

Socialist ORGANISER

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Tories talk of using troops



RICK MATTHEWS (IFL)

Dock strike picket at Glasgow's King George V docks - 12 July



Durham Miners' Gala - 14 July

**Time
for a
general
strike!**

STEFANO CAGNONI (IFL)

PHILLIPS RUBBER WORKERS SACKED SAYING NO TO LOW PAY



JOHN HARRIS (IFL)

Phillips Rubber workers who have been on strike for over six months on the North West TUC Day of Action in support of the miners in Manchester, 13 July

THERE WAS a big response in Manchester to the North West TUC's call for a day of action in support of the miners on July 13. About 20,000 women and men joined a demonstration to show their solidarity. There were a lot of trade union banners. Rail

workers, health workers, and local council workers struck for the day. Train services were stopped by the strike at Piccadilly and Miles Platting, and the day of action also received support from the Labour-controlled City Council. The council wrote to all council workers recommending a half day strike in support of the

miners. NUPE Housing voted instead to strike for a full day. Pickets were set up outside the Town Hall and area offices urging other workers to come out for the whole day. The Day of Action was a success, despite the failure of the North West TUC and (even more so) the Manchester Trades Council to build for it.

The capital lords of London

Have you heard the news of late
About some mighty men so great?
Parasites! — You'll soon learn
to hate
The capital lords of London.
A surly set, a cowardly crew
They've shut our pits (and not a few)
And now we've nothing left to do,
Damn those capital lords of London.
Now, with our ballads we've come about
To turn this country inside out
To try and learn to live without
The capital lords of London.
Everybody's crying shame and
Spitting on the 'maiden's' name
But don't you think she's as much to blame
As the capital lords of London?

It's the working people such as we
Who spend their lives in poverty
Those bastards live in luxury,
The capital lords of London.
The bosses screw us throughout
the day and
Squander our wealth in every way,
Yet when we ask for higher pay,
So speak the capital lords of London:
'You get enough; we are intent
On your demands we'll not consent'
But we will have our ten per cent
From the capital lords of London

Paymasters say they're very sure
A lasting strike we cannot endure;
The sods! — They know we're

very poor,
Unlike the capital lords of London.
But we are determined, we are bent
On holding more than ten per cent,
We'll smash this Tory government
Plus those capital lords of London.
Capital lords are sure to fall,
Both ugly, handsome, short and tall
For we intend to conquer all
The capital lords of London.

So men and women, all of you
Come and buy a song or two,
and
With your assistance we can subdue
The capital lords of London.
We'll win through, make no mistake
Despite such laws as the coppers make
Well! — The bloody rules are there to break,
Just like the capital lords of London.
After, we'll dance and sing for free
And thank you all fraternally
But first, on to famous victory
And defeat the lords of London.
Everybody's crying shame and
Spitting on the 'maiden's' name
But don't you think she's as much to blame
As the capital lords of London?

50p for a single copy, 40p per copy for 5 or more, and 30p per copy for 20 or more, from SUPA, 83 Peckham High Street, London SE15. Please add an amount for postage.

Diary of a People's Marcher and "How politics were kept out of the People's March" 50p

by Satvinder Singh and Tony Purtil
Introduction by Jeremy Corbyn, MP

By Tony Twine, derived from a ballad of around 1853, called 'The Cotton Lords of Preston'.



Disused colliery in South Wales

JOHN HARRIS

The miners' demands

Alan: We are now beginning to win.

To me, winning includes getting more than a 5.2% pay and scrapping the incentive agreements.

If we scrapped this bonus scheme I think we'd have a better chance of getting unity amongst all the miners.

What about the four day week?
Charlie: It should have been brought in twenty years ago. Even the rabbits see more of day, light than we do.

Stan: There's 6 points I'd like to see before I go back. The 4-day week and five others.

One is obviously what we came out on strike for — no pit closures. Another one is to get rid of the incentive schemes. The third one is a massive pay rise. Because when you get rid of the incentive scheme you take a lot of wages off the lads.

Another one is that we don't go back to work until the lads who've been sacked and the lads who are in jail are reinstated.

And protected rates for miners. When a miner starts it's on a low grade. He works his way up to face work when he's on top whack. If he gets injured, he's back down where he started, on a pittance, and that pittance is what his pension is based on.

The protection scheme should say that once he's a face worker, it doesn't matter what happens to him, the rest of his working life and his pension is based on that.

What do you think is going to come out of the current round of talks?

Stan: They're panicking. What happens when Nottingham goes on holiday? Where is the coal going to come from? Before the go on holiday, a couple of days will be spent on safety work, and when they get back it takes a couple of days to get back to normal again, so you're talking about three weeks before you get back to the present production levels. So that's three weeks production lost unless Notts works through its holidays.

George: I think the talks are a ploy. They're giving a little bit to the union at the moment,

Shortly before the recent NUM delegate conference John Bloxam talked to four strikers from Bevercotes, Notts — Alan Hodgson, Charlie Jenkins, Stan Crawford and George Brooks — about the negotiations with the Coal Board and about new technology.

building up the hopes of the men that are on strike into thinking that it will be settled in a couple of weeks, and then they'll just tell us to go away and the talks will finish again.

So do you think the Coal Board's been beaten?

Alan: Yes, and the government, too. When you've got nationalised industries, such as this, which is run by the government who appoint someone to run it, and the government appoints them, nobody else, then it must be a government dispute as well.

What do you think about the discussions going on as to which pits should close? There seem to be three groups — exhausted pits, pits with geological difficulties and finally "uneconomic" pits.

I remember a year ago some Welsh miners came down here after their pit was closed. They told me that it was closed as uneconomic and the reason was they put steel supports on the face. They only reached four feet, yet the face was between six and seven feet. And you had a lot of timbering to do.

So the Coal Board had to spend a lot of money. That was enough to make the pit uneconomic.

Bevercotes is the same. Bevercotes was sunk in the 1950s and it never made a profit until last year. It's only through the investment they put into the machinery.

If you invest in a pit, it will become 'economic'.

Stan: If you look at technology as a whole, you're not only talking about the coal industry.

They're also introducing new technology into other industries like cars, with robots. You're coming to a situation where the majority of heavy industry and everything else is going to have so much new technology in it that there'll be millions on the dole permanently.

What's the answer to that from a working class point of view?

My answer is that I don't want to lounge about, I want to work, and that's what I'm on strike for.

You've got to get it down to a four day week.

When Bevercotes opened we had a new tech face. Prince Philip came to see it in his white overalls, and the manager took him round.

There were men on the face with cap lamps out, so he couldn't see them, working the machines. They said, look, it's working on its own, but there were men on the face with no lights on, and they were working the machine.

That's new technology, and if you've got to hide that from royalty, it's not right.

OK, they made fools of themselves like that, but surely now they've got the technology to put people on the moon. They've got the technology down the pit to take away a lot of labour.

There's one question I've always argued. If we get new technology and you can push a few buttons, what happens when those few buttons get covered in a rock fall? Who digs them out?

There's no comparison between men going to the moon and men mining coal. None whatsoever.

I'm scared that the technology they could bring in could reduce the workforce in the mines to make the NUM a weak union.

It's going to be the working class again that's going to suffer, and them that's got the money, they're going to have all the high jobs, and they're still going to dictate to the working class.

A workers' energy plan

NEW MINING technology could reduce jobs in the industry by over 100,000 to 79,000 by March 1988.

That's the conclusion of a report produced by the University of Bradford's Working Environment Research Group. The report further suggests that in the longer term as many as 83% of jobs could be at risk, reducing the number of workers to 38,000.

The alternative, as the NUM has argued, is for mineworkers to work fewer hours for the same pay.

There are a series of new tech-

By George Holt

nology systems that have been introduced into the mines, the most important of which is the Mine Operating System (MINOS), which is a computer system for central control of entire collieries, and even multi-colliery complexes like Selby.

In order to present these systems leading to mass redundancies, the NUM has drawn up a Technology Agreement, to be central to negotiations with the Coal Board. This calls for:

- A four-day, 28-hour week with no loss of pay,
- Early retirement at 55,

- Longer holidays,
- Radically improved working conditions,

- An end to occupational disease,
- A dramatic reduction in injuries and accidents,
- Retraining in new skills,
- Opening-up of new jobs for young people.

The agreement also calls for union monitoring of all technological change.

These demands need to be linked up to a workers' energy plan democratically decided and controlled by rank and file workers in the industry.

Fighting talk

There were 15,000 miners last weekend at the Durham miners' gala. Hundreds streamed away when Neil Kinnock started speaking, but before that they had heard militant speeches from Peter Heathfield, Dennis Skinner, and Arthur Scargill.

These are some excerpts from what they said.

Peter Heathfield: "It's not a question of can the miners win, or will the miners win. The issue now is that the miners are going to win..."

We will inflict on Maggie Thatcher and monetarism the kind of defeat we inflicted in 1972 and 1974".

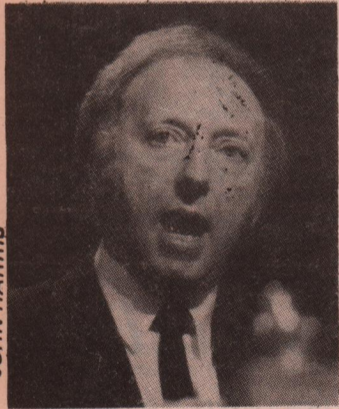
Dennis Skinner: "We're not going to win in extra time or on penalty goals. We're on the way to a decisive five-nil victory..."

The sun's out; the dockers are out; the seamen are coming out; the railwaymen are out... it will not be long before the Tories are out!...

You don't have to wait to take action... Everybody says a victory for the miners is a victory for us all - then come out!...

I say to you, Neil, when you get into No.10, there's going to be no more pit closures. And I call on Labour councils now - take those scab firms [the lorry firms who have driven through NUM pickets] off your approved lists...

The edifice is beginning to crumble, and it all began because 155,000 said, 'enough is enough'... When the vicars start joining us, by god they know which side has won".



JOHN HARRIS

Arthur Scargill: "My bottom line, and Peter Heathfield's bottom line, is: withdrawal of the pit closure programme; no economic closures; no victimisation for strikers; a wage agreement for 1983 which represents more than the money lost in the strike; consolidation of the incentive agreement as a step to its abolition; a rate protection scheme; and early retirement.

If any man ceases to be a member of this union, our union and its members will not work with scabs.

I say to those workers, and particularly their leaderships, in power stations and steel works - stop pious words, turn words into action, stop exempting blackleg coal...

I ask Neil Kinnock: a lot of people have been arrested who have never been in trouble in their lives... Their only crime is fighting for their jobs... A new Labour government should wipe off any criminal record...

I've one message to Neil Kinnock: when you get into No.10, show the same loyalty to your class that Thatcher shows to her class".



Lobby of the NUM Executive meeting in Sheffield, 11 July

JOHN SMITH (IFL)

'A five-nil victory'

We're getting very close to a victory, but let's not be wayward towards the end. Let's make it sure, let's make it clean, let's make it an incisive victory.

We don't want a scrappy ending. We don't want a compromise. We're not going to have a sell-out.

So my message to the Hackney people was the dockers are out, the miners are out, some of the seamen are out, some of the railwaymen are out. Don't wait for people like Len Murray to fetch you out. You can join on your own accord.

I'd like to see that spirit which is now prevailing amongst workers - a growing confidence - show itself in a little bit more industrial action.

Thatcher is having to fight on countless fronts and one of the key things in winning any dispute is to make sure that the class enemy, in this case the government and MacGregor combined together, are fighting on more than one front.

And Mrs Thatcher is fighting on several fronts now. They've got problems about the economy. They've got problems about the pound. They've got problems about interest rates. They've got problems with the dockers, large sections of railway workers, and they don't know what to do with the teachers.

They've got difficulties with local government workers coming up very shortly with their pay claim.

So there is a whole series of things. It's becoming a bit too much to handle.

On top of that, they've been defeated on the GLC, because of the tremendous support from Londoners. I don't give any credit to the House of Lords. The main reason was that Londoners had shown in no uncertain fashion that they didn't want the GLC scrapped.

Do you think a general strike is on the cards?

I don't know. I've never been around when there's been a general strike, but I think there's an atmosphere amongst working people of tremendous confidence. I don't know whether that will get translated into action. One thing I'm fairly certain of, I don't think they'll get the right kind of leadership from a lot of trade union leaders. And that is sometimes important, certainly in the NUM. I don't think the NUM would be on strike now if it hadn't had some very competent

Dennis Skinner spoke to John Bloxam

Dennis Skinner MP spoke to John Bloxam on Monday July 16, just after speaking to a packed lunchtime meeting of Hackney council workers

leadership. If we're thinking in terms of some of the leaders - Bill Sirs, for instance, who has gone on record time and time again attacking the miners' strategy when it's the only strategy that this government understands.

What do you think of the support action from other unions like the dockers?

We've had some pretty good support and it's been growing rather than being intermittent, which is important because if you get support and then it fades away that can be very negative.

What we've seen with the railwaymen is a gradual, growing support, starting with the non-movement of coal in areas where they were not on strike, until now we've got most of the coal that's in Nottingham now having to travel by road. So now we've got to put a bit more pressure on the TGWU to take more stern action.

So the support has been growing and with the dockers coming in, that's been absolutely tremendous. It has put the wind up the government without any doubt at all, uneconomic

You said in Durham on Saturday that you thought the miners' strike would be a five-nil victory

I say five-nil because there are five major demands. There has to be a victory on the closure programme.

There has to be recompense for all the wages that's been lost. I'm not a negotiator with the NUM but I think a bonus wouldn't come amiss for all those who've been on strike.

There's the question of going back to work with all the people who have been on strike. Those - who've been sacked - I Board, have got to be... There can be no... without that.

Then there's the question of the four-day week. That is a must. And then there is the question of overtime, linked with the incentive scheme.

The money that was going on the bonus scheme - about 22% of wages has to be incorporated straight into the day wage so that everybody gets the same.

There's a report published today about new technology in the mines which predicts that between 70-80% of jobs could go in the next ten years with new technology. Do you think the four-day week is partly an answer to that?

It has to be. Although I accept that new technology can do things along those lines, I know the industry fairly well and I don't believe that some of the technology that they talk about is possible, in the sense that it can be transported from a model on the pit top into actual practice underground.

Underground mining is a very difficult, hazardous occupation. There are all sorts of different elements that you have to contend with. So although I accept that technology is reducing jobs all the time, I don't think it will be on the scale that they imagine.

The thing to do is develop a strategy in which the four-day week is a part, so that we use new technology for the benefit of workers, not for the benefit of somebody else.

What do you think of the Labour Party's response to the dispute?

Good and growing all the time. That's been one of the most pleasing features about the meetings I've been doing, and this is the 58th meeting I've done in this campaign! Most of them have raised a tremendous amount of money, and they are raising more money now than at the beginning.

Last week I went to St. Albans, a Tory constituency, and the Labour Party and the rest of the trade unions set up a meeting and we raised £2,120. At Oxford we collected £5,000 the other week, at Kingston £700, and £500 here even though Hackney has raised a lot of money already.

So the labour movement has been responding tremendously.

As for the leadership, I think that they now understand that the fence-sitting is over. I remarked at the Durham rally last Saturday, deliberately, that the fence-sitting days were done, and Labour leaders should understand that the way to win power is to show clean, decisive leadership.

Not to be waffling, not to be waiting to see which way the wind blows, but to show leadership even when the going is hard.

When the miners strike began I knew I had to move very quickly into line with support for the pits, even though there are pits in my constituency which are in Nottinghamshire NUM. I knew that I'd have a battle, that there'd be a minority, a very small minority thankfully, in my constituency who'd be supporting the right wing Nottinghamshire leadership.

But it's been an inspiration to me and I think some comfort, that because I spoke out right from the very beginning, and made it clear where I stood, most of the miners in the Bolsover constituency, despite having two Nottinghamshire pits within it, have stood solid in the strike.

In the recent elections in Bolsover NUM five out of the eight returned were on strike.

What about the role of the police during the dispute?

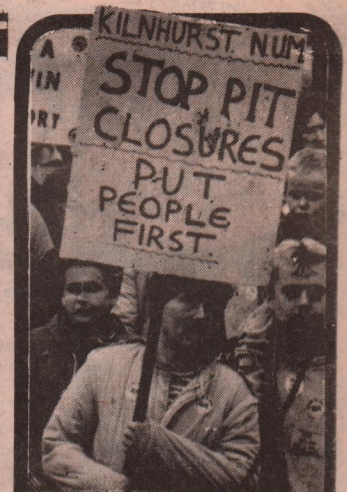
Without a doubt the police have been sent up there to do a job for Mrs Thatcher and Leon Brittan and the rest of them. They sent them to act as their private army. Some of the things they have done have appalled non-miners in those areas.

More and more people write to Members of Parliament. They no longer feel afraid. They feel they have to speak out against the police, even though they've had no connection at all with the miners.

I had a pub landlady ring me up on Friday asking me to make a protest on her behalf. She was objecting to the police using the precincts around her pub as a marshalling yard every morning, to try and stop the pickets from getting together.

That's after 18 weeks and she feels braver now. That is typical of countless other examples.

In my area, nearly every parish councillor told the police to keep away from attending their meetings. There used to be a practice of the police coming to parish council meetings and giving a homely little report on something or other. But they'd been affronted by the way in which civil liberties have been under attack.



Back the miners

Midlands rail blockade

By Rob Dawber

THE hard core at Shirebrook rail depot, who are willing to continue moving coal, remains; though they are down to about 16-17.

Most of the coal they shift is going into High Marnham, and much of comes from stockpiles such as at Rufford.

Up to now those NUR and ASLEF members who support the NUM and thereby refuse to handle coal, are being used by management to shift MGR (Merry Go Round or pit to power station coal trains) empties around.

This means that the non-supporters only handle coal, and, for example, run full MGRs into High Marnham, leaving four or five over the weekend in the sidings (condemned as unsafe for use up to the start of this dispute) for the C&GB to use at their leisure.

Then first thing Monday morning the supporters are sent in to bring out the empties to make space for new loads.

Management, it seems, are getting very adept at moving MGRs around to make the maximum possible use of the supporters.

To frustrate this, guards, at least, at Shirebrook have persuaded the NUR to, instruct them to also refuse empties. This should seriously affect coal movements if the hard core have to move all, full and empty, MGRs.

A meeting at Shirebrook just recently called for all reps of freight guards, to organise among themselves, was amazed when a young guard from West Houses, a small depot just south of Chesterfield, announced that his depot had been moving coal from day one, had ignored the NUR call, and that no-one from the NUR officially had been into the depot to talk to anyone about it.

To the embarrassment of the full time divisional officer present it was learned that this was how a substantial amount of coal was getting into Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station.

Under pressure, a meeting is now being set up to meet and talk to the train crews.

West Houses is up for closure in a few months time.

All the other depots in and around the Midlands coalfield remain solid.



Pamphlet 50p plus postage from Turkey Solidarity Campaign. BM Box 5965, London WC1N 3XX.



Police attack NHS pickets

Health workers in North Manchester are this week discussing strike action in protest against a police attack on their picket line on the North West TUC day of action last Friday, July 13. Karen Reissman reports.

NORTH Manchester hospital took action in support of the miners on the North West TUC day of action, Friday July 13.

All the unions had agreed to

strike for at least part of the day. There was a strong picket line stopping all cars as they came in, but police were being very difficult.

They were constantly demanding that pickets move, or hurry up, or remain on the pavement.

The pickets, about 70 strong, were just inside the hospital gates, where the police had no jurisdiction unless invited in by management. This caused a few arguments between the pickets and the police. One sergeant became very angry. He stormed off and returned twenty minutes later with two vanloads of police.

They brutally arrested two of

those who had been arguing, and another picket who tried to protest about the arrests.

Shop stewards immediately went into the hospitals in the district and called on all those who were still working to come out. There was a good response. Over 2000 extra people struck.

This week there will be a mass meeting to discuss the arrests and maybe strike action when those arrested appear in court, on Monday July 23.

As one steward put it, "This country is turning into a police state. They can do what they want, when they want. We've got to protest now".



Photo: Martin Shakeshaft, IFL

Llanwern - police hold back miners

Socialist energy policy

The peaceful H-bomb

Fourth in a series of articles in which Les Hearn looks at the possibilities of developing an alternative, socialist energy policy.

IN MY discussion of the role of nuclear power in a socialist energy policy, I omitted to look at nuclear fusion.

This technology has some advantages over conventional nuclear (fission) power, together with the major disadvantage that so far no-one has managed to get more energy out of fusion than they put in.

However, lots of cash is being put into fusion research and it seems to be achieving results. We will therefore need to consider our attitude to fusion.

First, let's examine its basis.

In nuclear fission, large radioactive atoms disintegrate to make smaller particles that together weigh less than the original atoms. The lost weight or mass has been converted into an astonishing amount of energy according to Einstein's equation: Energy produced equals Mass lost times speed of light squared. ($E=MC^2$).

In nuclear fusion, small atoms join together to make larger ones that together weigh less than the original atoms and lots of energy is again given out. This only works for very small atoms such as hydrogen (H) or its isotopes, deuterium (D) (the naturally-occurring "heavy" hydrogen) and tritium (T) (a radioactive "heavy" hydrogen that has to be made artificially).

Like fission, nuclear fusion occurs in nature, but while the earth we live on is a gigantic fission reactor, the nearest fusion reactor is 150 million kilometres away and is called the Sun.

Despite being composed mainly of hydrogen, the Sun is so massive that the hydrogen at its centre is compressed and hot enough that the nuclei can overcome their natural repulsion and fuse.

This results in the loss of four million tonnes of mass by the sun every second and the output of inconceivable amounts of energy.

To mimic these conditions on earth requires the expenditure of a vast amount of energy and so far this has only been achieved in the thermonuclear (or H-) bomb.

In this, a conventional A-bomb explodes around a charge of compressed D and T. This compresses it even more as well as heating it to about 100 million degrees Celsius. Fusion takes place, liberating a vast destructive force which vaporises anything within a few kilometres.

Peaceful fusion obviously requires some quite drastic changes as we need to overcome the following problems:

1. The process must be scaled down. We can't afford to vaporise the power station.
2. We must contain the reacting atoms, but no substance is solid at 100 million degrees Celsius.
3. We must get the atoms to the necessary temperature and pressure.
4. We must trap the energy so it can be used.
5. We must obtain T (available only from certain nuclear reactions) and D.
6. We must make the process safe — the very opposite of an H-bomb.

Problem 1 is simple. We just introduce the fuel to the reaction chamber in small pulses. The energy then comes out in small pulses and we can stop the process simply by stopping the fuel coming in (unlike nuclear fission which carries on all the time).

Problem 3 can be tackled by zapping glass spheres containing fuel with laser light. This causes intensely high temperatures and pressures in the fraction of a second it takes the glass spheres to vaporise and explode and fusion can take place.

Alternatively, a charge of D and T is heated to a few thousand degrees C, when it turns into a mixture of electrons and nuclei. This electrically-charged gas is called a plasma and it can be held together for tens of seconds by an intense magnetic field.

Meanwhile, the plasma is



American forest exposed to the effects of radiation leaks

heated further by radio-waves or beams of particles until fusion starts to occur.

This is called magnetic confinement fusion. The most popular shape of magnetic field is a ring doughnut-shaped field called a tokamak — originated by Andrei Sakharov.

Either method solves problem 2 since the fuel charge never actually touches the walls of the reaction chamber.

As far as temperatures and pressures are concerned, only about 10% of what is necessary has yet been achieved. However, the rate of progress makes it extremely likely that the goal will be reached by the end of the century.

Problem 4 is solved by surrounding the reactor with liquid lithium, a light metal like sodium which traps the neutrons which carry away most of the energy. The heat thus produced can be carried away by the flow of lithium.

This solves part of problem 5 as the neutrons react with the lithium to make T. D is obtained by extraction from sea-water, using its slightly altered physical properties that arise from its different weight from ordinary H.

As you might imagine, problem 6 is the most important

one for us.

Dangers arise from the liberation of T. Even though T is only feebly radioactive and decays to half its strength in 12 years (compared to 24,000 years for plutonium), it can easily be incorporated into all parts of living things, being chemically identical to hydrogen.

Stray neutrons will also make the other materials of the fusion reactor highly radioactive and these will need disposal.

Specifications for commercial fusion reactors that I have seen, blithely talk of routine release of tritium into the air where it will be diluted. However these planners recognise that this might (!) be unpopular and discuss the goal of nil release. This would mean trapping the T and several methods are discussed, including reacting it to make solid plastic polymers (rather like Bakelite or polystyrene) which would be easy to guard for the 100 years necessary to reduce radioactivity to a low enough level.

The goal of cheap, abundant energy from fusion may be in sight. Our movement needs to consider whether this technology is necessary and whether it can be made safe.

Strike round-up

THE WELSH TGWU has expelled 14 drivers for taking coke and iron ore to Llanwern steelworks. A further 40 members face disciplinary charges on August 15-16.

42 pickets were arrested on Monday July 16 outside Port Talbot steelworks when convoys of lorries took coal and iron ore out of the plant for Llanwern steelworks. The windscreens of more than 40 lorries were smashed in a barrage of bricks and stones. One picket was taken to hospital after being beaten up by police.

Welsh miners also stepped up picketing of a private wharf in Newport, Dowd's wharf on the River Usk, where imported coal from Germany has been landed for Llanwern. One picket was arrested on Monday July 16 as a convoy of lorries left. Also on July 16, 1500 pickets gathered outside Cottam power station in Nottinghamshire, with another 500 at the Ratcliffe plant and 400 at High Marnham. And 700 pickets were at Shirebrook colliery in Derbyshire, with 350 at Markham pit.

Dockers and seafarers in France and Belgium have pledged not to handle any ships loaded or staffed by troops if the Tories call in troops to break the dock strike, the National Union of Seamen said on Monday night, 16th.

Ford Halewood workers collected almost £10,000 for miners before beginning their annual holidays at the weekend.

The Inland Revenue Staff Federation has written to the TUC expressing their 'serious concern' over the Coal Board withholding an estimated £7 million in tax refunds due to miners from the our weeks miners were on strike at the end of the 1983/4 financial year.

Under a new Tory Act passed in April 1982, tax refunds cannot be made to strikers. If the strike continues into the new tax year, then the employer is obliged to calculate the refunds due and to notify the Inland Revenue, but not actually to pay them out until the strikers return to work.

In a separate dispute the National Union of Seamen has banned the handling of freight on Sealink ships in protest against the government's plans to privatise the line.

NUR leader Jimmy Knapp, speaking at a rally of London SOGAT 82 printworkers on Friday July 13, said that no steel trains, no oil trains, and only 10 out of a normal 356 daily coal trains, were moving in Britain.

Grimby fish porters joined the national docks strike on Wednesday July 11 despite a High Court injunction granted 18 months ago which prohibits them from taking industrial action. Trawler owners were preparing to take legal action to enforce the injunction.

As a result of the miners' strike the Central Electricity Generating Board is now getting over 50% of its output from oil-fed power stations. Usually it is 4 per cent.

Cycling for socialism

Socialist Organiser supporter Les Hearn is cycling from Lands End to John O'Groats, beginning the end of this month.

Sponsor him — 1p a mile if you're hard up, 5p a mile from the better off — and the proceeds will go to the Socialist Organiser fund drive, to help us help the miners and argue the case for socialism.

Fill in this form, cut it out, and send to Les Hearn, 2 Lancaster Ave, London SE27.

Name

Address

Phone

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Dockers join the fight

Build action committees!

By Martin Thomas

SOME dockers are talking of not going back to work until the miners' dispute is settled, whatever happens on their own issue.

They are right. If the dockers — and maybe other workers too — make common cause with the miners, then the fight for pit jobs can be won much more quickly. And such a defeat for the Tories and the bosses will put the whole working class in a strong position.

The capitalist class is a tiny minority. Its power rests on the fact that it is generally united, but it manages to split up the working class and take on workers section by section.

The fact that miners in highly profitable pits have joined the fight against closures is a first blow against that divide-and-rule tactic. Other workers coming in on the struggle can be decisive. An injury to one is an injury to all!

Opportunity

The dockers also have good reason to use this opportunity to make more radical demands on their own behalf. If there was ever a time to fight, this is it.

They should demand the extension of the National Dock Labour Scheme to the 'non-scheme' ports, and a public guarantee by the Tory government that it will not try to scrap the scheme.

The disputes are connected. It isn't just an accident that iron ore movements in breach of a boycott imposed to help the miners sparked the docks strike.

The basic issue on the docks is the same as in the pits — a workers' struggle to save jobs, against the Tories' drive for a leaner, weaker, more highly exploited labour force.

So links should be made. The old Triple Alliance of mine, rail and steel unions has virtually collapsed, thanks to the abject role of steel union leader Bill Sims. The Financial Times put it bluntly: these days Sims sounds like a British Steel Corporation spokesperson.

New alliance

The old Alliance should be supplemented by a new Alliance of unions in struggle.

This should not just be an alliance at the top. That is one of the weaknesses of the old Triple Alliance. There are few rank and file connections which could enable miners to bypass Bill Sims and go straight to the steel union membership.

Local action committees should be formed round rank and file representatives of the unions in struggle.

The core should be the miners, the dockers, and the rail and other transport workers who are boycotting coal, other fuel, and iron ore movements in solidarity.

Round this core, delegates

from other workers in struggle, and observers from additional trade unions and from Labour Parties, can be drawn in.

Action committees must also include representatives of the women against pit closures groups which have played such a crucial role in the coal industry fight.

Sometimes Trades Councils may be able to take the initiative to set up such action committees. Elsewhere the already-existing miners' support committees may be able to set wheels moving and give help.

Obviously action committees,

where established, should liaise closely with the support committees. Maybe at a later stage the two sorts of committees can be merged into one.

Immediate

The dockers' strike has made the prospect of a general strike much more immediate. The big business magazine the Economist last week headlined one of its editorials, "Towards a general strike?", and wrote: "This week's events may have increased the probability that the courts may

start to levy fines on union funds . . . Mrs Thatcher could then find something like a general strike on her hands . . ."

That is another reason for establishing action committees. The central leaders of the TUC have made it plain throughout the miners' strike that they just want the strike ended quickly with whatever shabby compromise can be got at short notice. They have been angling to get in on the dispute and establish themselves as compromise-brokers between the miners and the government. TUC general

secretary Len Murray has condemned the regional days of action in support of the miners.

So we cannot trust the TUC to call a general strike when it is necessary, or to do anything but betray it if a general strike gets underway.

The rank and file has to campaign and organise independently, be ready to take initiatives, and be prepared to take a general strike out of the TUC's hands.

Local joint action committees of the unions in struggle would be a first step towards that.



Miners picket Port Talbot steelworks. The old Triple Alliance needs to be supplemented by an alliance of workers in struggle — miners, dockers and those taking solidarity action.

Now's the time to push 4 day week

By John Bloxam

PETER Heathfield put it well last Saturday in Durham. "It's not a question of can the miners win or will the miners win; the issue now is that the miners are going to win."

The attempts by the Coal Board and the government to break the strike are in tatters. A ballot over the heads of the NUM has been threatened and dropped. Strike-breaking has flopped, despite the aid of massive police

force. At Shirebrook, the scab force has been maintained only by bussing in strikebreakers from other pits. In Durham, last week, they laid on 200 buses for scabs. Seven people used them, and two of them were pickets hitching a lift!

MacGregor's letter last week, pleading for a return on the grounds that the differences between the NUM and Coal Board are small was a sign of weakness, in marked contrast to the bluff and bluster of his previous letter.

Meanwhile, pickets have shifted significantly to the power stations. Notts strikers, who are leaving token pickets at most of their pits are now being joined by many pickets from other areas at the main Trent Valley power stations.

Monday's Financial Times commented. "There is now a substantial lobby in the [Coal] Board — though not in the government — for a settlement before the end of autumn, even if a settlement means conceding that pits cannot be closed on

purely 'economic grounds' . . . the prolongation of the strike is likely to benefit the union not the Board or the government."

The dockers' strike is a major factor. But an academic study has also concluded that the NUM's position in terms of coal stocks "is much stronger than had previously been thought . . . The possibility of power cuts late in August or early September, announced by Mr Scargill and immediately denied by Mr Walker, merely looks a logical deduction from the available data".

Power cut

Two weeks ago ITN confirmed the NUM's estimate of 15 million tonnes of coal at the power stations — less than the amount when Heath declared the three day week in 1974.

Last week in Durham, just before the Miners' Gala, there was an unexplained power cut of a few hours.

And now, because of the holiday break, little coal will be produced in the Notts coalfield over the next month.

So it is not surprising that last

week's NUM delegate conference was euphoric. 'Here We Go' became 'Here We Are'. The conference defied the courts' attempt to interfere in the union and overwhelmingly passed the rule change for a new disciplinary procedure in the union, even with the Notts area delegates voting against.

High Court

Miners we spoke to said they thought the procedure would be put in train immediately, at least against officials who were scabbing. But the Notts scabs have been back to the High Court and got a ruling that the disciplinary committee set up by the conference is void, so a clash between the NUM and the Courts remains a real possibility.

The conference also unanimously passed a resolution endorsing the strike and a series of demands.

In Durham, Arthur Scargill described these demands as his and Peter Heathfield's "bottom line" — including a four day week and an end to the incentive scheme.

But the negotiations, from all accounts, have been exclusively about the closure programme. The NUM needs to be clear that the "bottom line" is the bottom line for ending the strike.

Demands

For all workers this is the time to fight for their demands — and for the NUM above all. Its demands like the four day week aren't pushed now, when will they be pushed?

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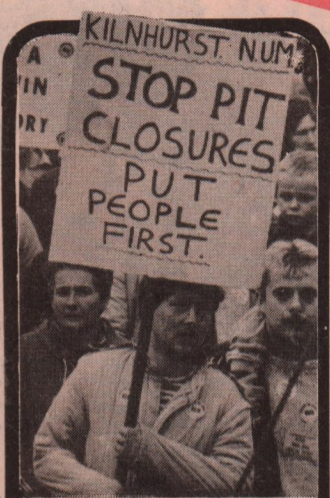
Why we need a General Strike

WHEN Solidarnosc was negotiating with the Polish government, they set up closed-circuit television and broadcast every move in the talks to workers sitting outside.

Why doesn't the NUM do the same? To say negotiations should be open is not to accuse Arthur Scargill of selling out, any more than Solidarnosc's procedure meant they were accusing Lech Walesa of treachery.

But secret negotiations harm the momentum of the strike, because miners don't know what's happening. They give the media extra scope to spread rumours and misrepresentations. They allow the Coal Board to shelter behind closed doors.

Who needs the police?



Back the miners

MANY people say that in any civilised society a police force is necessary in order to control anti-social behaviour and catch common criminals. But this is not true.

In every kind of society there must exist some means for keeping order and regulating people's behaviour; but the police are a particular means which arose with the development of capitalism and which will die with the coming of socialism.

The distinguishing feature of the police is that it is a special force separated from the people and standing above society. It possesses special powers and privileges, it is organised bureaucratically from the top down; and only in the most restricted ways is it democratically accountable to the people.

The communism which we fight for — unlike the phony version in the Soviet Union — is one in which society will be regulated not by a special force above the people but by the people themselves through their own self-organisation.

The police have become so well entrenched that it seems as if this bourgeois institution of social control has always been with us.

The police prove time and again they are not a neutral force: they smash up picket lines, attack black people, and harass youth. But is the police force still necessary for other functions? Bob Fine, joint editor of the book 'Capitalism and the Rule of Law', takes up the arguments.

Historically, however, the police are only one hundred and fifty years old. The police force, as we know it, slowly emerged in the nineteenth century as the brain-child and strongarm of the industrial bourgeoisie.

It was introduced in the teeth of fierce opposition from the great landlords and the merchant capitalists. They opposed the police in the name of 'freedom', but the freedom they had in mind consisted of their own privileges and personal powers.

They ruled through their direct control of military forces, through the powers allocated to their private servants (e.g. gamekeepers) and through their explicit influence over the courts, the judges and other state institutions. The growth of the police in this context was one aspect of the replacement of the personal power of the lords by a power formally based on the will of the people as a whole.

Repress

In this respect it was a mark of the progressiveness of the liberal bourgeoisie.

The development of the police reflected in part the liberal fear of despotism from above, but it also reflected their fear of the 'mob' below. Its function was not merely to keep order and control crime, but to repress the working class, and it was this class function which made necessary the distinguishing characteristic of the police: its separation as a



ANDREW WIARD (REPORT)

Police protect NF march through Maidstone

special force from the people whom it was said to represent.

Although it was an advance that the power to regulate society was transferred from a small class of property owners to the 'public', the public only came on the stage in formal dress, as an abstraction without flesh and blood.

The consent of the people was from the beginning a formality. The doctrine was put forward that if individuals opposed the police, they were enemies of society as a whole; they also appeared as their own worst enemies, since the police were treated as the embodiment of the rational interests of each individual. The bourgeois mystique was that subordination to the policeman's club was in fact subordination to one's own rational conscience!

To sustain this fiction, a number of mechanisms were instituted which purported to be means of subordinating the police to the people but which were in effect ways of subordinating the people to the police. In different capitalist countries, different methods were employed.

What they all had in common was the purely formal nature of the identification of the police with the people and the highly restrictive democracy they made possible.

The primary 'mediation' through which the people could express their will lay in the development of a professional police bureaucracy. Policemen and women were to be salaried out of the public purse in order that they should have no financial interest in putting private profit before the common good.

They were to be subjected to strict hierarchical discipline in order that their private concerns should be subordinate to the general concerns of the police. They were to be recruited from all strata of society lest any particular stratum should receive privilege. They were to be selected for their high moral fibre and then trained to be even-handed and impartial in their practices.

The general idea was that by this bureaucratic method, the police could be identified with the general interests of society and not the interests of any particular class within society.

In reality the new police were associated with the interests of the 'people' only in the most abstract sense. Real flesh and blood individuals could interfere in the 'public' concerns reserved for the police only at their peril.

The public interest became as it were the private domain of the police. It was they who monopolised the definition of what the public really wanted and needed. Their principle was secrecy, the people were not permitted to know what was done in their name.

While the hierarchy disciplined those officers who violated its own requirements, the sins of the individual copper are as nothing compared with the sins committed by the police hierarchy itself, which leaps to the defence of its own members when they perform the tasks set by the hierarchy.

The openness of the police to all sections of the population is true only in the sense that an individual may cross from the camp of the people to the camp of the enemy and in no way creates an identity between the two.

In the institutions of the police bureaucracy, the public is only present as a formality. When real people clamour to enter police stations that they might see what the police are doing to their brothers, sisters and friends, they find a notice declaring to them: 'no admission to members of the public'. Public concerns are definitely not concerns for the public at large.

In reality bureaucracy is the principal means of alienating the police from the public and subordinating the public to the police.

The idea of 'policing by consent' is nonsense, since the very existence of the police as a corporate body with its own bureaucratic code and hierarchic organisation implies privilege. The consent of the public is necessarily a formality.

This is often obscured when in the name of the 'community' the police attack a single criminal, but it is vividly demonstrated when, at a time of urban unrest (like the summer of 1981) or of labour dispute (as in the current miners' strike) the police oppose whole communities still in the name of the community.

If 'policing by consent' is to make any sense, it can only mean the abolition of the police bureaucracy lording over society and its replacement by new and far more democratic means of 'policing' society — i.e. of seeing to its internal welfare — organised by the people themselves.

This is not of course to say that one form of police bureaucracy is as bad as any other. The difference between the organisation of the police in, say, South Africa and Britain is a matter of great importance for their respective working classes.

The 'militarisation' which has changed the face of British policing within the last ten years has intensified the alienation of the police from the public.

The general perspectives of Marxism, as I see it, however, is to link democratic struggles for the reform of the police with socialist struggles for its abolition and for its replacement by means of social regulation more democratic than any possible in a society based on the exploitation of the many by the few.

'It's t

WHEN the women got on the green the police cordoned them round and kept squeezing and squeezing until some of them couldn't breathe and they just collapsed.

And how they picked on the women to arrest, I don't know. They were squeezed so closely together they couldn't do any damage.

I said I would like to leave and they said "no way", and then a policeman hit me and I fell and caught the bottom of my back on the curb. Then he hit me again to make sure I was unconscious.

There were about 60 women there from all over.

While we were there at Calverton, we were saying about our photograph negatives that got wiped clean. It's happening all over the country. Women from Yorkshire and other places said they'd had the same problem.

When we take pictures on the picket line or demonstrations or whatever and we send them away, when the come back they've wiped off all the ones with the police on, and all you get back is your old pictures of weddings or your grandchildren and things like that. So we're getting ours done privately now.

The police make rules up as they go along. Every ten minutes they change the law.

But they've come to the end of the road now. Like the Kent miners that came back to be tried. Five police gave different stories — they got off, not enough evidence, and the police have to pay the court costs. So I think they're coming to the end of the road with these little laws they create.

The police are acting political — it's not law and order. When a policeman drives a bus into the pit because the bus driver won't cross the line it's got to be political.

I was deeply shocked. If the driver doesn't want to

Mrs Hood from the pit Coventry, spoke to Jean why she thinks the Tories against the working class.

drive that bus it should be left in the garage. We've had food parcels from the Coventry bus drivers, and they wrote a note "not all drivers will cross your line."

And we had a parcel from the DHSS workers — two in fact. They said seeing as we're supposed to be taking £15 out of your money (for strike pay which we don't get) we'd like to help. Also the income tax people came with a box of food. The longer it goes on the more sympathy we're getting.

Do you think it important that other workers come out if you are to win?

Oh yes. Definitely. Well the dockers are out now. The seamen are coming out, aren't they?

Do you think there are steel workers who feel that way but just aren't getting the leadership?

Well, I'm more than surprised at Bill Sirs because he signed a pact with us and the railway men some years ago.

But I don't know what happened to him during the steel strike. He seemed to just let them do it — the big redundancies and that. Either he was afraid of MacGregor or he didn't have enough fight.

I don't think Bill Sirs was strong enough. They should have had somebody a bit stronger. Well, I suppose somebody like Arthur Scargill.

They keep pushing Arthur Scargill to the fore, but these men are out because of what they're thinking. If Arthur Scargill told them to do something they didn't want to do, they wouldn't do it.



Overtuned scab car

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...ne troops next'

village of Keresley, near Lane about the strike and may soon be using troops

Strong leadership is important though, isn't it?

Definitely. But leaders are only as strong as the people that stand behind them. A convenor is as strong as his stewards, and a steward is as strong as his members.

Workers think a lot before they do these things. I look at these policemen and their officers. The officer will call a sergeant and the sergeant will give orders, and they just do it like dummies being wound up. You couldn't do that to a miner. He'd tell you where to go.

You were there in 1972 at Saltley...

And 1974. Three times a week I went to Saltley, I fed them. I had two on strike - away at the power stations - and four going to school. But I coped - don't ask me how, because there were no food parcels then.

The day those factories came out, it was great. Marvellous.

After the first month of this strike I said to my husband, I think it'll be a long one. He said yes, it will be. I said: And it'll be a bloody one. I had that feeling.

We'd heard some time ago that Thatcher was gearing up the police after '72 and '74, getting ready for anything like this. She'd hate to be beaten. She'll do anything rather than be beaten. She will see us all drowned first.

But I'm afraid it could come to violence. If something doesn't give it'll have to come of it.

We'll have a Toxteth. That's why she's given this money to Liverpool. She couldn't cope with it all. She's paid the nurses, she's

paid off several groups of people, hasn't she? What is she going to do now with the dockers and the seamen? She won't buy them off.

I think she has hit the brick wall. It's the troops next.

Do you think this strike can bring the government down, like in 1974?

I don't know. It'll shake it. But you see in 1974 it was so different - we were all together.

This trouble in Notts is a problem that Gormley caused - the wonderful Mr Gormley.

Notts are the people with most bonus. This is the problem we're facing. He did it - that wonderful man who's now in the House of Lords.

If it did bring down the Tories, what do think an alternative government should be? Would you be satisfied with a government led by Kinnock?

Well, I did think he was a good man. But he's kept too quiet over the strike. He's like Emery at Daw Mill [a local pit], moderate, doesn't know which way to go.

If you're quiet and let everybody walk over you, you're moderate. The minute you speak up for yourself, you're militant.

I must have been militant all my life then, in a way, because I would fight for anything. But I don't think I'm a

bad person because I do that.

My husband's very quiet but after he went up to Mansfield, he was wild. He came back and said the only good copper is a dead one. It made him very bitter. But it's made a lot of men bitter that were very, very quiet.

Do you think the police harassment has demoralised people?

Oh no. All these men that are picketing now have been there all along. I've been going up there since the first week.

They don't frighten me. They've tried to. They tried to arrest me outside the gate the other morning.

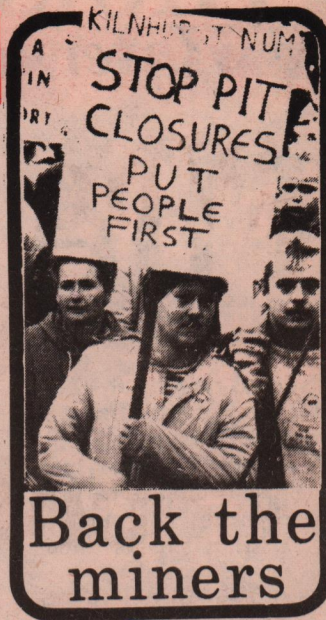
Do you think this has the possibility of becoming a general strike?

We were hoping for that all along anyway. We should have one when Thatcher got into power anyway.

I've always been Labour, all my life. I think that they will come in again. They've got plenty of good leaders - like Dennis Skinner, he's good. It's got to be Labour.

The Liberals are a kick off of the Tories. And those that left the Labour Party, they could never have been Labour in the beginning.

I think that if Labour got back in, they would make the changes needed. There's a few in there that would. There's got to be people in there for the workers.



Back the miners

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Liverpool

A 95% victory? Stepping out of struggle

"Liverpool council have won an overwhelming victory over the Tory government," trumpets the editorial in Militant (13 July). "Ninety-five per cent of the council demands are conceded."

This is a shameful refusal to face reality squarely. The deal is preferable to ignominious retreat, and the 17% rate increase that it includes is preferable to the 70% wanted by the Parliamentary Labour leadership. But "an overwhelming victory" it is not.

The deal, aside from a 17% rate increase, provides for some juggling with figures

be back demanding more cuts". It's not just 'more cuts', as Militant well know - it's this year's cuts put off. And to refer to 'next year' simply begs the question. Why did the Tories do a deal? The answer is obvious. Because of the miners' strike.

If Liverpool is to take on the Tories, then the time to do it is when the working class is involved in the biggest class war in a decade. 'Next year' there may well not be a miners' strike or a docks' strike - and we can't simply assume that the Tories will be out by then.

I THINK Kevin Feintuck misses the point when in SO 187 he tells us that "17% is well below the increase involved in the cuts packages proposed by the Liberals and Tories".

I should hope so! But it is exactly the kind of rate rise the hard Left - including Militant! - has been fighting against elsewhere.

A week after the conclusion of the Liverpool deal, for instance, some of its councillors will address a meeting in Hackney alongside the new Labour leader there. Hackney Labour parties called this meeting after condemning the old council leadership for a 17% rate rise!

The real point is this. As the dockers join the miners on strike against the Tories, with other struggles growing, Liverpool City Council has stepped back from this growing front of struggle and let the Tories off the hook. Whichever figures you care to

By Andrew Hornung

believe about how much the City Council won from the government or about how much of the problem was simply put off for a year, one fact will not go away: Liverpool does not stand as an example of a new, revolutionary form of struggle but essentially more of the old brinkmanship.

Whether this was good or bad brinkmanship is not the issue. Liverpool City Council understood, to be sure, that a display of militancy and grass roots organisation of support is worth more than all the negotiator's gab and financial analyst's flannel.

Good. But the conclusion, and indeed the methods used to reach that conclusion, were simply a rotten compromise of the old type.

The effect of the Liverpool deal on the struggle in the Labour parties for a "three nos" position - no cuts, no rent rise, no rate rise - will certainly be to strengthen the right wing. Their rejection of illegal action, their insis-

tence that basically the government cannot be beaten, their failure to see their struggle within a broader political context, their insistence that the rates issue is not a principle but the negotiable element - all this will have been confirmed by Liverpool.

Kevin Feintuck is no doubt right about the role of leading NALGO and GMBU members. I wouldn't claim that there was a "sell-out" in the sense that the movement was ready for much bolder actions than the council.

The point is that the struggle in Liverpool never reached the level capable of winning more than marginal concessions from the Tories: it was never able to challenge the rules the capitalists impose on such conflicts.

The blame is not necessarily all on the side of the Militant leadership of the City Council. But the question posed is not did the Council win, but did the movement win? And that question must be answered in the negative.

LEFT ★ PRESS

and shifting spending to a capital account where it won't be penalised. In other words, it shifts this year's cuts onto next year's budget. According to Labour leaders in Liverpool, about 45% of the problem has been shifted to next year.

In other words, the real confrontation with the government has just been put off for another year. Militant is happy to quote the Daily Express condemning the Tories as "shoddy and cowardly" for their betrayal of ruling class interests.

They might also have quoted a more serious voice from the capitalist press. "In fact this is very much an old-fashioned compromise, the sort of deal that used to be concluded over the beer and sandwiches in Downing Street" - so says the Guardian (July 12).

Militant blithely comment that "next year the Tories will

Liverpool council has withdrawn from the fight just when a very wide front against the Tories was opening. Consequently it has weakened the fight. As such the deal in Liverpool is a set-back and a defeat.

Militant argues that there was not enough support among Liverpool's workers for a big campaign over the difference between a 9% and a 17% rate increase. Possibly. But why did it come to that, instead of a bold 'illegal budget' back in May? Militant bears the responsibility for this - ditching the grass-roots campaign since the May elections in favour of negotiations with the Tories, making last month's conference just a general anti-Tory rally, and manoeuvring for a compromise. And hailing what is actually a defeat as a "ninety five per cent" victory can only disorient and miseducate the local labour movement.

The Glasgow council version

UNTIL the recent compromise between Liverpool and the Tories, the right wing leadership of the majority Labour Group on Glasgow District Council, showed little sympathy for Liverpool's stand. Now, suddenly, it is all different: Labour Group leader Jean McFadden has congratulated Liverpool on its "victory" and pledged herself on a trip to Liverpool last week to "come back to Scotland to fight the same battle."

It is not the grass-roots campaigning which attracts McFadden, but the fact that the campaign remained in the hands of the local bureaucrats and was resolved at the end of the day round the negotiating table.

The version of the "Liverpool model" now being pushed in Glasgow is this: build a campaign at local level, yes, but keep it under control and use it as a stage army to back up the "real" fight - private negotiations between the Labour Group leadership and the Scottish Office.

Activists must turn that strategy against the Group's own purposes, by building their Hands Off Glasgow campaign, fighting for rank and file control of it, winning the arguments on the need to defy the law and confront the Tories, and winning the right of veto over any attempt at a negotiated settlement between the Labour Group and the Tories.



Liverpool demonstration last May in support of "no cuts/no increases"

Policewatch

Sheffield Police watch: 73, West Street, Sheffield S1 4EQ.
Kent police monitoring group: Richard De Friend or Ian Grieg Spall, 0227 66822.
Nottingham Co-ordinating Committee Against the Police Presence: c/o Ivan Wels, 11, Osborne St., Sherwood, Nottingham.
Ollerton strike HQ is collecting statements about police behaviour: Mansfield 862790.

International

The left in Iran

Inflation is running at 40% in Iran. The war with Iraq consumes an estimated \$45 million a day. Unemployment is rampant though partially covered up by the mobilisation of hundreds of thousands for the war.

Six million workers have had their wages frozen. Land seized by peasants after the revolution of 1979 is being transferred back to big landowners. Free trade unionism is non-existent. Strike leaders have been arrested and shot. Women and national minorities are ferociously repressed.

The left opposition in Iran is fighting back with considerable courage — but, sadly, ineffective politics and a lack of international solidarity.

The Mojahedin remains the largest opposition movement. It is radical-Islamic, but becoming more Islamic than radical.

Recent statements by its exiled leader Massoud Rajavi have stressed more and more the notion that the Mojahedin, not Khomeini's supporters are the "true" followers of Islam.

Its previous attempts to promote a radical image have been ditched in favour of attempting to curry favour with Western European industrialists and politicians. Rajavi's agreement with the reactionary Iraqi regime on a peace plan is his latest way of reassuring Western capitalism.



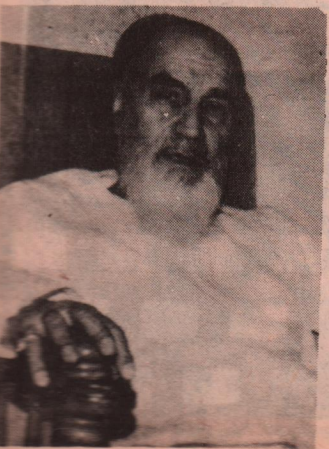
Massoud Rajavi

Such recent developments represent an extension of, rather than a break with, the Mojahedin's previous policies. Thus, its 1981 programme for a "transitional government of the democratic Islamic republic of Iran" pledged "acceptance of the national bourgeoisie and the bazaar as well as individual private ownership and personal investment", offered only "internal autonomy" (not full independence) to national minorities and only permitted the right to strike "subject to previous notification".

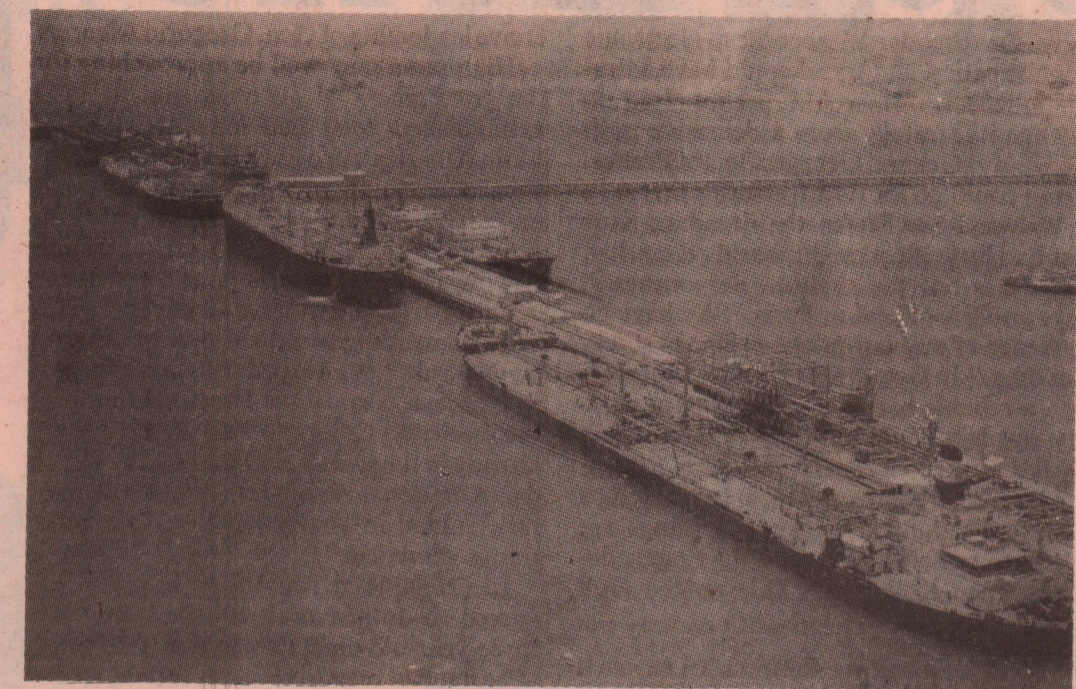
The programme also stressed its adherence to "true" Islam.

After the Mojahedin, the Organisation of Iranian People's Fedaii Guerrillas (OIPFG) is probably still the next largest grouping.

The OIPFG claims to be



Khomeini



Oil tankers under threat of missile attack whilst loading up at the Iranian oil port on Kharg Island in the Gulf

In the first of two articles, Stan Croke looks at the political problems of the movements in Iran fighting the repression of the Islamic Republic.

Marxist. But it preaches the Stalinist theory of "two stages of revolution"; first the "People's democratic revolution" creating a "workers' and peasants' democratic dictatorship", then a socialist revolution at a later stage.

Internationally, the OIPFG declares the Stalinist states to be the "socialist camp", which, despite "revisionist deviations" since Stalin's death, is an "international ally of Iran's proletariat".

Internally, the OIPFG's Stalinism expresses itself in the treatment of opposition factions. The former minority tendency (now the "Revolutionary Socialist Tendency") was denounced as a "defender of Trotskyism" and OIPFG supporters were warned: "refrain from intellectually oriented debates and commit yourselves to struggle in a healthy environment . . . drive out the faction-seeking opportunists from your ranks" who "inadvertently or not, will be at the service of the police and the anti-popular regime of the Islamic Republic."

The OIPFG has refused to participate in the Mojahedin-initiated National Council of Resistance, rightly denouncing it as a class-collaborationist popular front. But the OIPFG's own attempt to propose a "common platform for the unity of all anti-imperialist, revolutionary progressive forces" was politically inadequate (based as it was on the "two stages of revolution" theory, and calling for "unity and co-operation with socialist and progressive countries") and only drew support from small groups.

The recently formed Communist Party of Iran (CPI) is essentially a fusion of the Unity of Communist Militants and the Kurdish organisation Komala, plus some remnants of Peykar and Razmandegan.

The CPI claims to be much clearer ideologically than the other groups, but in fact it is often confused.

Over the Iran-Iraq war, they used to sneer at the slogan "turn the reactionary war into a war against reaction" on the grounds that it allegedly "places the Iranian proletariat in the service of the solution of the international disputes of the bourgeoisie" and instead called for "independent struggle against any kind of foreign invasion" whereby "workers (could) defend their revolution against the war of the capitalists".

In Iran, the CPI calls for a Democratic Revolutionary Republic because "the proletariat and its communist party, cannot embark on an immediately socialist revolution." This is merely a variant of the traditional Stalinist position of "Two stages of revolution".

The CPI describes the Soviet Union as "state capitalist", but without advancing any theoretical arguments to justify sticking such a label on it. It is even more hostile, and less theoretically coherent, on China: "It belongs to the camp of world imperialist counter-revolution . . . alongside American imperialism, the defender of the most naked forms of bourgeois reaction."

The CPI's supporters in Western Europe, argue that the trade unions (the unions themselves, not the bureaucracies) are reactionary, anti-working class organisations. The CPI has denounced the French Trotskyists who called for a vote for the French Socialist Party in 1981 as "equally anti-working class and responsible for today's massacres conducted by the French government in Chad and Lebanon."

Apart from the Mojahedin, OIPFG and CPI, the biggest opposition group is the now banned Tudeh, or Moscow-oriented "Communist" Party. The Tudeh Party supported the regime and aided it in its attacks on the working class until it was itself attacked.

The Tudeh Party is now in opposition to the regime, but only because the regime has tossed it aside.

Trotskyist organisations unfortunately have little weight in Iran, and are deeply divided among themselves. The avowedly Trotskyist "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" has had up to three sympathising sections in Iran, divided in particular on the question of the Iran-Iraq war. The SWP-USA and its co-thinkers within the USFI support Iran against Iraq, while other people in the USFI oppose the war on both sides.

The bulk of the anti-Khomeini opposition is thus split between the Mojahedin, with their bourgeois alliances, and various brands of sectarian, dogmatic Stalinism.



Saddam Hussein

Iraq: dissent grows

By Roy Thomas

AS the Gulf War continues there has been a significant growth of opposition in Iraq, especially among the Kurdish nationalists and the students.

The focus for this opposition has been the Ba'ath regime's treatment of army deserters and its attempt to force large numbers of Kurdish youth and students into the Army or the paramilitary outfit, the People's Army.

January and February of this year saw mass executions of Kurdish youth accused of desertion. For example eight young army conscripts were executed on February 22 which is the eve of Nawruz, the Kurdish national day.

In April the government issued decree no. 107 which stipulates that all students must undergo military training with the People's Army and death squads, set up to hunt down army deserters, executed 70 war objectors in Baghdad.

May saw the beginnings of mass opposition to the regime.

5,000 people turned out in the town of Sulamaneyah on May 12 to demonstrate, openly calling for the downfall of the regime. 13 days later, in the same place, 50,000 took to the streets.

Some reports would seem to indicate that this last event cul-

minated in the offices of the People's Army being stormed, statues of Saddam Hussein pulled down and barricades set up.

The students have been acting as the motivating force for this outbreak of opposition. In response to decree 107 a total strike of students was declared and students' strike committees have been set up in Kurdistan and Baghdad. This strike has followed mass expulsions from the colleges of those students who refused to comply with the decree.

The Iraqi regime is obviously in trouble. It has been forced to negotiate with the students' strike committees and the demonstrations in Iraqi Kurdistan have been accompanied by the appearance of the partisan armed movement on the streets, indicating a weakening of the regime's control in the area.

However, the major opposition forces in Iraq, united in the Patriotic Democratic Front, cannot be said to offer a working class political alternative to the Ba'athist regime. The PDF has followed, rather than initiated, the student revolt. And the Iraqi Communist Party, one of the major components of the PDF, has a long history of actually opposing the struggle of the Iraqi working class and the Kurds. Though it was finally rewarded for this by repression from the Ba'ath.



Zionist extremists attack the car of Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Aréns, demanding increased repression against West Bank Arabs.

Israel: a no choice election

By Clive Bradley

AS Israel moves towards its elections on July 23, it becomes increasingly difficult to predict the outcome. Until recently, the main opposition party, the Labour Alignment, seemed well ahead, but that is now less clear.

The ruling coalition, Likud, under Menachem Begin and then current leader, Yitzhak Shamir, has landed Israel in a mess. Rampant inflation (now approaching 400%), plus the political and human costs of the war in, and continued occupation of part of Lebanon, have undermined the government's popularity.

However, lately the Likud have successfully shifted the terms of election propaganda: Ariel Sharon, the defence minister forced to quit because of his role in the Sabra and Chatila massacres, has been touring the country with pictures of Yassir Arafat and the legend: "He wants you to vote Labour".

This PLO-scare tactic seems to have proved effective.

In fact, the claim that Labour is pro-PLO or even that it wants to 'hand over' the occupied territories to be a 'terrorist state' are bizarre. Labour has a long record of oppressing the Palestinian Arabs, and its policies now are hazy and by no means radical ones.

some sort of autonomy deal (i.e. well short of even a

Palestinian mini-state) with King Hussein of Jordan, seems to be in the pipeline. Such a proposal, if Labour wins, might revitalise the so-called 'peace plan' of Ronald Reagan, issued in 1982 and firmly rejected by the Likud. But that is all.

Whoever wins, it will be a battle for a coalition with one of Israel's highly influential and important small parties.

Most of those — like the Tehiya Party of ex-chief of staff Raphael Eitan, or the ultra-orthodox Agudat Israel — are more likely to opt for Likud. Eitan vies with Sharon in anti-Arab chauvinism — for example he recently referred to the West Bank Palestinians as "cockroaches in a bottle".

Likud have also hit back in defence of the occupation of Lebanon: for example a recent election advert involved an account by a small girl from North Galilee about how terrifying things used to be before the Lebanese war.

But Labour leader Shimon Peres is still trying to convince the Israeli Jews that he is at least as good as Likud at oppressing the Arabs.

The economy, however, remains a big issue. Labour claims it can reduce inflation to 85% (and to 25% within six

years). Nobody seems to believe them.

The Likud had faced big strikes from sections of workers, and the election campaign itself has been interrupted by action by TV workers. There is a wage indexation system, but many real wages have fallen, and over the past few years there have been several struggles to reverse this trend, notably by teachers.

Most Palestinians — those in the territories occupied in 1967 — do not have the vote. Amongst those in the pre-'67 borders, the biggest single block of votes will go to Rakah, the Israeli Communist Party.

That will guarantee only a handful of Arab representatives in the Knesset. Real Arab political organisation is illegal.

Some more vigorously socialist and anti-Zionist candidates are standing. The government tried to ban both the extreme right and left, but was forced to change tack. But anti-Zionists have very, very little influence among the Jewish population.

What is certain is that the development of an independent socialist voice with any roots in the working class is as yet extremely limited. Whoever wins on July 23, it will be a culmination, perhaps with some modification, of the reactionary policies of the Israeli state since its creation.

Racism as anti-racism

VOICE FROM THE ALIENS

About the Anti-Alien Resolution of the Cardiff Trade Union Congress.

We, the organised Jewish workers of England taking into consideration the Anti-Alien Resolution, and the complimentary remarks of certain delegates about the Jewish workers specially, issue this leaflet, whereby we hope to convince our English fellow workers of the unfairness, unreasonableness, and want of logic contained in the cry against the foreign worker in general, and against the Jewish worker in particular.

It is, and always has been, the policy of the ruling classes to attribute the sufferings and miseries of the masses (which are natural consequences of class rule and class exploitation) to all sorts of causes except the real ones. The cry against the foreigner is not merely peculiar to England; it is international. Everywhere he is the scapegoat for other's sins. Every class finds in him an enemy. So long as the Anti-Alien sentiment in this country was confined to politicians, wire-pullers, and to individual working men, we, the organised aliens, took no heed; but when this ill-founded sentiment has been officially expressed by the organised working men of England, then we believe that it is time to lift our voice and argue the matter out.

It has been proved by great political economists that a working man in a country where machinery is greatly developed produces in a day twice as many commodities as his daily wage enables him to consume.

Pamphlet produced by Jewish workers against TUC anti-semitism



Tom Mann, SDF trade union militant - and anti-semitic

Letter

Stop messing!

WE are deeply concerned that proposals should have been made to reopen the question of re-selection through a rule change at this year's conference.

Particularly because it would provoke precisely the kind of infighting and bitterness which was such a damaging feature of Party affairs just a few years ago.

Since then the Party has gone some distance to repairing the damage done. Labour's improved showing in the European Elections is a direct result of the new spirit of unity created by an awareness of the need to reduce internal tensions. A further, and unnecessary, upheaval over constitutional change will only re-open deep divisions and distract the Party from its main priority.

It is vital that the Party looks outwards to winning support for its policies rather than there should be interference with a re-selection procedure which has only been altered comparatively recently. This should be allowed to proceed until such time as experience of its operation is actually proved to require change or review.

As yet there is no evidence that this is the case. Indeed, such

Clive Bradley reviews 'That's funny, you don't look anti-semitic', by Steve Cohen, an anti-racist analysis of Left anti-semitism. (Beyond the Pale collective, £2)

THIS book should be read and re-read by everyone active on the left. For years, the left - revolutionary or otherwise - has glibly held up its hands in horror at the very idea that it might be anti-semitic. Anti-semitism is rarely mentioned except as an afterthought to ward off criticism from Zionists.

Yet synagogues are attacked, even bombed; Jews continue to be persecuted in large parts of the world; and the left not only fails to mobilise people against the scourge of anti-semitism, but persists in using 'world conspiracy' arguments in its analyses of the Middle East conflict.

Whilst few men on the left would insist that they are not at all sexist, few white people would deny any anti-black racism whatsoever, and few heterosexuals would deny any trace of homophobia, rare indeed is the left-wing gentile who admits the possibility that s/he might have inherited any of the deep-rooted anti-semitism in Western culture.

Steve Cohen's book confronts all these issues, and exposes the latent (or not so latent) anti-semitism in much of what the left says and does. He analyses in some detail the way in which anti-semitism was institutionalised in Britain with the Aliens Act of 1905, and how the labour movement was instrumental in bringing this about.

Guilty

Instances of socialists taking a stand against blatantly anti-semitic immigration controls were the exception; well-known leading figures in the early history of British socialism like Tom Mann and Keir Hardie, were particularly guilty. Hyndman, founder of the Social Democratic Federation, was a notorious anti-semitic.

The widespread idea that the Labour Party has a history of sympathy for the Jews (and its pro-Israeli position follows from that) is utterly false.

Cohen demolishes the anti-semitic assumptions behind much of what passes as 'anti-Zionist' propaganda. Take the example of 'Newsline' (April 9, 1983) which speaks of a Zionist power "stretching through Downing Street channels right into the White House". As Cohen wryly comments: "Lenin was presumably wrong when he analyses imperialism as being the highest form of capitalism: Zionism is apparently even higher, as it is able to control the two main nerve centres of imperialism."

Newsline

'Newsline' is maybe the worst offender; but it is by no means the only one. Cohen deals with the way in which left propaganda against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon was couched in quite clearly anti-semitic terms.

Beirut was compared to Belsen: "Jews are now expected to be on a higher level of morality than anyone else... if we act immorally or if any one Jew misbehaves, then we also have to apologise more than anyone else and make public penance."

Cohen also shows how the left has consistently played down the real significance of anti-semitic ideology, and of the experience of Jewish oppression; and how the main 'advice' from the left to the Jews historically has been to stop being Jewish and assimilate.

There is much more that could be said on Cohen's book: in particular some of his interesting comments by way of a critique of Abram Leon's classic "The Jewish Question", and a mass of detail condemning socialists through the years from their own mouths.

Its main point should be taken on board by all socialists: anti-semitism is a real and persistent problem, and the labour movement needs to be mobilised against it and in defence of the Jews. Anti-semitic ideology is deep-rooted in Western (Christian) culture, and has permeated many views on the left. In my opinion, this book should be basic reading.



Harrison Ford

Over the top romp

Raiders of the Lost Ark was probably one of the best adventure films ever made. And it was certainly a difficult one to follow. Inevitably, the follow-up, Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom had to be even more action-packed, frantic and full of surprises to be a success. And so it is.

Our hero this time finds himself in the Far East, escaping mishap in the most unlikely of fashions, to end up somewhere in India. Here he and his companions - a young Chinese boy and an American woman who has made her living as a singer, and is apparently obsessed with diamonds and the state of her fingernails - find a small poverty-stricken village.

It is poverty-stricken because a sacred stone that has kept them in plenty for decades has been stolen, along with all the villages' children.

So off the fearless threesome set to the Temple of Doom to recover the stone and discover the two other identical stones that will bring them "fortune and glory".

The Temple of Doom turns out to be the home of a revived 'thugi' sect that worships the goddess Kali, performs human sacrifices and is dominated by an evil genius who turns his victims into slaves by use of a powerful drug and keeps innocent children chained up as labourers in the deep tunnels of a mine.

A momentous battle against the forces of evil ensues to recover the stone and set free the hapless slaves.

It is, of course tongue-in-

Edward Ellis reviews Steven Spielberg's latest film, 'Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom'

cheek romp that unashamedly mocks and imitates all those other adventure films you've ever seen. It is also very exciting, sometimes very frightening and thoroughly enjoyable. There were bits, I have to confess, I couldn't watch - especially scenes involving large numbers of vile insects crawling all over people, but, of course, you know that no real harm can come to our hero or his

friends.

It is, if that's possible, more over-the-top than Raiders of the Lost Ark: the escapes from the very jaws of death (at least once every ten minutes) are even more improbable; and there are even more absurd and shameless contradictions. Its biggest fault, in comparison to its predecessor, is that the woman character is a stereotype helpless female, and the 'natives' seem to exist only to be killed or rescued by the hero.

Still, as an adventure movie for children of all ages, it is well worth seeing.

Join the Labour Party

Socialist ORGANISER

Scargill gets it right

BREAK LINKS WITH TORIES!

By Harry Sheen

Join the Labour Party

Socialist ORGANISER

JOBLESS KEY TO WAGE-CUT PLAN

By Harry Sheen

Fight the witch-hunt

Inside

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Notts strikers need money

Send money or invitations for fund-raising visits to the Notts Miners Rank and File Strike Committees.

North Notts. Strike Centre, Ollerton Miners' Welfare, Ollerton, Notts.

South Notts. Miners' Strike Centre, c/o AUEW, 218 Mansfield Road, Nottingham.

St Leonard's raided

By Andrew Hornung

AT 6.03 a.m. last Monday morning, about 50 police and four car-loads of civilian posse — bailiffs, tipstiffs, sherrif's officers and assorted rodents — invaded St. Leonard's Hospital in Hackney where an occupation had been maintained for the previous two weeks.

The ending of the occupation does not mean the end of the struggle to stop the closure of St. Leonards. The campaign to save the hospit-

al has been meeting almost every day since the ending of the occupation to plan further action.

Hackney Health Emergency, the campaign at the centre of the resistance to health cuts in Hackney, has moved to a new office and all supporters should contact it there. The new address is 5 Bradbury Street and the new telephone number is 254 6689.

Troops strike-break

STRIKE-BREAKING troops have been brought in by the Irish government to try and end a month-long dispute between members of the National Busworkers' Union employed at a bus depot to the north of Dublin and the CIE national transport company.

Troops started ferrying commuters to work on Monday June 16, in army lorries displaying notices that members of the public use them "at their own risk". An extension of insurance coverage to motorists who give

lifts to travellers has also been arranged by the government. So far the army is only covering three routes in the north of the city during peak hours, though troops have experience of more extensive scabbing from when they were last used during a wider stoppage in 1981.

Hard-line, intransigent senior management, backed up by a government more than willing to use troops to smash working class action sounds very much like a description of a situation now facing striking miners and dockers in Britain, doesn't it?

Newcastle NUPE: keep the pressure up!

By Alan Johnson

OVER 200 NUPE workers walked out and marched on the Newcastle university administration on Monday July 16 to demand a response to their pay claim.

The management's use of casual labour has blown up in their faces, strengthening the resolve of many workers.

Shocked by the show of strength, the management agreed to meet NUPE representatives immediately. However, they say they will negotiate only after a return to normal working.

This is a trap the strikers must avoid. Nationally, NUPE has stated. "The employers have made it

clear that they are not prepared to improve this offer. The trade union side are convinced that the only way that the offer can be improved is by increased industrial action".

NUPE's demand is for a £7 a week increase for all grades. The demonstration has strengthened the workers' hand. Financial support is beginning to come in. Newcastle local authority workers have donated £100. Visiting factories could increase this support.

Shop steward Gloria White said. "We've got to keep the action going while we've got the advantage, not wind it down".

Messages and donations to Joe Holland NUPE branch secretary, Ancillary Services, University of Newcastle.

Solidarity needed now

By Judith Bonner

THE South London Women's Hospital remains under occupation. Workers there decided to keep it open and working against the DHA's wishes.

The occupation started at 5 o'clock on June 29. Management were told they were no longer responsible for running the hospital and within minutes each entrance door displayed notices warning management of the workers' legal occupation.

By July 2 NUPE voted unanimously to support the work-in and elected an occupation committee. On the 6th the Royal College of Midwives made their support official. Workers in the boiler room joined in, refusing to accept transfers to other hospitals.

Patients, too, are backing the occupation, keeping in regular contact with the occupation committee.

Support is also coming in from community and women's groups, council workers, trades councils, unions and former patients.

The hospital first came under threat 18 months ago when the DHA ignored a petition of 27,000 signatures collected in only 14 days after their plans had been leaked, and voted to close the hospital by April 1984. Several Labour Party members on the DHA voted for the closure, incurring the wrath of local Labour Parties.

Despite continued mass opposition, the AHA pushed through the closure. Publicity campaigns, pickets, demonstrations and petitioning continued as the Secretary of State endorsed the closure.

The DHA aimed to stop admissions on July 9 and close wards by the 15th. These plans were thwarted by the occupation. Two wards remain open, but only four midwives remain the hospital and new admissions are urgently being sought. The hospital registrars are under enormous pressure to refuse admission to patients referred



South London Hospital for Women under occupation

by their local GPs, but are less able to turn away women who turn up on the doorstep seeking admission.

Adverts are being placed locally urging women in need of hospital care, pregnant women, for example, to present themselves at the hospital for admission.

Tactics

Attempts by management to move equipment have not proved too successful. Porters at the hospital sent removal boxes back to nearby St. George's Hospital empty.

Ambulance drivers have agreed not to remove any patients from the hospital against their will.

The police haven't put in much of an appearance and there are still no signs of an attempt by management to seek a high court injunction against the occupation.

But some tactics used to try and break the work-in have been astounding. One

consultant took a patient in her own car to another hospital while in the maternity unit, medical notes of women yet to give birth were stolen.

Worst of all, an elderly patient who had been moved to the South London when the St. Benedict's Hospital occupation was smashed and that hospital closed down, and who had been told that she would not be moved again, was moved. Within hours she was dead.

Keeping the hospital open means keeping patients there. As long as patients are admitted, the DHA is legally obliged to maintain medical services. Some doctors have volunteered to work and one consultant has agreed to stay on after her contract "ends". Recently two consultants at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital were suspended after referring patients.

With staff here due to finish and others accepting transfers to other hospitals, a concerted campaign from

other health unions is necessary to win the occupation.

NUPE nationally have planned no such solidarity action, and the burden of opposing the closure is falling on the few determined workers not prepared to accept closure or transfer.

They must not be left isolated. The community in the area — especially the women — are the bulwark of the campaign but it is crucial that other health unions take action now.

If you want to help there are plenty of things to do.

1) Help picket. Get your union branch, Labour Party ward, women's section or YS branch on the picket line.

2) Lobby your GP to make referrals to the hospital.

3) If you need hospital treatment, go to the South London Hospital and demand to be admitted.

4) Give out leaflets and send donations. For further information phone the occupation committee at the hospital, 673-7788.

Islington NALGO steps up action

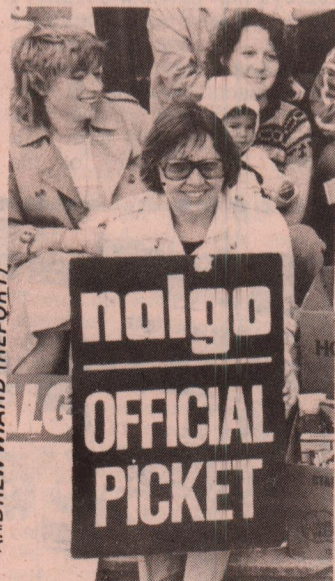
By Nik Barstow

ISLINGTON NALGO is now moving towards all-out action in support of the council's nursery workers, who have been on strike for 14 weeks.

A huge majority of a 450-strong branch meeting on July 17 voted for the branch executive to urge meetings in all departments to vote for strike action. NALGO's national emergency committee has been asked to authorise an immediate branch-wide ballot for an all-out strike.

Islington NUPE has already begun a series of lightning strikes around different council depots, and NALGO members in social services, computers, and housing transfers, are already on strike to support the nursery workers.

This latest stepping-up of support came after Islington's Labour councillors refused to



ANDREW WARD (REPORT)

bow to pressure from the Party for a substantial increase in the paltry offers they have so far made on nursery workers' pay and on the appalling staff levels in the children's day centres.

A joint meeting of councillors and Labour Party delegates on July 13 voted down the Party's calls for an improved offer in favour of a minimal offer "with-in the council's budget strategy" to be followed by 'binding arbitration' if no settlement is reached.

The councillors only won their resolution by voting almost as a

bloc, and many refusing to be bound by mandates from their ward parties. These tactics take the party back to the late '70s — when the then right-wing Labour councillors refused to be accountable to anyone, and eventually joined the SDP.

Arbitration

Now it is 'left-wing' councillors who are trying to sit out a strike. Their call for arbitration is merely a way of refusing any real negotiation.

This is despite the nursery workers having reduced their demands by a third! Now they are simply asking the council to add the money they have saved from the dispute to their existing offer.

When Islington council workers' Labour Party branch moved this demand at the meeting with councillors, it was rejected by Labour council leader Margaret Hodge because "it would add to next year's budget more than the limited growth we plan".

But under rate-capping all of Islington's budgets will be more than the council can afford — unless it fights.

Negotiation

The sad truth about the dispute in Islington today is that the council is only too ready to fight... its workforce. They must be planning to use that as a basis for negotiation... with the Tories.

Vote Paul Davis

By George Craft

IN THE forthcoming election for secretary of the North West TUC, to be held on Saturday July 28, there are two candidates.

Paul Davis, TGWU full-time officer and a member of Wallasey Labour Party, is running against Dave Hawkins, a member of the Communist Party in Manchester.

The election of somebody to a bureaucratic position might appear neither here nor there. But the North West TUC has recently displayed some autonomy, for example in its resolution calling for the resignation of Len Murray in the aftermath of the NGA dispute

and its support for the Day of Action for the miners on Friday July 13. The position is therefore a vital one.

Manchester Trades Council, of which Dave Hawkins is secretary, has for the last decade been nothing more than a talking shop unrelated to the real concerns of local trade unionists.

In contrast, Paul Davis, since his election as chair of Wirral Trades Council three years ago, and as secretary of the Merseyside Association of Trades Councils two years ago, has been a strong influence in organising the fight

back against the Tories and the Len Murrays of this world.

Communist Party bureaucrats have launched a witch hunt, claiming that Paul is a member of the 'Workers Revolutionary Party'. He is in reality a strong anti-sectarian member of the Labour left.

A vote for Dave Hawkins will be a vote for manipulation and adaptation to Congress House. A vote for Paul Davis will be a vote to strengthen the fight back against Thatcherism and all it represents. We call on all trade unionists in the north west to move resolutions and to campaign for the election of Paul Davis as North-West TUC secretary.

Women against pit closures

- Dalkeith, c/o Dalkeith Miners' Welfare, Dalkeith, Lothian.
- Fish Cross, c/o Fish Cross Miners' Welfare, Fish Cross, Clackmananshire.
- Durham, c/o Heather Wood, 18 Hallfield Drive, Easington Village, Peterlee, Co. Durham.
- Kent, Kay Sutcliffe, c/o Aylesham Miners' Welfare, Aylesham, Kent.
- Thurnscoe, Sheila Jow, 105, Lidget Lane, Thurnscoe, near Rotherham.
- Blidworth, Doreen Humber 50 Thorney Abbey Road, Blidworth, Mansfield, Notts.

- Edlington, Veronica Balderson, 62, Blowhall Cres., Edlington, Doncaster.
- Maesteg, Teresa Parry, 13 Charles Row, Maesteg, West Glamorgan. (Tel 738825).
- Birch Coppice, Wendy Coxson, Tamworth 896069.
- Barnsley, Ann Hunter, 5 Packhorse Gn, Silkstone, near Barnsley Tel. 791187.
- Maerdy, c/o Maerdy Strike Centre, Ferndale 755 301.
- Oakdale, Gwent, 82 Markham Cres., Oakdale, Blackwood, Gwent. 0495 220158.
- Celyen North, Gwent. c/o

- Dorothy Phillips, 13 Thorn Ave., Newbridge, Gwent 0495 245000.
- Rugeley, Staffs. Mrs Jackson, 9 Woodlands, Handsacre, Rugeley, Staffs. Mrs Southwell, Rugeley 6179.
- Littleton, Staffs. 6 Tower Road, High Green, Hednesford. Linda Platen, Hednesford 76614.
- Merton, Durham. Hetton-le-Hall 267641.
- Sheffield, Kath Mackey, Sheffield 381594 or 454163.
- North Staffs, Brenda Proctor, 153 Broadway, Meir, Stoke-on-Trent. 0782 332151.

How the rich get rich

THE first two articles in this series by Martin Thomas argued that the state is not neutral, but tied to the interests of the ruling class. The third article, last week, said that the ruling class is defined by its monopoly of the sort of wealth that creates more wealth. This week's article asks: how is it that wealth creates more wealth? Why do the rich get richer?

An advertisement for the Abbey National Building Society shows a man dozing on a sofa, with the message: "This man is busy earning 7.75%."

On the face of it this would seem to show the way for a whole society of leisure and comfort. All we need do is share out the wealth so that everyone has, say, £50,000, and then everyone could get a comfortable income of about £4,000 a year — 7.75 per cent — without having to sweat in coal mines or toil in factories or slog away in offices!

The fact is, however, that all comforts and necessities are produced by that toil and sweat. Somehow or other, people who do no productive work but possess wealth receive and consume goods made by people who do productive work but possess no wealth.

But how? Some people, no doubt, make their fortunes through theft and swindling — but there is more to it than that. For the most part, goods change hands at the going price and productive work is paid for at the going wage.

As Marx put it: "All labour appears as paid labour. [In contrast] in the corvée [feudal forced labour] the labour of the worker for himself, and his compulsory labour for his lord, differ in space and time in the clearest possible way. In slave-labour . . . all the slave's labour appears as unpaid labour."

To understand this, we have to look more closely at the social relations underlying the everyday business of buying and selling.

In the market-place, a bible, a bottle of brandy, 5 lb of meat, and a shirt, are equivalent. What makes these very different objects equivalent? Apparently, money. They are all equivalent to each other because each is equivalent to £5.

This man is busy earning 7.75%.



But that answer only restates the question. Money is an expression of an exchange economy, not the root of it.

The real basis of those different commodities being equivalent is that they all represent a chunk of the total labour-time of society. Although the labour that produces each item is different in type from the labour that produces others, it can be measured by a common standard — time.

Arguing

for
Socialism

Commodities of different sorts, bibles and brandy, are commensurable because they embody commensurable amounts of social labour-time. When goods change hands, amounts of labour change hands.

As Marx put it: "It is not money that renders commodities commensurable. Just the contrary. It is because all commodities, as values, are realised human labour, and therefore commensurable, that their values can be measured by one and the same special commodity, and the latter be converted into the common measure of their values, i.e. into money."

So far, so good. This market place appears to be, as Marx wrote:

" . . . a very Eden of the innate rights of man. There alone rule Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham. Freedom, because both buyer and seller of a commodity, say labour-power, are constrained only by their own free will. They contract as free agents, and the agreement they come to, is but the form in which they give legal expression to their common will.

Equality because each enters into relation with the other, as with a simple owner of commodities, and they

exchange equivalent for equivalent. Property, because each disposes only of what is his own. And Bentham, because each looks only to himself."

Everything has a fair price. But what is the fair price of labour — or, more correctly, of labour-power, the capacity to labour?

Labour power — the worker's capacity to labour — is sold just like any other commodity. Its value is determined by the labour-time embodied in producing it: that is, the labour-time required for the various means of subsistence and enjoyment which the working class family consumes. But something special happens when the capitalist uses this commodity, labour power, which he has bought.

New value

When someone consumes food s/he has bought or wears clothes s/he has bought, the commodities are used up and that is that. But when the capitalist 'consumes' his workers' labour power, the workers' life and energy is consumed, and new value is created. That value is more than the value of the labour power — and the difference is the source of the capitalists' profits. The 1400 pages of volumes 2 and 3 of Capital are largely devoted to showing how surplus value ends up partly in the form of rent, partly interest, partly merchants' profits, and only partly as industrial profits. But basically all these (as well as the state's income) are derived from the surplus value created in production.

Unpaid labour

The fact that the worker and his or her family require for everyday living goods of a total value representing perhaps four hours of average labour-time does not stop the capitalist making the worker work eight hours a day. All those eight hours appear to be paid labour; but four hours are in a sense unpaid labour.

And so the capitalist class's monopoly ownership of the means of production enables them to pocket the proceeds of that unpaid labour. Their wealth produces more wealth — it "earns 7.75%" or whatever, simply by value of being wealth. And they grab as their own all the creative powers of society.



Maidstone NF demonstration — 14 July

Fascists defeated

LAST Saturday, July 14, the National Front planned to march through the Kent county town of Maidstone.

This was to be a very important event for the fascists. Jean-Marc Le Pen, head of the French NF, had been invited to attend.

Maidstone was chosen because it is reasonably close to South London, Tunbridge Wells and Chatham, all local centres of NF activity.

Fortunately the NF did not get what they wanted. All that stopped them being physically smashed was a row of coppers outnumbering the 70 marchers by at least 3-1.

The opposition to the NF came more from spontaneous action by local youth than from the local labour movement. Labour councillors in Maidstone had refused to give details of the NF march and the "counter-demonstration" called by Kent LPYS was totally ineffective.

The counter-demonstration started three hours before the fascists were due in town and ended when the coppers herded us into the local cattle market about half a mile away from the city centre.

It was there that the organised anti-fascists had to make a decision about what to do next.

Militant and the Socialist Workers Party called a stewards' meeting (where they were a majority) and announced that it was lunatic and ultra-left to go back into Maidstone to try to oppose the fascists physically. One Militant comrade even announced that the answer to the Front was to build a branch of the LPYS in Maidstone . . .

As a result, over two-thirds of the 150 or so demonstrators left Maidstone, including some young Kent miners who wanted

to stay and take on the NF but had to leave because their coach was going.

The rest of us decided to go back into the town centre to see what we could do to give the fascists a hard time. There were only about forty of us so we were pretty worried about what could happen if the NF turned up in great numbers.

Then we found that the local working class youth of Maidstone had turned out to give the NF a hard time too. The fascists didn't succeed in moving one inch through town without being jeered at, spat at, or hit with stones, fists or feet. All in all, about 200-300 youth chased the fascists through Maidstone.

The anti-fascists had the advantage that they knew the town better than the fascists or the police, so could quickly move about down the back roads and alleys to ambush and block the march at point after point.

The police behaved as you would expect them to. Fascists wearing racist emblems and chanting poisonous slogans were given the same protection as scab miners.

And the local youth — black and white — who had turned up to show their disgust, had to face the same tactics as the miners have faced for the last 19 weeks — beatings, snatch squads, photographs, and plain clothes agents provocateurs.

We even got Derry and Toxteth-style "motorised policing" (i.e. a black maria driven at about 70 mph at the anti-fascist demonstrators). Throughout the day police made over 40 arrests, nearly all of them anti-fascists.

But in the end we won. And it will be a while before the NF try to organise any more demonstrations, even in what they see as safe territory.

What a surprise for the bosses!

By Jon Riley

I WAS brought up to believe that the ruling class in this country is very clever, astute and sophisticated. After reading a recent editorial in the Economist I am not so sure.

The article, "Loyalties Clog", is an astonishing catalogue of misinformation, muddle and mendacity as one could ever expect to find in the Sun.

The writer of "Loyalties Clog" is surprised to discover that a recent MORI poll shows 37% of the British people supporting the NUM's struggle against pit closures. "To the sort of people who read or write The Economist this extent of public support is astonishing."

The miners are depicted as demanding " . . . huge subsidies" (no comparisons with the big Continental subsidies

are given, of course) and "huge energy charges" (. . . unlike cheap, safe nuclear energy!). The writer expresses surprise that miners actually want to work in "geologically used up pits where working conditions are horrible".

Arthur Scargill's case is "ridiculous" to "most people educated to form their opinions by observations of the facts".

The Economist

The most amusing part of this article is the section called "We're as proletarian as daddy was". The writer is surprised to find that the majority of the population (69%) think they're "working class". After all these years of TV sets, fridges and Spanish holidays, the "bulgers in the middle" still think they're at

the base of a pyramid!

All of one sentence is given to refute this — 60% of households are owner-occupiers and a similar percentage have bank accounts. The size of these houses and bank balances are not given, of course, but at least these are facts.

Despite all these indications of "prosperity", these bourgeois dullards think they're proletarian.

It did strike my closed Marxist mind that around 69% of the British population are working class in so far as they work in manual jobs or in routine clerical work . . . But old fashioned Marxism would still stubbornly identify class as "a function of assets owned" (1% of the population own 25% of the personal disposable wealth — and income received, the top 10% gets as much as the

bottom 40%) wouldn't it?

No. This is Communist rubbish! That would only tell us that one class (the 1%) exploits and lives off the surplus labour power of the other (those 69% plus).

No, "class is a psychological condition, built upon occupation and accent and district and the time you eat your meals." It's all in the mind you see.

The Economist

The four million "middle class" people who are now on the dole and live in Kirkby and Scunthorpe could really be living in Harrow-on-the-Hill or Heswall if they'd only snap out of these fantasies of theirs. They think that because they've got no money, live in lousy houses

and where they do work, feel frightened and insecure, they're working class.

The educated elite know that because they drink "lager and not bitter" they're middle class types like us "Economists".

"This kind of British class identification is deeply wasteful of human resources" the writer informs us. Presumably mass unemployment isn't!

The article ends by expressing the hope that the strike is won (i.e. the NUM is crushed) and that "the Nottinghamshire miners and realistic believers" will then feel "quietly supported" as this nonsense will have been defeated. And then, "the glacier of old loyalties might melt a yard or two faster into the stream of economic change now benefitting (!!) Britain's working classes." No comment.

ANDREW WARD (REPORT)

Socialist Organiser

Dockers stay firm!

TORY Transport Minister Nicholas Ridley said on Sunday 15th that troops could be used against the docks strike within "two or three days".

On Saturday 14th, Margaret Thatcher had hinted that the government would invoke emergency powers. "The government will do everything necessary to keep the country working".

As we go to press, the Tories have backed off slightly, but are still keeping open the options of the use of troops or a state of emergency.

The tremendous struggle begun 3½ months ago by the miners has sharply changed gear with the dockers coming out.

A dockers' strike hits harder and quicker than a miners' strike. Foreign trade accounts for nearly a third of Britain's economic activity, and 90% of it travels by sea.

A docks strike does not just

By Martin Thomas

mean shortages in the shops. It means that major industries are paralysed for lack of essential materials, and that companies dependent on exports face huge cash problems. It is a huge blow to the whole capitalist economy.

According to the Financial Times on Wednesday 18th, "The strike has halted nearly all seaborne trade into and out of Britain. Support among dockers is more solid than in the last strike in 1972..."

"Freight movements have been halted at all 78 ports belonging to the dock labour scheme, which normally handle more than 70 per cent of seaborne trade. The strike has also hit the biggest ports outside the scheme."

And some of the changes on the docks since 1972 have paradoxically made the employers more vulnerable to strike action. It is less easy to get cargo through

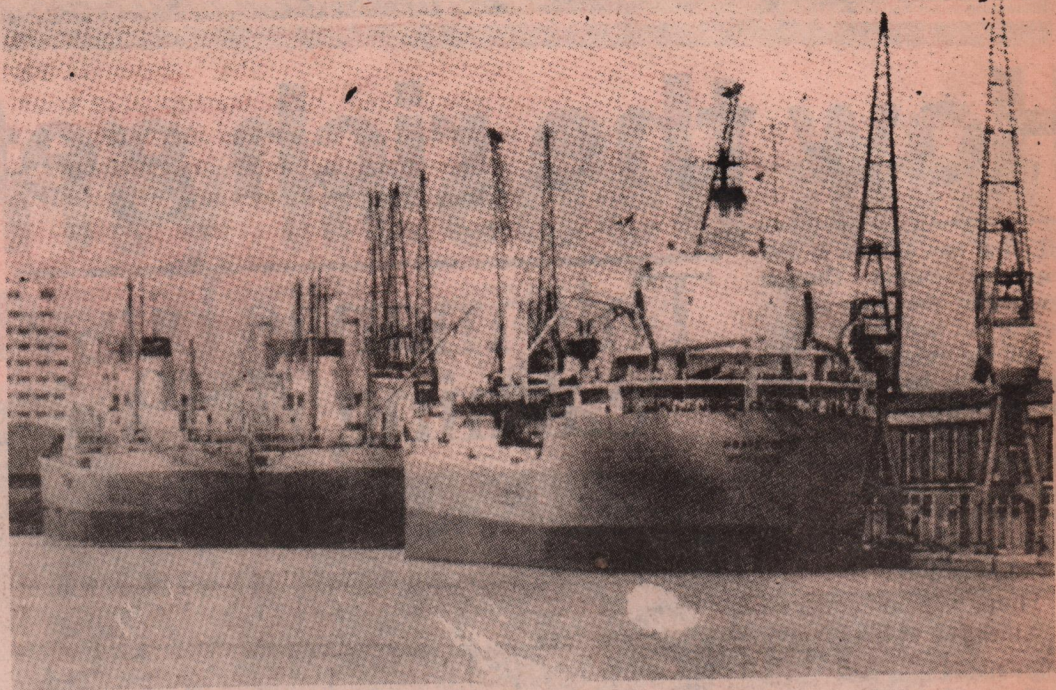
small non-scheme ports.

"There has been growth in roll-on, roll-off and large container vessels for which the working ports are either too small or do not have adequate cranes", writes the Financial Times.

The National Union of Seamen has said it will not cooperate with troops sent into the docks, and French and Belgian dockers' unions have made the same pledge.

If the Tories do not use drastic measures - like sending in troops to break the strike, as was last done in the docks by the Labour government in 1951 - then the dockers' strike will quickly bring British capitalism to its knees. But if they do send in the troops, or use state power some other way, then they could - and should! - face a general strike.

Behind the docks dispute stands the issue of the National Dock Labour Scheme. This scheme was introduced in 1947. It ended casual labour on the



Cranes stand idle as dock strike bites

docks. It gave control over dockers' jobs to a joint union/employer Dock Labour Board, thus giving dockers a high degree of job security. It was the basis for a major growth of militancy among dockers in the 1950s and '60s.

Since 1972 the dock labour force has been reduced drastically by dint of especially large severance payments. But the Dock Labour Scheme remains, and the strategic position of dockers in the economy remains.

The port employers have called publicly and officially for the scrapping of the scheme. In April, Transport Minister Nicholas Ridley indicated that the government might move in that direction.

Abolition of the scheme would mean a dramatic further decline in dockers' jobs and a worsening of their conditions.

Tactically the Tories and the port employers might be well advised to back down now and wait for another day. Ridley has already said in Parliament that the government has "no plans" to alter or abolish the National Dock Labour Scheme.

Why exactly the employers are holding out is not clear, but one factor seems to be that they are trying to cut 1500 jobs by voluntary redundancy with the bribe of severance payments by July 27, and are having little success. They do not want to agree to anything that could tie their hands in nibbling away at the scheme.

In any case, the labour movement has a tremendous chance here to get the Tories on the run. The dockers' strike should be tightened up - especially as regards oil shipments, which are 20% of Britain's trade by value, and relatively unaffected as yet. Other workers should bring their own demands forward and strike alongside the miners and dockers. And we should step up arguing and explaining the case for a general strike.

DON'T LOSE THIS CHANCE!

Dennis Skinner spoke to John Bloxam.

Do you think that Thatcher's been trying to keep other groups of workers out of the firing line?

Yes. She devised a strategy to keep only one ball in the air at a time.

She had to buy off the railway workers. She allowed the teachers to go to arbitration. She had to accept the report's recommendation of 7½% for the nurses.

Then there was the question of Liverpool. And there's no doubt, no matter what they do with the figures, there has been a victory of a kind in Liverpool.

Do you think they could have won more if they'd stayed out with the miners?

Yes. I think if I'd been sitting round the table when the British

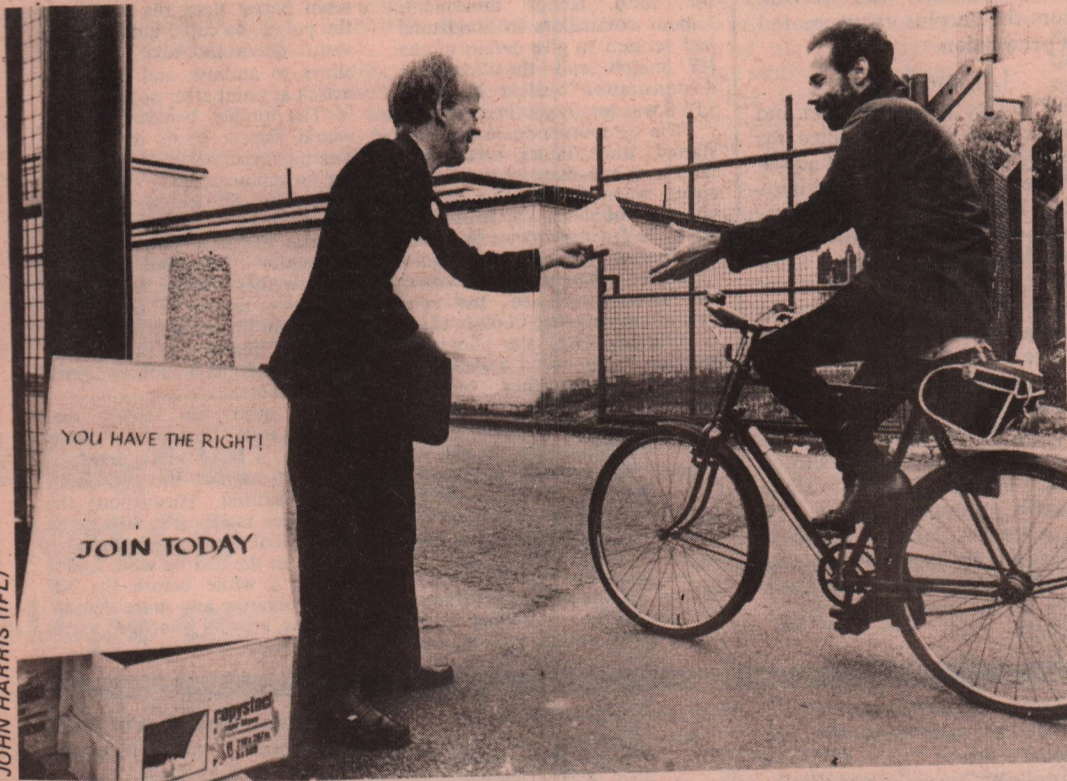
Rail employers said that they were dropping the productivity strings, I would have smelt a rat. I'd have said, this has got them on the run. We'll get another 2 or 3% next week and then we'll go for a bit more and a bit more.

Would you say the same about Liverpool Council, too?

Well, I'm not sure about the exact state of the settlement with Liverpool Council. I don't know to what extent they were going to hold the line. I think I would have said there's a little bit more here, let's frighten them a little bit longer.

You don't get many chances when the Tories are running for cover and you don't want to lose an opportunity to see them retreat right back into the forest.

The rest of this interview appears on page 3.



JOHN HARRIS (IFL)

Above: trade unionists have been recruiting new members at GCHQ Cheltenham since the High Court ruled on Monday 16th that the government's ban on union membership there is illegal.

Union activists also need to be vigilant and make sure that their leaders do not revive the proposal for a no-strike agreement at GCHQ which they made when the Tories first imposed the ban. Conferences of the biggest civil service unions, CPSA and SCPS, have voted to rule out any such deals for toothless trade unionism.

Shipyards should follow



The Lairds occupation against enforced redundancies is now in its fourth week. With jobs under threat throughout British Shipbuilders, now is the time for workers in the industry to follow the lead given at Lairds and join the miners and dockers in the struggle to defend jobs.

Donations, messages or requests for speakers should be sent to Lol Duffy, Cammell Lairds Occupation Committee, 3 St. James Court, Victoria Rd., Wallasey, Merseyside L45 9LD. Or phone 051-638 2310/051-647 6122.

Poland Stalinist trial farce

THE Polish junta has issued an amnesty for 35,000 people in prison or under arrest for committing "political crimes and offences". It is unclear whether Jacek Kuron and the other leaders of the dissident KOR organisation currently on trial will be included.

What is clear is that the 'amnesty' is a farce. It follows a wave of arrests unprecedented since the early period after the junta came to power at the end of 1981. Declaring an amnesty is a convenient way for the Jaruzelski regime to improve its relations with the West whilst maintaining a high degree of repression against leaders and activists of the banned Solidarnosc union.

The trial of Kuron, Adam Micknik, Henryk Wujec and Zbigniew Romaszewski, which began last week, continues.

All are leaders of the Workers' Defence Committee (KOR) and have been in prison for 2-2½ years. They are charged with offences carrying ten-year sentences.

The Stalinist state has amassed no less than fifty volumes of evidence to prove that they aimed

"to overthrow the political system by force and to weaken the Polish People's Republic by breaking the alliance with the Soviet Union".

The junta is using former Solidarity activists as prosecution witnesses, including Lech Walesa. Ironically, these people are also defence witnesses. The idea is to convict KOR, which acted as advisors to Solidarity, for the events preceding the coup.

It is unlikely to work. Mass support for the banned trade union continues to be expressed in a wide variety of forms of protest - from milk strikes, through creating immense noise in factories on significant anniversaries to graffiti slogans.

And Walesa has commented on the victims of the show trials that they are "honest and brave men", and that "millions demand their liberation".



Jacek Kuron



Adam Micknik



Join the Labour Party. Write to: The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT. Subscription is £7 per year, £2 unwaged, 50p OAPs.

FUND

AFTER a good start, the fund is slowing down this month. Thanks this week to Martin Barclay, £20; and Nik Barstow £15. Total so far this month: £901.96.

Later this month Socialist Organiser supporter Les Hearn is cycling from Lands End to John O'Groats, and he is asking for sponsors for the SO fund. Fill in the form on page 4.

But we still need money in the meantime! Send to 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.