer. Nor can he, because the one-sided civil war waged by Stalin against the Bolshevik Party was intended to consolidate the rule of the bureaucracy—the same caste of privileged officials Gorbachev still represents.

No part of his speech is more dishonest than his appraisal of Stalin's role in the Second World War, which flies in the face even of those facts already established by Khrushchev.

"A factor in the achievement of victory", Gorbachev says "was the tremendous political will, purposefulness and persistence and ability to organise and discipline people displayed in the war years by Joseph Stalin."

In reality, Stalin's policies, both within Russia and internationally, paved the way for the Second World War. The rise of

Hitler to power would not have been possible without the criminal policy of 'social fascism' pursued by the German Communist Party on Stalin's orders, which split the German working class. The defeat of the heroic Spanish proletariat, which removed the last obstacle in the way of World War, was the responsibility of the Spanish Stalinists under Moscow's direction.

Army purged

The purges themselves not only disorganised the economy, but also wrought havoc in the armed forces. Japanese intelligence estimated 35,000 Red Army officers (over half the officer corps) fell victim of the purge in 1937-38. 57 out of 85 corps commanders; 13 out of 15 army commanders; three out of five marshals; 110 out of 195 divisional commanders; 220 out of 406 brigade commanders; all 11 vice-commissars of war. 90 per cent of generals, 80 per cent of colonels and all but one of the fleet commanders were eventually eliminated. 30,000 officers below the rank of colonel were purged.

Hitler drew the necessary conclusion from the purges: "The Red Army has been decapitated...It is necessary to go to war to prevent the formation of new cadres."

Despite repeated warnings from courageous Soviet agents in Central Europe, Germany and Japan, Stalin chose to ignore the threat of German attack in 1941, leaving the Red Army fatally exposed. When it came, millions of Soviet soldiers were captured without a fight and sent to Nazi death camps. Yet the Red Army fire-power greatly exceeded that of the enemy.

In his report to the 20th Congress in 1956—which has still to be published in Russia—Khrushchev gave numerous examples of the criminal role of Stalin in the war. He recalled that a Russian general, shortly before the German invasion, wrote to Stalin to warn him and proposed the organisation of a strong defence:

"Moscow answered this proposition with the assertion that this would be a provocation, that no preparatory defensive work should be undertaken at the borders, that the Germans were not to be given any pretext for the

initiation of military action against us. Thus our borders were insufficiently prepared to repel the enemy.

"When the fascist armies had actually invaded Soviet territory and military operations began, Moscow issued the order that fire was not to be returned. Why? It was because Stalin, despite evident facts, thought that the war had not yet started..."

"As you see, everything was ignored: warnings of certain Army commanders, declarations of deserters from the enemy army, and even the open hostility of the enemy. Is this an example of the alertness of the chief of the party and of the state at this particularly significant historical moment?"

"...The result was that already in the first hours and days the enemy had destroyed in our border regions a large part of our Air Force, artillery and other military equipment: he annihilated large numbers of our military cadres and disorganised our military leadership: consequently we could not prevent the enemy from marching deep into the country."

Khrushchev recalled that Stalin was completely demoralised by the German advance:

"After this, Stalin for a long time actually did not direct the military operations and ceased to do anything whatever."

Despite all this, Gorbachev insists in regurgitating the old legend of Stalin as 'great war leader'.

Can Gorbachev's reforms work?

Debate between Lynn Walsh (Militant), and Monty Johnstone (Marxism Today).

£1 admission Sunday 29 Nov. Camden Town Hall, Euston Rd.

Yugoslavia

New twist to national conflict

ON SUNDAY 25 October a 5,000-strong paramilitary force moved into Yugoslavia's troubled southern region of Kosovo.

By Len Anderson

This signalled a new twist to the country's bitter national conflict. It reflects the new 'get tough' stance of the Serbian 'Communist' bureaucracy, determined to stem the rising nationalist tide among Kosovo's 1.7 million ethnic Albanians.

Kosovo, an 'autonomous region' of Serbia—one of the 'republics' making up the Yugoslav federation—is the country's poorest province. Unemployment is reportedly over 50 per cent.

For decades the Albanians, who outnumber the Serbs and other nationalities in the province by eight to one, have suffered national oppression under the largely Serbian ruling bureaucracy (and, before that, under capitalism and the rule of the Turkish sultans).

There is a long history of opposition to Serbian rule, with bloody riots in 1968 and 1981. The regime in the national capital, Belgrade, is adamantly opposed to the main Albanian demand—for Kosovo to become a republic.

Break-up

They fear that such a concession would encourage a movement towards secession and unification with neighbouring Albania. This, the bureaucracy fears, could herald the break-up of the Yugoslav federation into its eight component parts.

It is an indictment of Stalinism that, despite the enormous gains of a planned economy, chronic mismanagement and strangulation of economic life by the bureaucracy has produced massive unemployment, high inflation, corruption, falling living standards, and even the possibility of disintegration along national lines in the future.

Recent events have marked an escalation of this tension. Hardliners, advocating a head-on confrontation with Albanian nationalism, now command a majority in the Serbian 'Communist' Par-



The Yugoslav army could not be sent into Kosovo: its reliability could not be guaranteed.

ty. Figures like Slobodan Milosevic, president of the Serbian party, have pushed for greater control by the republic of Serbia over Kosovo.

The Kosovo party is being purged, with reliable pro-Serbian elements taking key positions. University staff and school teachers face a purge too. Those suspected of any tinge of Albanian nationalism have lost their jobs.

Even sections of the Serbian media have blasted Milosevic's position as "blatantly nationalist and chauvinist".

The victims of this policy are not just Kosovo's Albanians, but the province's Serbian and Montenegrin minorities who have suffered the inevitable backlash. An estimated 30,000 Serbs have fled Kosovo in recent years, complaining of attacks and harassment.

Two recent events have been seized on by the Serbian hardliners to justify the crackdown.

In September a young Albanian conscript shot dead four fellow-soldiers, who came from different parts of Yugoslavia, before turning his gun on himself.

More recently top Kosovo bureaucrat Fadilj Hodza was sacked after making disgraceful racist and sexist remarks about



Stop press

PRICE RISES just announced by the Yugoslav regime include electricity (up 69 per cent), rail transport (61 per cent), petrol (66 per cent), milk and bread (100 per cent). Salaries and wages have been frozen till next July.

Serbian and Montenegrin women. He had 'joked' that they should become prostitutes in order to reduce the increasing occurrence of rape:

"Albanian women won't do it. Serbians and others would like to—so why not let them?"

Such poisonous chauvinism and national arrogance is unfortunately typical of every ruling Stalinist clique. Albanian bureaucrats in the Kosovo party and state apparatus have deliberately manipulated and encouraged nationalist discontent to advance their own sectional interests.

Aspirations

This outlook is a million miles removed from the genuine national aspirations of Albanian workers and youth who suffer discrimination and poverty. Their 'nationalism' is a reaction to the crimes of the Serbian-dominated bureaucracy.

The only solution lies in struggle by all Yugoslav workers, regardless of nationality, uniting to overthrow the parasitic, unaccountable bureaucracy, and establish a regime of workers' democracy in its place.

Merger with Stalinist Albania, sought by some sections of Kosovo's nationalists, holds no solu-

tion. Here the living standards of the masses are even lower and the regime even more repressive. Whilst such an arrangement might free the frustrated bureaucrats from 'interference' by their Serbian rivals, it offers nothing to the working class.

But on the basis of real workers' democracy, national oppression—like all other forms of oppression—would be wiped out. It would create the conditions for a free and voluntary federation of all the Balkan peoples.

One thing is clear—the military crackdown and the antics of the hardliners will only aggravate the situation.

This poses a nightmare problem for the bureaucracy. Even inside the army, 216 illegal Albanian organisations have been discovered. This is one reason why regular troops have not been used in the latest operation—their reliability cannot be guaranteed.

More liberal sections of the bureaucracy, such as the Slovenian party leaders, view the new developments with alarm. They fear a greater centralisation of power within Yugoslavia, with the consequent strengthening of the Serbian bureaucracy's position at the expense of other sections.

Bangladesh Turmoil deepens

AS MASS opposition deepens in Bangladesh, General Ershad's regime faces its most serious crisis since seizing power in 1982.

On Tuesday 10 November, despite a government ban on transport to the capital and the arrest of 1,200 opposition activists, at least 10,000 demonstrators filled the streets of Dhaka and brought the city to a standstill. The demand was the downfall of Ershad's regime.

Twelve demonstrators were shot dead by police, enraging the masses still further. The main opposition leaders, Sheikh Hasina of the Awami League and Begum Zia of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, were forced to call a two-day hartal (total strike).

The regime reacted in panic, detaining both women. This failed to halt the movement, which gathered momentum on Wednesday and Thursday. Thousands of protesters, mainly youth, fought running battles with state forces. Two more demonstrators were shot dead and two policemen killed by a grenade.

Government buildings were stoned, and roads blocked with burning barricades, while a dawn to dusk curfew was clamped down on the country.

Isolated

Clearly, Ershad's support is fast being narrowed down to the 'armed bodies of men' under his command, isolated from the mass of Bangladesh's 105 million people.

Even this support rests mainly on the special privileges extended to the military in a country twice as poor as India. If the crisis continues to deepen, mass pressure on the rank-and-file troops will increasingly split them from the regime.

Determined leadership will be crucial in taking the movement of workers and youth forward in the immensely favourable situation opening up. Unfortunately, the aim of the Awami League and BNP leadership is precisely the opposite: to force Ershad to resign before the movement reaches revolutionary proportions.

But already the struggle is beginning to escalate further than the leaders intended.

Even western press correspondents in Dhaka comment on the swing to the left among the activists, on the growing strength of 'Communists' and 'leftists', and the mood of hostility to US imperialism—not shared by the top leaders.

Undoubtedly, a programme linking the overthrow of Ershad to the overthrow of capitalist and landlord rule, and the perspective of socialist transformation throughout the Indian subcontinent, would find a huge response.

By George Collins

Greek students in revolt

A MASSIVE movement has erupted throughout Greek universities which is now spreading to technical colleges.

From a correspondent in Greece

Students are protesting at the lack of housing and high rents, and demanding further resources for education from the PASOK Government.

It began two weeks ago in

Papras, outside Athens, when students occupied two hotels in protest at the lack of accommodation. The Government gave some concessions in the form of a cash payment, and the movement spread throughout Greece. Almost all Universities are currently occupied.

A student march through Athens was followed two days later by a demonstration called by the technical students. Be-

tween 20,000 and 30,000 participated and attempted to march to the central square in Athens. They were met by a cordon of riot police who refused to allow the march to proceed further due to a Government reception which was taking place.

Student leaders tried to dissolve the march. The students refused, and were immediately attacked by riot police wielding clubs and firing tear

gas.

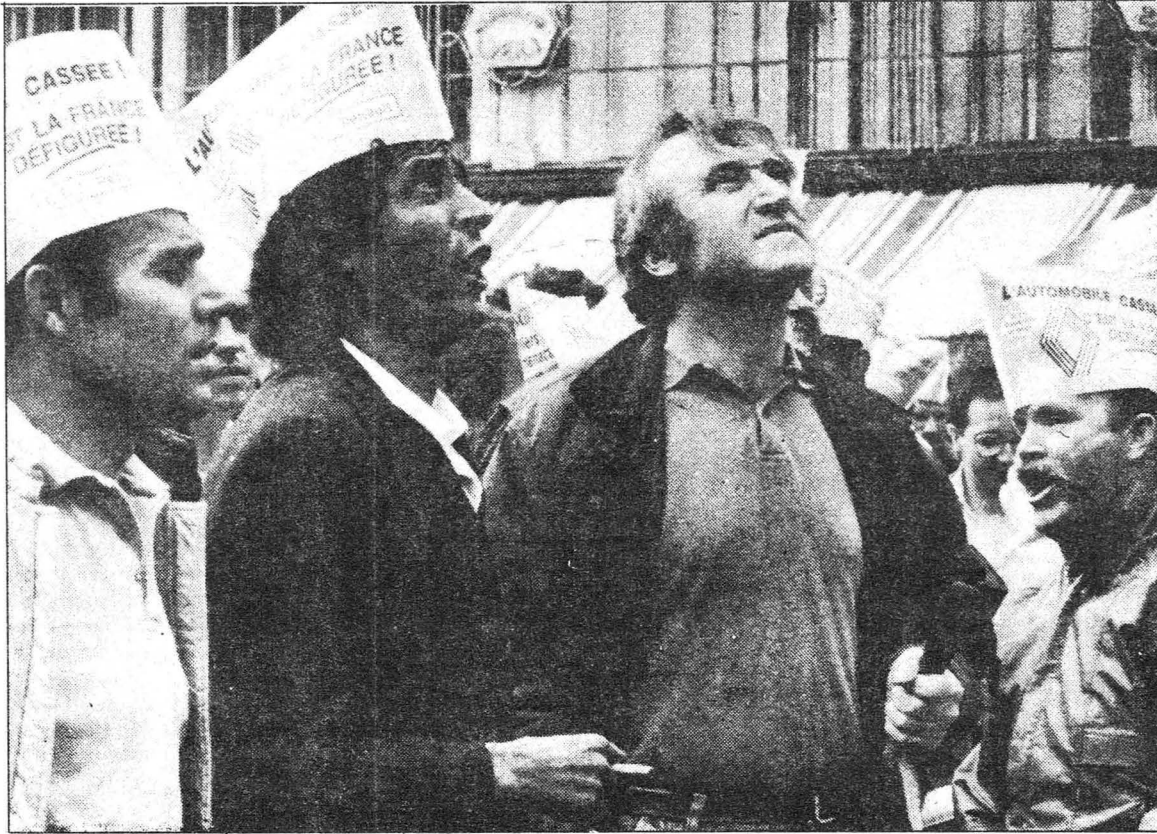
The students are in a mood to fight, despite efforts by the KKE (Greek Communist Party) to dampen down the movement. They are demanding the resignation of the Minister of Education and the Minister of the Interior.

Learning from movements of the French and Spanish students earlier this year, they marched through Athens chanting: "Workers, students

together—one voice, one fist"; "Bread, freedom and education".

Then, last Thursday, 400,000 took to the streets on the anniversary of the Athens Polytechnic demonstration in November 1974, where students fought against the military regime. Students have told the Minister of Education that they would not allow him to attend and lay a wreath in memory of the students killed.

France on the road to mass explosion



Renault workers strike against proposed sackings.

THE STRIKE wave in France continues to gain momentum.

The miners' strike in the North is now in its seventh week. They have received support from miners in Lorraine, who staged a one day solidarity strike, and from workers who organised a demonstration in Lille.

Miners have also been in action in the South. Thirteen miners who have been occupying the Carmaux mine for the last four weeks have gone on hunger strike. Their wives and other supporters held a demonstration in Paris.

The dockers' strike in Marseille has now been going on for eight weeks. In September, 10,000 dockers in neighbouring ports staged a one day solidarity strike.

Most of the Renault plants are affected by industrial action. Workers are fighting against job losses and for wage increases. Since 1982 real wages have fallen by 15 per cent according to official figures, but 33 per cent according to union figures.

Record profits have been announced at some plants, yet the company plans to cut 30,000 jobs.

Industrial action has also taken place at Thomsons, Technip, Dassault (which wants to sack 1,261 workers and close four plants, yet has orders for three years' work) and Honeywell.

Numerous protests have been sparked off by the government's new anti-trade union laws. In September there were fierce battles between the CRS (riot police) and workers protesting against fines imposed on the CGT (the largest trade union federation). As a direct result, print workers organised a lightning one day national strike with 100 per cent turn-out.

The widespread character of these disputes and the intense bitterness felt by the workers involved, especially the miners and dockers, reveals the determination of the workers to protect

jobs and resist the government's attacks.

In the last six weeks there have been three national days of action, with over half a million workers taking part. For the first time in years all the various sections of the CGT have been involved, revealing the pressure on the leadership for unity from the rank and file.

We are also beginning to see the different union federations forced to act together, particularly in Renault.

Since its defeat by the students last year, the Chirac government has been forced onto the defensive. The most advanced layers amongst the workers see that this government can be beaten. This is one of the factors behind the new strike movement.

Divided

Meanwhile the government remains divided on how to respond. They are afraid of provoking the workers even further.

For example, a paper mill management used the government's new laws to sack nine workers who took part in the first day of action. However, when it appeared that the sackings were likely to provoke a national strike, the government put pressure on the employers to back down. The workers were promptly reinstated.

The government has been further undermined by the financial crash.

Chirac's attempt to follow Thatcher's 'popular capitalism' has completely failed. The government had pinned all its hopes on privatisation, but has had to retreat since the slump.

There has been a decline in France's share of the world market. France never really benefited from the last upturn, so the ruling class has less room for manoeuvre than in Britain or West Germany.

The government's paralysis has given rise to new splits within the

main right wing parties. The National Front is in a state of disintegration. At the same time there has been a big shift to the left amongst working people. Mitterrand continues to have 57 per cent in the opinion polls.

Often, when workers are blocked on the industrial front, they move into political action, and vice versa. Yet in France we see the two processes unfolding together. Next year's presidential elections could be one of the most bitter electoral fights ever.

Pressure from the rank and file is widening the divisions within the workers' parties. While the Communist Party is regaining support from activists after its disastrous role in the Left coalition government, a group of leading members (including an ex-minister) have resigned because they find its policies inadequate.

The Socialist Party is also facing crises. Shortly after the stock market crash, general secretary Jospin was pressed at a mass meeting into promising that the party, if re-elected, would renationalise newly privatised industries. The next day, however, leading right-winger Fabius publicly attacked this idea. There is now open wrangling amongst the factions.

All the signs are present in France for a mass explosion. A 24 hour general strike could unify the struggles taking place, as a first step in mobilising workers to bring down the government.

Unfortunately the CGT is not prepared to call for this. Its strategy at the moment is short strikes and 'days of action' at different times in different places, dissipating the workers' energy.

But the workers will not wait indefinitely. Their leaders may well find themselves overtaken by the movement, on an even bigger scale than last December.

By Soraya Lawrence

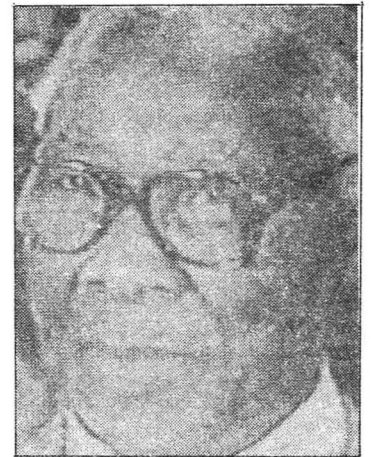
South Africa

ANC leader released

THE UNCONDITIONAL release of 77-year-old comrade Govan Mbeki from life imprisonment stands to the credit of the South African working-class movement and the pressure it is putting on the apartheid regime.

The courage shown by comrade Mbeki together with Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners during 23 years in SA jails has been an inspiration to hundreds of thousands. His release is widely seen as a test run for the release of Mandela and other leaders.

But for the regime, Mandela's release would in no way be seen as a prelude to unbanning the ANC or negotiating a democratic settlement. In the end, the workers and



youth under the ANC banner remain faced with the task of overthrowing the regime and ending capitalism in order to establish democracy.

Youth force Inkatha back

AFTER AN unparalleled reign of terror by Inkatha vigilantes in Natal since mid-1985, the pendulum is now beginning to swing in favour of Congress workers and youth.

Inkatha, led by Gatsha Buthelezi, is supported by big business and the savage regime as an instrument of counter-revolution and division of the mass movement. It bases itself on intimidation but also on appeals to tribal prejudice among still passive layers of the working class.

For a period Inkatha succeeded in paralysing the emerging class movement in Natal. Hundreds of activists and family members were driven from the townships by Inkatha's cowardly thugs.

In May an Inkatha leader declared that "he longed for the day when there would be open war between the UDF (mass-based opposition movement, oriented to the African National Congress—Editor) and Inkatha—it would prove who was who in the political battle..."

More than 150 have been killed this year in the civil war between Inkatha and UDF supporters. But now the youth are increasingly gaining the initiative.

Growing layers of workers and youth, understanding that Inkatha violence can be countered only by organised force, have shown unexampled bravery in marvellous resistance. Self defence has become the first commandment.

As one youth activist put it: "if we didn't embark on defence committees we would all have been forced to join Inkatha by now".

In a township nicknamed 'Angola', youth activists have defined their priorities:

"defence committees to counter vigilante attacks; people's courts to discipline comrades who misbehave; and first aid committees to treat the battle-wounded."

The fight-back is proving effective. In Hammarsdale township, scores of Inkatha Youth Brigade members have been won over to the Hammarsdale Youth Congress.

Cases have been reported of black policemen linking up with the youth against Inkatha.

In Pietermaritzburg, there is growing resistance among township residents against being forced to join Inkatha.

With Buthelezi's gangsters increasingly on the defensive, the youth need to link up with the power of the organised workers. The youth for all their courage cannot carry the struggle to a conclusion on their own. Through joint mobilisation of workers and youth a resounding defeat could now be inflicted on Inkatha.

At this moment it is completely mistaken for leaders of the movement—such as UDF President Archie Gumede—to call on the warring factions "to bury their hatchet" and offer Inkatha a truce.

Such leaders argue that "black-on-black violence" disrupts unity in the struggle against apartheid.

Through joint mobilisation of workers and youth a resounding defeat could be inflicted on Inkatha.

But Youth Congresses in Natal and the Cape have already declared their opposition to any truce. They understand that it is impossible to establish 'unity' with murderous forces of counter-revolution.

The task for the leadership of the UDF, the Congress of SA Trade Unions and the SA Youth Congress is to strip away the support from Inkatha by uniting its rank and file under the banner of our movement. This means combining organised self-defence with an action programme around the democratic and social demands of the mass of working people.

The youth should explain these tasks in the workplaces, and join with organised workers in calling on the leadership to take them up.

On this basis the fighting traditions of the Zulu workers can be mobilised to the full in the South African revolution.

By Gavin Jantjies

Punishing victims

Dear Comrades,
A short article tucked away in the *Guardian* last week brought home to me the nightmare that capitalism means for millions of working class women and their children.
The mother of a four year old girl pushed her from their fifth floor tower block home. The child died. The prosecution tried to make out that she had pushed her daughter because she had an uncontrollable temper.
The defence pointed out that she had recently had a new baby and had psychiatric reports stating that she was suffering from severe

diminished responsibility. The woman got five years and her baby was taken from her and put up for adoption.
What on earth do judges with their privileged background know about being stuck in a tower block with two kids probably suffering from post-natal depression?
That woman's life is over, what good will five years inside do? Thatcher and her system are responsible for the murder of that child and the sooner we get rid of them the better.
Maggie McGinley, Barking, London.

Countdown to revolution

Dear Comrades,
Just after the crash in the value of shares on the international stock markets, everyone started to reassure us that this was just a minor adjustment to the overvalued prices, that it would not cause a recession and that the underlying health of the economy is fundamentally sound.
One American econom-

ist compared the drop in prices of shares to that which occurred in 1917 in Russia. He informed us that the stock market index in Petrograd dropped to zero before the revolution took place and that therefore we had a long way to go yet.
Comrades will be pleased to hear that at the present rate of decline, we have only 15 weeks to go till the revolution!
Dave Campbell, Newham.

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.

Nottingham raffle results: Louise Salah No.96 prize £40. Phil Hoskins No.81, prize £5 Mrs Vizard No.45 prize £5. 4 bottles wine won by: Steve Hoare No.20, Paul Shawcroft No.100, Simon Chapman No.47, Tommy Cowans No.39.

Tapes £1.50 each plus 30p p&p available from Tony Wedlake, 13 Cae Brackla, Brackla, Bridgend. *Unfolding Revolution in Latin America*—Phil Frampton. *Perspectives for the South African Revolution*—Richard Monroe. *World Economy Heads for Slump*—Ted Grant. *Lessons of General Election, which way for Labour?*—Ted Grant.

Wanted co-op and green shield stamps. Loose, part or full books. All proceeds to the fighting fund. Send c/o *Militant* circulation, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.

"Militant for Labour and Youth" enamel stud badges now available £1 each. Red plastic fighting fund collecting tins £1 each. A3 size posters of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg, 50p each. Stickers available in rolls of 250; 'Kick out the Tories', 'No slave labour on YTS', £2.50 per roll. All available from Fighting Fund Dept, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB. For all orders add 25% p&p.

Unemployed Wigan socialist seeks shared accommodation in London area for one month. Please ring 0942 58042.

Militant red enamel flag badges. £1 each + SAE to Mick Griffiths, 20 Trilby St, Wakefield, W Yorkshire. Special offer 10 badges for £8.

Militant meetings

Southampton Marxist discussion group. Wednesdays 12.30pm. 7 Goodwin Close, Millbrook, Southampton. Creche provided. Thursdays 7.30pm. Tel 786879 for details.

No job security

Dear Comrades,
I thought I should tell you of the firm I used to work for; CQR Security Systems Ltd, 125 Pasture Road, Tarren Way ind. estate, Moreton, Merseyside. I give the full address to warn comrades looking for work to stay well away from it. The working conditions are awful.
The hours are 60 hours (12 hours a day) for £100 a week. Most of the workers quit within a month. There's only two people I

know that have stayed more than a month, both of them were sacked. The first was sacked because he was off sick for a week and while he was off he went for an interview for a weekend job. He went to work on the Monday and was sacked on the spot.
The second lad was doing his job when the machine he was working on caught fire. He ran for the foreman who screamed at him and told him he should have stayed where he was. When he

called in the next day he was sacked.
Everyone else I know has quit within two days. I quit within six hours of working there.
We were working in a very hot temperature, day shifters were only let out at lunch times and the night shift were not allowed out at all. No one is allowed to be a union member. I hope a union member reads this and informs their union.
Mike D, Wallasey, Merseyside.

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.



Council tenants feel the squeeze as developers move in.

Airport inferno!

Dear Comrades,
On 5 November, traditional Bonfire Night parties were lit up as a scale model of a Dash-7 Airliner crashed onto a monster bonfire lit outside the Drew Road school in Newham. No-one was hurt and unlike the full-size versions this plane was totally silent in flight.
That day the model was sighted, on display outside the airport's main gate. It

was part of a demonstration organised by the Docklands Residents and Tenants Action Campaign. We were protesting at the contempt shown by the London Docklands Development Corporation towards the working class communities of Newham's Docklands. Already, assurances given to us at a public enquiry are being set aside as the LDDC and Mowlems prepare to use Jets on the

airport.
In the evening, as the 'nobs' swilled champagne and our model blazed, we enjoyed traditional Bonfire Night grub: Bangers a la Carbonnade, Incinerate of Burger, both in Bread a la Francais, as well as Jack-et Spuds and Beans; all cooked on a symbolic abandoned supermarket trolley over the flames.
Mike Cleverley, (DRATAC).

YTS disappointment

Dear Comrades,
After my one year's experience on YTS I was politely told by a member of staff at the job centre, that anyone finishing a Youth Training Scheme was doomed for disappointment when showing off their pretty YTS certificate to employers:
"You need more help now than you did before the scheme". Through my own experience I found that out, employers didn't want to know when they found out I'd gained my experience through the scheme. It's funny they don't mind taking YTS people for the cheapness of it.
Even now at 21 I can't get a job without job experience. I have finally worked out the solution—working through an agency. The firm pay the agency roughly £3.50 an hour, I get £1.94 of that for doing the same work as others and working a damn sight harder to prove myself.
There's enough technology for everyone to be working, and working shorter hours, that's if the employers used it right.
A Militant reader, Sheffield.

Dear Comrades,
I am a student at Charles Keen Further Education college. When I first left school I didn't know what I wanted to do. I went down to the careers office, they explained about the YTS and said that it is a very worthwhile course.
I replied "What do you think I am, stupid? It is a

crap course". The Tories want to have a go on it themselves. I bet Maggie wouldn't stick it for a week let alone two years.
I am getting together with some friends and going in to the NUS office about getting a coach to the lobby of Parliament on 19 November.
Mandy Leader, Leicester.

'Life' hypocrisy

Dear Comrades,
David Bayne (*Militant* 872) is 'disappointed' at the article on abortion. Unfortunately his lack of knowledge on the subject is even more 'disappointing'.
He claims that a foetus of seven months is as developed as a newborn baby. Yet premature babies delivered at that age face a desperate struggle to survive: their vital organs are not yet fully developed and they are dependent on sophisticated machinery to keep them alive.
In fact the cuts the Tories are making in the NHS

means that many premature babies will not be given the chance to survive; this contradicts the supposed aim of the Abortion Bill to sustain life. Why is the gestation period nine months 'if seven are sufficient'?
Women do not take the question of abortion lightly—if the NHS provided a speedy, efficient abortion service no woman would have to wait seven months and abortion could be carried out well under the 18 weeks stipulated in the Abortion Bill.
Lucy Slater, Camberwell.

Selling at the flicks

Dear Comrades,
Norwich *Militant* supporters have discovered the cinema! Or to be more accurate, have discovered the virtues of selling papers outside the cinema.
In the last two weeks 'Business as Usual', 'Comrades' and 'October' have visited Norwich. We were not willing to let this opportunity slip away.
The local Labour Party Young Socialists produced and distributed over a thousand leaflets advertising 'Business as Usual' and explaining the need to join a union plus fly posting the town. The response was brilliant.
In one scene the film depicts a *Militant* paper sale. The cinema audience not only see this scene but actually experience it after the film. This approach had a good response, with the selling of over 50 Sexual Harassment supplements.
Over two weeks Norwich *Militant* supporters also sold 30 papers and established three new regular sales. Norwich *Militant* supporters are now looking forward to the next political film especially if it features *Militant*.
Mark Dyball, Norwich.

Tories—the Party of the family?

Dear Comrades,
A woman I know, a one-parent family, recently tried a reconciliation with her ex-husband but things didn't work out. While they attempted to patch up the marriage he stayed at her house for a few nights.
A tip-off to the DHSS about her having a man in the house resulted in her being summoned to the local office. As her ex-husband had stayed with her longer than is legally allowed by the DHSS he was classed as having been her lodger and her benefit for the following week was promptly suspended.
The anonymous informant will now receive (courtesy of the DHSS) a giro for £30 which is the going rate for 'grassing up' your neighbours. £30 is more than the wage paid to a youngster on a YTS scheme and is probably more than most claimants receive in benefit. I don't condone people who 'shop' others to the Social, but capitalism deliberately breeds resentment and mistrust among the working class, it's a dog eat dog system.
Sandra Thompson, Wallsend.

Out now!
November edition of Militant Irish Monthly.
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Postal workers prepare for action

All in a working day

**How
we can
win**

THE BALLOT in the postal workers' union, UCW, got the employers worried. They started a massive press campaign to persuade postmen to vote against a shorter working week.

They didn't give any detail about the actual working day of a postman. In rural areas they start at 4 in the morning. In London it's 6am, and in my area it's 5am. So you're up at four, Monday to Saturday all weathers. There's no transport, so you usually walk or take the bike.

At work, it's straight into sorting the mail into the 50 to 60 deliveries; this has to be finished by 6.15. Management always demand that you sort an extra five to ten minutes. Now you have half an hour to throw up your letters, and tie them up in bundles.

Post Office rules are one thing; practice is another. The official limit is 35 lbs of mail on your bike. At our



By a Middlesex pack mule.

office, we go out like pack mules, overladen with 70 lbs or more.

If you are lucky and have a good bike, delivery starts at 7.15, only two hours to get round all the houses.

Back at the delivery office you get half an hour for a quick breakfast, a cup of tea and a cigarette, to be summoned back by loudspeakers dead on 10am. If you're late down, it's a disciplinary paper. Back you go to sorting and a second 70 lb delivery.

Recently a postman in our area was attacked by a giant Doberman who crashed through a plate glass door. Flying glass cut the postman's neck and only quick action by an OAP with towels stopped him bleeding to death.

The Post Office advise postmen to take dog biscuits with them (you have to buy them yourself.) But then the big Alsations will expect biscuits every day!

If you are lucky, you finish your delivery and get back to sign off at 12.36. If you haven't finished by then, hard luck. This happens six days a week. Does that sound like an easy number to you?

We've waited 22 years for a cut in working hours. We need it. I voted yes!



Outside Mount Pleasant, the biggest sorting office in the country.

Photo: Militant

UCW MEMBERS in the Post Office have voted for industrial action to win their claim for a three hour reduction in the working week.

Most UCW members currently work 43 hours a week, with long unsocial hours and often without a weekend off work.

Cutting three hours off the week at no cost to the workers would put most UCW members on a five day week. It would also give the chance to create more full time jobs. This would help temper the effects of extended technology and also counter the threat of increased casualisation.

The union's policy is for a phased reduction to 30 hours working by 1990. If we are to win that, we must fight for the three hours now; until the ballot the Post Office had only offered us one hour.

That would only mean ten minutes per day; the employers would try to make workers fit the same work in a shorter time. Most union members would see this offer as an insult.

No delay

But the recent talks have themselves contained certain strings. We welcome talks with the Post Office but we must beware of delaying tactics designed to stop any action before Christmas, which is the most effective time to strike.

Unfortunately the union leadership don't understand that we will need to fight for the full three hours at no cost to the members. Some of the campaigning literature encouraged union members to believe that simply a 'yes' vote in the ballot will bring an improved offer, if not the full three hours.

Ultimately, we can only win the full claim by all out strike. We would back regional stoppages, but only on the basis that it rapidly leads to a full national strike.

If the Post Office try to move mail by other means, we should raise the question of action by transport workers in the TGWU and NUR. NCU members in the post office should be approached to play a full role in the strike and Telecom workers should be involved with at least a one day stoppage.

The EC proposals will confuse and even demoralise members because they give no clear perspective for developing the strike. But a strategy for victory on hours would give UCW members confidence to fight on the many issues facing us.

★ For the full three hours with no strings
★ Support for regional stoppages only on the basis of rapidly leading to national strike

By a Manchester postal worker

NCU/UCW-one fighting union

THE TWO main unions in the Post Office and British Telecom, the UCW and NCU, must now work for amalgamation.

In 1984, the Tories privatised BT; the same fate is being prepared for the Post Office. Both businesses constantly make big profits, but at the cost of job losses, cut services and worsening conditions for workers.

Both unions have a history of 'moderation'; too often, when one union has been in struggle, the right wing leaders of the other

union have sat on the sidelines. This has led to agreements to cross picket lines, much to the disgust of ordinary members.

Recent deals have played more and more into the employers' hands. Productivity and staffing agreements, recommended by the UCW leaders as the only way to save jobs, and enforced with a warning against industrial action, have led to over 90 walk-outs by our members this year.

In BT, NCU branch of-

icials have been victimised and sacked for being effective trade unionists.

Proposals

After last year's conferences, both unions are now committed to amalgamation. The UCW proposals are for one national rule book, one annual conference with elections every five years for national officers and yearly for a lay executive.

Broad Left supporters in both unions welcome these

moves but we must campaign to make them reality.

In last year's annual report, the UCW leadership stressed the benefits of pooling union services and resources. These are important, but the real benefit must be the combined industrial strength from joining together. Used fully, it can gain important victories on common issues of pay, hours and conditions.

But a successful amalgamation needs to forge links at local level, not just at the

top. Militant supporters in both unions have always supported the call for regular joint meetings at district and branch level.

Next year's conferences must move forward on amalgamation. Failure will only benefit management. The NCU and UCW Broad Lefts must ensure that the issue of 'one fighting union' is acted upon.

By John Johnson

Communication Workers' Broad Left (personal capacity)

Stop the great Post Office robbery

THE FAT cats in the City of London are awaiting with glee the pickings from the next round of Thatcher's 'sale of the century'—the postal network.

By Chris Whale

(North London District: C&CS branch UCW personal capacity)

Last Christmas, the right wing Centre for Policy Studies advocated phased privatisation of the Post Office. They suggested establishing its constituent businesses as separate limited companies. Since then the Post Office has reorganised into four separate businesses.

Thatcher says that by the next election, National Girobank and the counters, worth £86 billion, will be privatised. The Monopolies and Mergers Commission is also poised to probe into head and sub post office costs and efficiency, no doubt providing the government with more propaganda to 'justify' privatisation.

Clarke, the Trade and Industry minister, recently told the Commons that if the postal union, the UCW, tried to disrupt postal services in our campaign for a shorter working week, the government would suspend the Post Office monopoly.

Legislation also gives the gov-

ernment the power to tender postal services to private agencies. What clearer sign could there be that Thatcher intends to privatise Royal Mail, parcels and letters, despite her election promises?

Strength

Our union's response must be unequivocal. The government have chopped up the business but our union has not been split; we have the strength to defeat these attacks.

The UCW executive must lead from the front. All the unions' warnings of the effects of Telecom privatisation have been borne

out—higher costs, redundancies, and worsening conditions and standards of service.

The executive have launched CAPPO (Campaign against Privatisation of the Post Office). This campaign must explain to every member that jobs and conditions, already eroded, would fare even worse under privatisation.

We need a properly organised campaign with branch meetings and rallies, addressed by national executive members and speakers from the telecom union, NCU, giving their experiences. This would give members the confidence to fight off these attacks.

Industrial reports

Car workers' fighting mood

Dagenham

"IF YOU do not support the fight for your deserved respect and dignity, we might as well lie down, kick our legs in the air and let the company walk all over us."

That was how Basildon Tractors Joint Shop Stewards Committee ended their report back from the national negotiations meeting on 11 November.

Ford workers have walked out at plants around the country in response to the paltry offer of 4.25 per cent with a list of strings which will further undermine our conditions.

4.25 per cent is an insult. Productivity and profits have continued to rise, reflected in the increases given to the top salary employees. Labour Research recently reported that Ford UK's top director won a 74.5 per cent pay rise, up to £222,105 while the workforce was only awarded 6 per cent in the second year of our pay deal.

We need an all out strike for a 35 hour week and a one year deal with no strings. Some union leaders opposed an immediate walk-out but had to respond to rank and file pressure when workers walked out anyway.

On the day that Ford unions were holding a press conference to announce the claim, AEU general secretary Gavin Laird was in Dundee for talks on one-union, no-strike deals for the new Ford plant to be developed in that area.

It's no wonder that with leaders such as Gavin Laird, Fords were confident of offering so little. It is a case of lions led by donkeys. We must prepare for a long dispute if necessary. In 1971 and 1978 we came out for eight

weeks. We must be prepared to come out for as long as it takes because of the strings attached.

Fords are demanding that skilled workers return to the assembly line, that foremen are abolished, and existing production methods are replaced by the 'gang system' with group leaders on 10 per cent more pay than the others. We must oppose this 'whipping boy' system.

The foremen may not be particularly popular but they are union members and we must differentiate between them and higher management.

The bosses would like local negotiations and settlements; local agreements would divide the union in its stand against the company. The company are spinning out negotiations while they build up supplies at other European plants.

Overtime ban

We need an overtime ban now. Already the 45 acre sites at Dagenham have an overtime ban until the settlement is made. Car workers must unite and appeal for solidarity through the Ford international shop stewards' combine from workers in Belgium, Spain and Germany.

We must also link up with workers involved in disputes in different car companies in Britain.

- ★ A one year deal with no strings.
- ★ 35 hour week.
- ★ Immediate overtime ban.
- ★ For a national strike.
- ★ Forge links with other car workers.

By a Dagenham Ford worker



Ford workers march through London in 1978.

Photo: Militant

Austin rover Cowley

ON MONDAY 16 November, the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) were on strike at Austin Rover's Cowley assembly plant.

The mood, particularly amongst TGWU track workers, was so strong that management laid off the EETPU and AEU members and closed the plant.

Management, fearing escalation of the one day strike, also laid off its workers in the body plant, thus closing the whole Al-bion plant, and losing around £3 million worth of production.

Some workers feel that one day is not enough and they are pressurising the shop stewards committee not to end its campaign to win better pensions but to use the one day stoppage to start fighting back against management's policies.

Already in the body plant they have pushed through some diabolical speed-ups on some jobs. Workers who have been here for nearly fifteen years have resigned and would rather go on the dole than do the job the industrial engineers map out for them.

We must show management that the trade union movement is far from defeated in the car industry. Already workers here are looking to workers in Ford and Vauxhall in their disputes.

Victory in Ford would give workers confidence to fight back and win against a management hell bent on turning Austin Rover car workers into low paid robots.

By a Cowley worker

Halewood

ONE HALEWOOD Ford worker said that in the 17 years he'd worked there he'd never known anything like it. "If we don't have action now we never will."

By Kath Lee

The foremen's strike really changed the mood; it was the first that workers could remember. The company threatened to sack 60 per cent of the foremen and force the rest to re-apply. Line workers are joking about the unexpected sight of lads in the canteen passing round buckets with 'Foremen's strike fund' on.

Ford Halewood didn't take action last week when other plants did. The stewards went round the plant telling workers not to walk off the job as they were still negotiating. But during the week, the stewards changed their minds and called a mass meeting last Thursday.

There are two shifts, 'A' and 'B'. The stewards' resolution for a 24 hour strike on 16 November was fully accepted at the 'A' shift. But the 'B' shift's questions about banning of overtime weren't answered properly and they lost the vote. So the day shift were on strike and the night shift at work.

But with a clear call by both the T&G and AEU, the action could be very successful. The mood at both meetings was explosive. There was a minute's silence because, sadly, one of the convenors had died over the weekend. But one worker said that was the only silence of the whole meeting which was uproar.

In recent years, the buoyant car market has led stewards to take the line of 'making the cake bigger' so workers would all benefit. Workers had confidently expected over 20 per cent pay rise as they had given everything the company asked for.

Eighteen months ago workers used to get a letter congratulating them for producing 850 cars, now they get a letter asking what is the problem if they don't produce 1200, and that's with fewer workers.

Although the agreement runs out on 24 November and balloting over strike action may take weeks after that, many workers feel the mood is so explosive that there could be a walk out at any time.

STOP PRESS National one-day stoppage

The dispute at Fords has taken another step forward with the announcement of a national one-day stoppage on Monday 23 November. It also appears that an overtime ban has been agreed, at least in the majority of Ford plants.

There will be more coverage of the ferment within the car industry in next week's *Militant*.

Crewe error

MILITANT wishes to make it clear that the reference to George Cheetham in the article on Crewe in issue 872 was an error.

BLOC

Conference '88

Sheffield city Hall—Sat 13 Feb

THE BROAD Left Organising Committee (BLOC) is holding a conference next February on the theme "Organise a fight-back". Many national Broad Lefts are now considering how best to use this meeting.

They recognise that the event will give them a golden opportunity, not only to meet activists from all other key unions but also to recruit members to their own Broad Lefts at the conference.

The calling of the conference is very timely. One of BLOC's main slogans over the past four years has been "for

a fighting union leadership."

Every trade unionist will have an interest in the re-election of Arthur Scargill as NUM President. That will be a major victory for the left and a refutation of misnamed 'new realism'.

Disputes are developing in the post office, the car industry, local government and there are many local strikes. Union Broad Lefts have a great potential for building for this conference.

Whether you are in dispute or fighting to change your union, BLOC conference will be your chance to pool experiences

and adopt a united strategy.

BLOC conference will take place in Sheffield on Saturday 13 February at Sheffield City Hall. It is open to all trade union bodies (branches, workplaces, district committees, shop stewards committees, divisional councils etc.)

Each body can send up to five delegates (fee per delegate £3). For an application form and details of local transport to the conference, write to Broad Left Organising Committee, PO Box 464, London E5 8PT.

Industrial reports

Save Coventry's health service

THE DAY of action called by the Health Services joint union committee looks like being the biggest protest by Coventry workers since trade unions were banned at GCHQ.

By a Coventry nurse

The four hospitals will take action and be joined on a lobby and rally by workers from Coventry Colliery, Massey Ferguson, postal workers, engineers, telephonists, NALGO local authority workers, students from Lanchester Poly, Butts and Tile Hill colleges as well as nurses from Manchester and Birmingham. 50,000 leaflets have been distributed throughout the workplaces.

The intention to close Whitley Hospital and three other wards has provoked an angry reaction. The local health authority justify the effective privatisation of Whitley by implying their proposals were like treating a case of financial gangrene, that is, chopping off the leg to 'save' the body.

But the authority say more 'operations' are needed as three more wards are to be 'chopped off'. Health workers now see the authority as the receiver for a bankrupted NHS and say 'enough is enough.'

Cuts throughout the region have touched practically every family to some extent. Every day brings new stories about cutbacks, increased waiting lists and deteriorating facilities and services.

One Coventry couple have a seven year old son, Adrian, with a heart defect. He is breathless all the time but unfortunately, Adrian is not classed as seriously ill, so emergencies come first due to cutbacks in beds at the specialist hospital. Adrian's parents contacted Dave Nellist MP as he has already waited two years



Fighting to save Whitley Hospital in Coventry.

for an operation that could cure him.

The government are playing with people's lives. Spending on outside relief doctors, ie locums, is to be slashed. The extra workload is to be pushed on to junior doctors who already work a minimum 82 hours a week.

Doctors in Coventry, quite rightly, are refusing to do the extra hours. One patient in Birmingham has already died, as a result of the enormous physical and mental strain of doctors working 100 hours week after week.

The only negligence involved is from the Tories and their system. The NHS has become one big waiting list pushed to the back of the queue by the Tory government 'doctors' to favour their own 'patients' such as Trident, privatisation and

tax cuts for the wealthy.

This lobby must not be the end of the campaign; it must be dramatically stepped up. Support for the action has been significant. The mood is there, a determined lead could lead to an even more widespread strike in the city.

Although the closures are very near they can be stopped, given the support that can be tapped. With links being built between health workers and workplaces across the city, a full city-wide strike could be possible.

This needs more immediate action by the health workers, including occupation of the hospital, backed up by other workers.

Pressure must be put on the health unions' leadership for the national action to tap the existing mood to defend the NHS.

Liverpool moderates hit jobfinders

NALGO MEMBERS in the careers service of Liverpool city council education department have voted overwhelmingly for industrial action; we oppose a move to redeploy six low paid posts to other areas of the council, to pay for the upgrading of staff on higher wages.

Management also proposed to scrap the post of YTS monitoring officer, who ensures YTS schemes come up to the low standard set by the Manpower Services Commission. Although this threat may have been withdrawn and the number to be redeployed cut to three, it still makes

the difficult task of finding jobs for young people even harder.

We lobbied the annual careers YTS exhibition, which is normally stewarded by careers staff. YTS schemes advertise themselves here to the fifth year students who attend. When they saw our lobby, one group of YTSers put up a sign saying "Jacob's YTS stall is unmanned due to support for careers service staff."

One school student apologised for coming past a picket. "Our teacher made us but my Dad would kill me if he knew I'd crossed a picket line."

Unfortunately Tom McManus, the new chair of the now "moderate" city council, crossed the picket line without a second thought.

The staff are angry at management and councillors but they will fight for a better service. YTS conscription will have almost as radical an effect on workers in the frontline of administering it as on the young workers involved.

By Emy Onuora
(Liverpool NALGO careers service shop steward, personal capacity)

BED SHORTAGES are so bad now that even emergency admissions to hospitals are left in corridors as doctors discharge the 'fittest' patients. Waiting lists of three years or longer exist for routine operations.

At best, patients aren't getting the care they deserve. At worst, lives are at risk from low staffing levels. Recently one baby lost its life due to poor staffing because nobody had noticed it had stopped breathing. We need vast amounts of money just to put the NHS back on its feet but the way things are going here, hospitals are having to make do with charity and bazaars.

It's scandalous that the DHA are cutting beds by selling off Whitley hospital when only richer patients will be able to use it after privatisation.

Yorkshire Rider

LAST MINUTE emergency talks between the unions and the major bus company Yorkshire Rider, averted a 24-hour strike on 13 November.

But further action is likely as the company are trying to cut wages by 11 to 14 per cent as well as slashing pensions and holiday pay and bringing in two different rates for present drivers and drivers employed in the future.

Yorkshire Rider say they are unable to compete with the small private firms which have sprung up since deregulation.

The unions have threatened a 24-hour strike every week until the company draw back.

UCW members vote for action -leaders must stand firm

POSTAL WORKERS have voted decisively for industrial action to win our claim for three hours off the working week. (See feature page 13). With a majority of 15,000 and 55 per cent of the vote, we are determined to win.

Speed-ups

Management have been implementing plans to boost profits, with speed-ups, faster work rates for code desk operators and a proposed disciplinary code that will set us back 20 years.

Postal workers are getting angry; that anger should be harnessed now to win the full claim. Sadly the national UCW leadership have been involved in secret talks behind closed doors.

Despite the ballot result, they have been talking about Sunday working, (a seven-day week).

Alan Tuffin is talking about there being no action this side of Christmas. It is rumoured that the union will shortly come to a deal with the Post Office. If this is for the full three hours, that is welcome. But if, as feared, the deal is little better than the one hour already offered with strings, it cannot be accepted.

The UCW leadership must stand firm with a well-organised campaign of regional action, with large rallies, leading rapidly to all out action. This dispute can then be won very rapidly.

By a London postal worker

Work on the 'black crap'

THE HUGE Conoco oil refinery in South Humberside recently had its annual major shutdown for maintenance and repair work.

By a Humberside engineering worker

Over 2,000 men were employed on site at the peak of the shutdown. Most were unemployed before and most will be again after the three weeks. The job was fully manned-up five weeks before the start—a sign of how many skilled workers are unemployed on Humberside.

Conoco is the sole producer of petroleum coke in the UK and much of the site is covered in 'black crap'. The work is hard, heavy, filthy and done in all weathers. One lad described the accident situation as something like the Battle of the Somme.

For these three weeks, seven 10-hour days are worked. The money is good but it's got to last for a long period on the dole.

As you walk on site you

see a massive notice board, half with the 'safe' accident rate for the site, and half with the latest Du Pont stock market price and the rate of exchange. I wonder if they'll show the record drop in the Dow Jones index.

While the winds of recession blow from the USA, most workers think only of the end of the shutdown when they can turn their backs on the 'black crap' and rest easy for a few weeks with a bit of cash in the bank.

On union matters, most lads are just waiting for future opportunities when their combined strength can be used effectively. No stewards are evident—understandable on a three week contract—but most are in the union with a high level of union consciousness which will erupt in the future.

As the lads depart to an uncertain future with recession in the offing, class antagonisms will be sharpened. Then, even on short term jobs like this, discussion will centre around the alternative to three or four weeks' work a year.

South Wales Broad Left

- ☆ Stop privatisation
- ☆ Defeat the Tories
- ☆ Build the Broad Left

Delegate conference: Speakers include-Terry Fields MP, John MacCreadie CPSA, Laurence Hemming NALGO
10am-5pm. Sat 5 December POEU Club, St Mary's St, Swansea

Militant

Inside

Youth stop the Tories

see pages 4-5

Forced YTS — No way!

A YOUNG LAD climbed the ladder on the front of a refrigerated trailer to help direct the vehicle into the workshop where he worked. There was 2' 3" between the trailer and the beams in the roof. The lorry cleared the first, but the lad was trapped under the second as it moved into the workshop. He was crushed to death.

By a Liverpool Young Socialist

He was one of the forty 16 and 17 year olds who have been killed on YTS so far.

Others include the girl whose clothing caught fire while she was leaning against a gas cooker and the lad crushed after the scissor jack holding the car he was working on collapsed. And the death

toll per year is rising, according to the misnamed Health and Safety report of the MSC, who run this slave labour scheme.

Major injuries

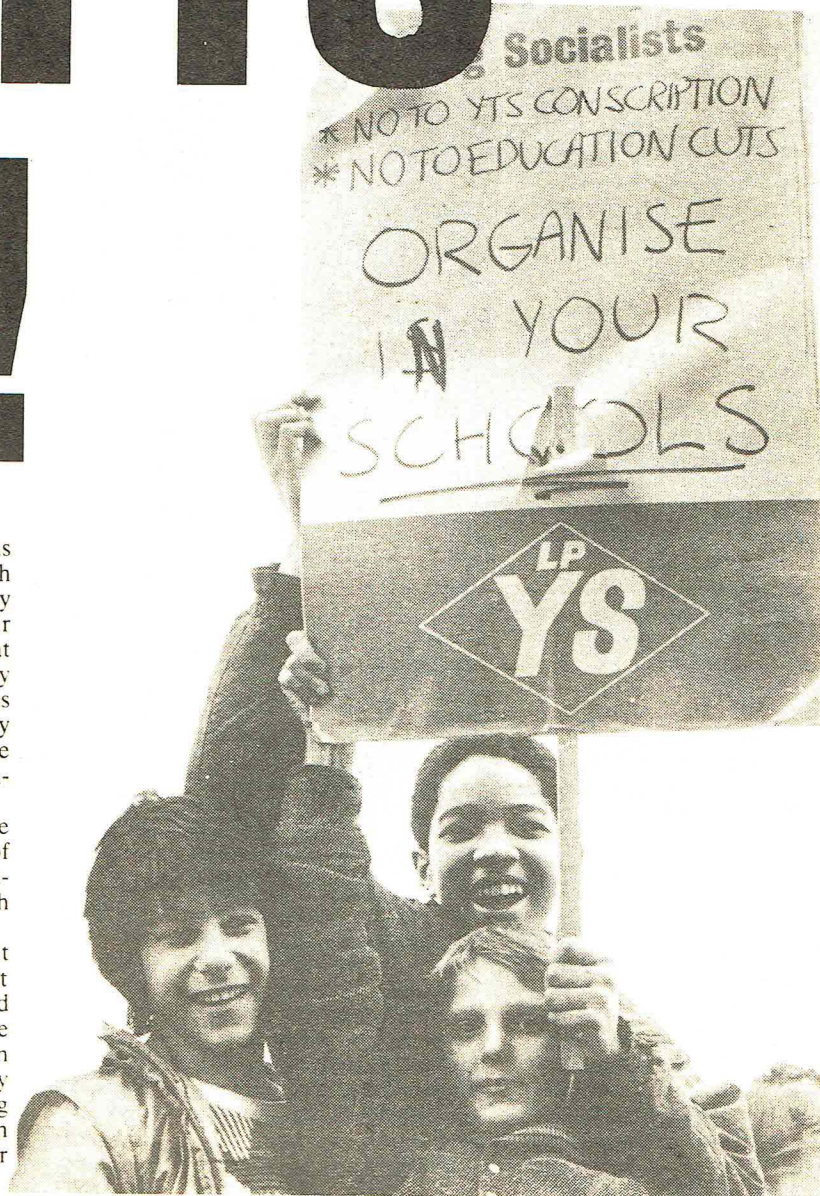
Over 500 trainees have suffered major injuries, such as the loss of limbs or fracture of the skull, and a further 3,489 suffered 'minor' ones. What the report doesn't show is the suffering these statistics represent. Imagine being 16 or 17 and having to face the fact that you will have to go through the rest of your life disfigured.

These trainees have been the victims of the Tories' Youth Training Swindle. It has helped the government disguise the appalling youth unemployment statistics. But it has given working class youth nothing but sweatshop slave labour.

The grisly statistics of deaths and disfigurement are so high because British bosses are ready to sacrifice a generation to their greed for profits. That's what YTS is all about and that's why the Youth Trades Union Rights Campaign and the Labour Party Young Socialists are fighting the Tories' plans to make YTS compulsory.

Already Scottish youth have had a one-day strike in support of YTURC's demands, and thousands demonstrated in Scottish cities.

YTURC's lobby of Parliament on 19 November is another part of the battle for real training and proper jobs for youth. We believe that only socialist policies can guarantee an end to the misery the Tories' profit system is piling onto our generation. Join us in our fight for a real future for youth!



MPs support YTURC

RON BROWN, MP for Leith, has congratulated the Youth Trades Union Rights Campaign (YTURC) on its work in a motion in Parliament. It reads:

"This house congratulates the organisers of YTURC who called a demonstration in Edinburgh against compulsory YTS, supports their demands for real training and apprenticeships at union rates with a £35 a week grant for students and calls on the labour movement to unite with young people in their struggle against the Government and its crisis ridden capitalist

system."

In a speech in Parliament last week, Dave Nellist MP, who is YTURC's president, said:

"YTURC will lobby the House of Commons on 19 November... I believe that the action by the 250,000 school students two and a half years ago against the then Secretary of State for Employment who tried to bring conscription into the YTS will be exceeded in the months ahead and that the young will take action against the YTS provision in the Social Security Bill."

- ★ For the unionisation of all YTS schemes.
- ★ For £55 for 16 year old trainees, and £65 for 17 year olds, or trade union rates of pay.
- ★ For a £35 a week grant for all at 16 in full time education.
- ★ For a guaranteed job at the end of all YTS schemes.
- ★ For a socialist Labour government.

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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.