

Councillors face ruin

WORKERS AROUND the whole country will be incensed at the Tories' threat to bankrupt 81 Labour councillors in Lambeth and Liverpool.

Their only crime has been to fight for jobs and services in their communities, against dictatorial government cuts. If the Tories are allowed to get away with this attack, through their puppets in the Audit Commission, hundreds of other Labour councillors in other authorities could be similarly bankrupted.

By Roger Shives

The struggle of these councillors is a struggle for all Labour councillors and for thousands of local authority jobs.

In Liverpool, 49 councillors have been ordered to pay a surcharge of £106,000 while 32 councillors in Lambeth have been surcharged £127,000. They also face possible disqualification from local government office for five years.

The action of the District Auditors is intended to punish these councillors and warn hundreds of others in Labour authorities. It was a blatantly political act. The auditors are supposed to be 'independent' but as Liverpool council leader John Hamilton said: "It is not coincidental that the certificate was issued to Lambeth at the same time as us."

Council houses

The councils are fighting for the workers of two of the most deprived areas of Britain, and were pledged to improve slum housing and do something about unemployment. In the week of the Handsworth disturbances, the Tories seem determined that inner city areas should be allowed to fall into deeper and deeper squalor and desperation.

For decades, Liverpool lost factory after factory, job after job. For four years before Labour came to of-

lice in 1983, the city council built no council houses. Since 1983 thousands of new jobs have been created through council policy and 3,600 new council houses have been built.

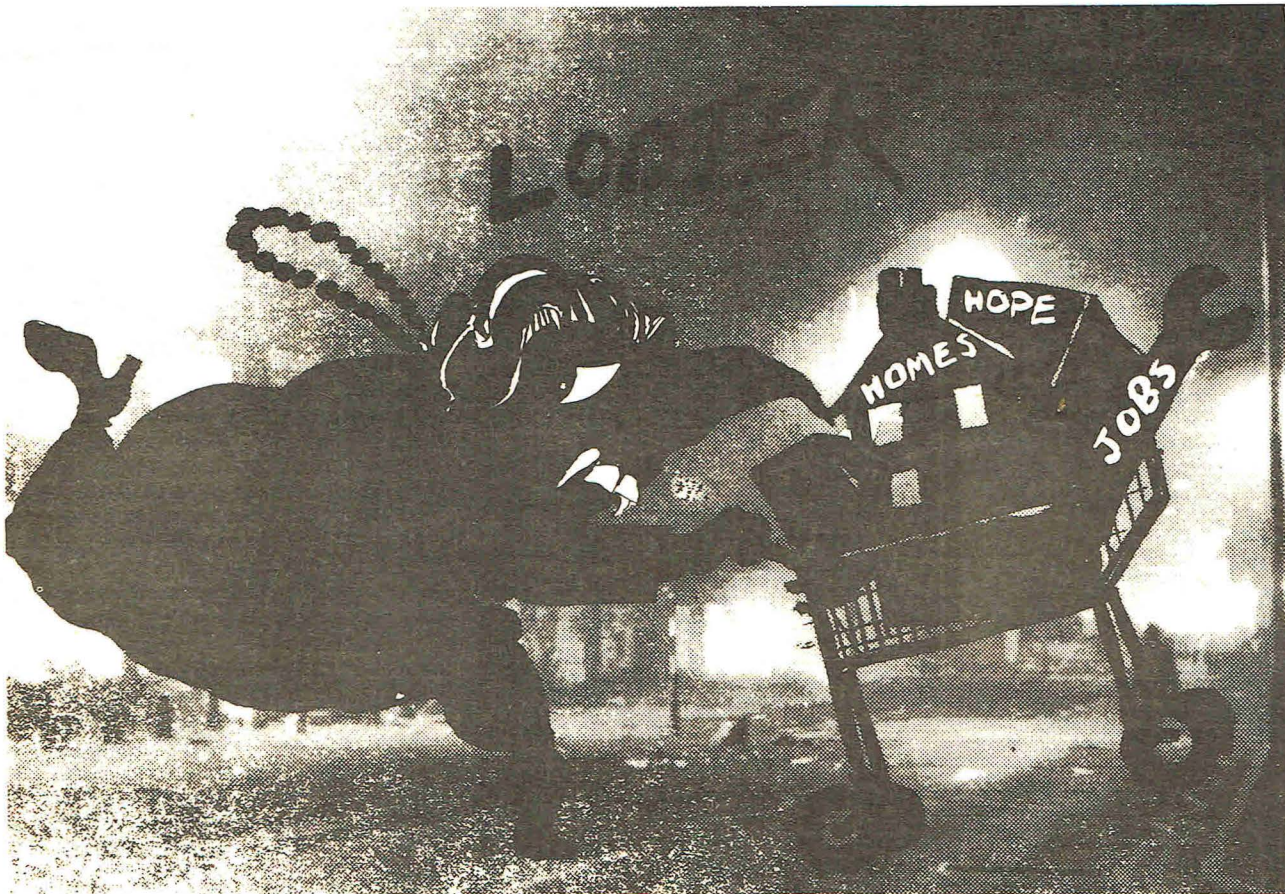
The Tories want to put this record, which councillors are justifiably very proud of, into reverse. If they get their way, 6,000 council jobs would disappear. That is why councillors are keeping up the battle regardless of Tory threats.

"We will not renege on our promises. There will be a co-ordinated return attack," Liverpool council's deputy leader Derek Hatton has warned the Tories. "Already 100,000 people have signed a petition in support of the city council".

Liverpool people were angry at being forced to "choose" between 6,000 sackings and a 100 per cent to 200 per cent rate rise. They are even angrier about this attack on their elected councillors. The council workers themselves are spearheading the fight.

The petition gives a glimpse of the potential support for Liverpool, but pieces of paper will have no effect on the Tories. They only understand industrial action.

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for saving jobs

**Handsworth:
Inner cities
in crisis**

NO-ONE should be surprised at the outbreak of rioting in Handsworth. Since the riots of 1981 all the social problems of the inner cities have become worse as a result of Tory policies.

These events are only the tip of a huge iceberg. On every working class estate in every city, young people are burning with indignation at the barbaric treatment meted out to them by the Tory government.

In Handsworth there is an average of 35 per cent

unemployment, but it is much higher among youth. Half the 19-24 year olds are on the dole. Out of the last batch of school-leavers, less than one in twenty blacks have jobs and less than one in five Asians.

According to Birmingham council's own records there is over 16 per cent overcrowding in the area and a "deprivation" level of 70 per cent.

It is ludicrous to pretend, as Tory politicians are now trying to do, that social conditions have nothing to do with the riots.

Tory ministers are engaged in an enormous cover-up

to hide the real effect of their policies in blighting the lives of millions of people, especially the youth in the inner cities. Any Labour MPs or councillors who try to put the events down to pure "criminality" are only helping the Tories' cover-up.

Tory policies

Since the Scarman Report of the 1981 riots, the only recommendations implemented by the Tories are those dealing with police equipment, and crowd control techniques. Although Scarman pointed to social deprivation, unemployment

and racial harassment as causes of those riots, not one of these has been addressed by the Tories, except to make them worse.

Every policy of the government on local authorities is designed to slash spending and cut jobs. Those councils like Liverpool which have fought to defend jobs and community services are being crucified for their efforts.

By John Pickard

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Quick response for Militant defence fund

WORKERS HAVE been quick to respond to our appeal to defend *Militant* against the libel action of James White, right-wing Labour MP for Glasgow Pollok.

White is suing over *Militant's* report in February 1983 of an industrial dispute at his vehicle-delivery firm, near Edinburgh, and the case is expected to come to court early in October.

Labour movement activists understand that what is at stake is *Militant's* right to publish the case of workers. Enormous anger has been expressed at the threat to *Militant's* resources, built up from the contributions of readers and supporters.

Even though the campaign has only been under way a few days, cash has already begun to come in to *Militant* Defence Fund, set up by supporters to finance our legal defence.

The first organisation to support the campaign was Pollok CLP, which passed a resolution disassociating itself from White's action and donating £50. Also passing resolutions of support are Ballieston branch of Shettleston Labour Party (£50 donation) and Tenantry branch of Brighton Kempton

CLP, whose members collected £33.

In spite of facing the threat of surcharge by the District Auditor themselves, Liverpool councillors Derek Hatton and Tony Mulhearn have each donated £25.

Several Labour MPs have already come out in defence of *Militant* and made donations: Terry Fields (£100), Dave Nellist (£50), Eddie Loyden (£20), Joan Maynard, chair of the Campaign Group gave £10, Bob Clay, treasurer of the Campaign Group (£10). Alan Meale, secretary of the Campaign Group has sent £10 and Euro MP Les Huckfield £10.

The strongest support from the unions, so far, has undoubtedly come from the NUM. From their experience in the miners' strike, NUM activists understand the key importance of *Militant's* reports and campaigning in industrial action.

Already a special appeal is being circulated to NUM branches and pits. The appeal to NUM activists is being sponsored by miners who were to the forefront in the strike.

These include (all in their personal capacities): Ian Isaacs, South Wales area executive; and Tony Ciano, chairman, and Gareth Gower secretary of Cynheidre colliery. In Lancashire there is support from

Mal Gregory, secretary, and Stephen Stonehouse, delegate Bold colliery; and also from Roy Jackson, secretary of Sutton Manor.

Sponsoring the campaign in Durham are Billy Stobbs, chairman of Easington colliery and member of the NEC, Davy Hopper, secretary of Monkwearmouth colliery and member of Durham executive, Peter Allen, secretary of Herrington colliery, Charlie Bell, Epplerton NUM, Kenny Young, Hawthorn colliery and Billy Etherington, NEC member and general secretary of the Durham Mechanics.

In the Northumberland area Ronnie Campbell, chairman of Bates colliery is giving his support.

Backing the campaign in Yorkshire are: Mark Ordington, Treeton colliery branch committee, Mark Thornton, Askern NUM, Richard Clarkson, Prince of Wales NUM, Gary Raynor, North Gawber branch committee, Gary Ironmonger, Cortonwood branch delegate, and Les Wigglesworth, Allerton Bywater colliery and also chairman of Elmet Labour Party.

We are confident that this is just a beginning of a campaign that will bring massive

backing from NUM members.

The workers involved in dispute with James White are TGWU members and the first TGWU branch to give support is Liverpool ACTSS branch 6/522 which has donated £20. We feel sure that this is just the first of many resolutions and donations from the T&G.

Peter Howarth, secretary of COHSE Broad Left gave £10.

Many individual donations have come in already: £20 from Mr and Mrs Thorpe in Nottingham, £2 from a CPSA member Tony Colwell, and there have been collections at meetings, including £12 at a meeting in Hertford.

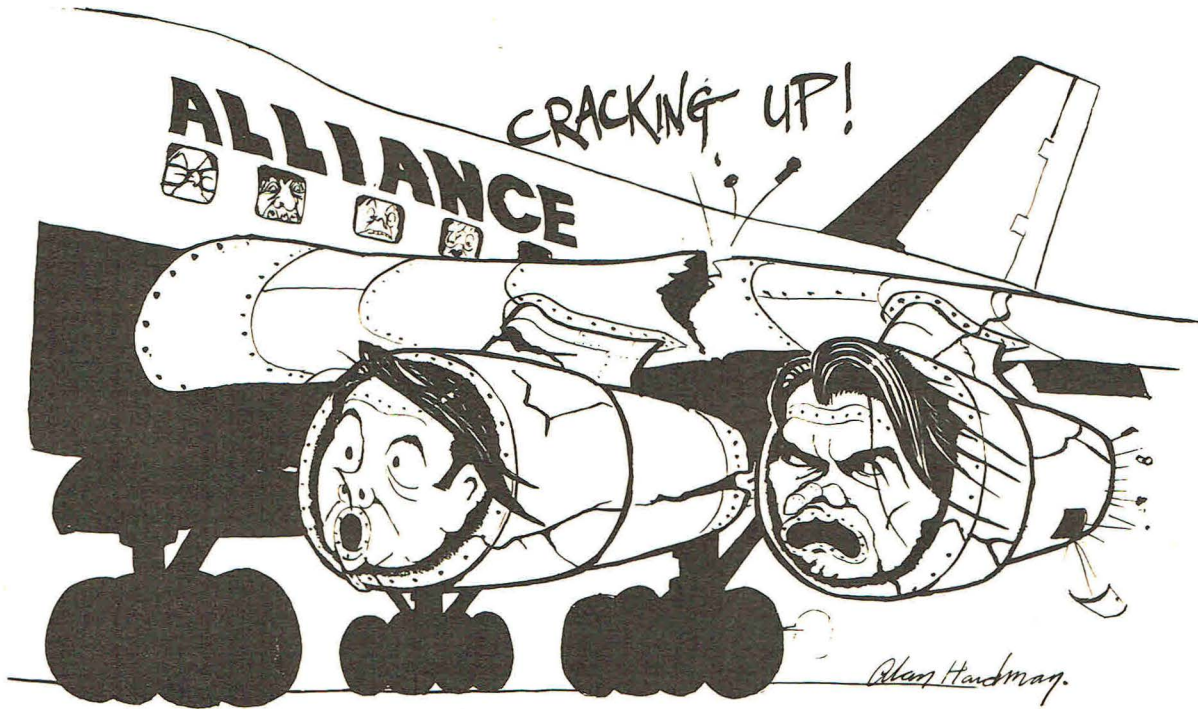
This response is good—but it is only a beginning! We are confident of our case, but the cost of presenting it will be astronomical. We now have only a few weeks before it comes up in the High Court.

Once again, therefore, we appeal to all our readers and sympathisers and to every section of the labour movement for support.

Send cash and resolutions of support urgently to: *Militant* Defence Fund, 5 Cremer House, Deptford Church Street, London SE8 4SB.

Can the SDP save the system?

Arrest provokes night of riot



THE SOCIAL Democrats' conference gives the Tory press a chance to look over the SDP and their Liberal "partners". They want to know whether they are reliable and effective enough to be a safe, capitalist set of reserves for the Tories.

The SDP were formed in 1981. The Labour government of 1974 to 1979 had horrified many Labour supporters with its anti-union and anti-working class policies. Disillusion led to Thatcher's victory in 1979. The Labour and trade union rank and file moved to the left demanding new policies and democratic changes in the Labour Party.

Former Labour right wingers established the SDP with the blessing of Fleet Street, to split Labour. Like the Liberals, who the press had rescued from half a century of inglorious decay in the '60s and '70s, they were supposed to act as a safety net. Any disillusioned Tory voter thinking of jumping over to Labour would be offered an 'alternative'.

The SDP seem safe enough. Leader David Owen believes in a strange beast called the 'social market economy', unfettered

market forces with a spoonful of crocodile tears.

Just in case the overwhelmingly middle class rank and file get a rush of radical blood to the head, the SDP have no truck with democracy. Their conference is purely consultative and even the "ruling" Council, which meets quarterly, is not binding. MPs must merely "have full regard" to their policies.

Tories' crisis

But now in the biggest crisis of support the Tories have faced since before the Falklands war, the press and the bosses generally seem divided and unsure about whether to push the Alliance's case. For a start, the opinion polls put Labour well in front of the Alliance with the Tories trailing way behind in third place. Would another big push for the SDP just erode Tory votes and give Labour a big majority?

The SDP backed a loser with demands for union ballots on Labour Party membership. Owen has been demanding re-runs despite massive majorities for keeping the links with Labour. Can the SDP get working class votes?—the faithful ask

nervously. Delegates want the SDP to be "less middle class". They wonder whether Owen's bellicose support for the Thatcher/McGregor line in the miners' strike may have alienated workers. Shirley Williams, and even Roy Jenkins, have been muttering about regaining the centre ground (wherever that is).

Add to that unease about the viability of the alliance with the Liberals and the relationship between the "two Davids". At present the SDP officially receive less than £10,000 from company donations, and the Liberals only a bit more.

But the Tories have the Alliance in reserve. PR men

and opinion poll experts (who else) are looking into 'improving' SDP policies. The stream of adulation for Owen already from the Tory press shows the publicity boost they could get in future. The press will also try to use the 'threat' of the Alliance to persuade Labour to moderate its policies even more.

That must be resisted. The SDP and Liberals have no answer to workers' problems in a capitalist crisis. The Labour Party will win if it puts forward a clear socialist alternative to the Tories and their slightly sweeter smelling shadows in the Alliance.

By Roger Shives

BLOC/Miners' Amnesty Campaign Lobby Labour Party conference

Monday 30 September, 8.00 am, Conference Centre, Exeter Road, Bournemouth

ON 9 SEPTEMBER, the Birmingham inner-city area of Handsworth erupted into a night of rioting, looting and pitched battles between youth and police.

Fifty or more shops, a church, and a bingo hall were gutted with fire.

The latest reports estimate four dead, dozens injured, including 25 or so police, and between 20 and 30 arrested.

The whole incident began at 2.30pm in the afternoon with an attempted arrest of a black youth whose car was parked on double yellow lines. Instead of the usual warning and issuing of a ticket the policeman attempted to arrest the youth.

Shortly afterwards, a police van arrived to take the youth away. An eye-witness reported the youth was physically beaten by the police who apparently hit his head several times against a slow moving bus.

Within minutes the police van's tyres were cut as local youth attempted to stop the arrest. Fighting broke out and some police were injured.

For a few hours the situation seemed to calm down, but there was an angry mood and youth in the area were obviously still upset. There have been several raids recently by the police on a local pub, known for drug trafficking, and this has angered many people that went in there.

At 6pm some of the youth set a bingo hall alight. The police at first did not enter the area. A fire engine was sent in which was petrol-bombed, so the firemen pulled out. By now the youth were in control of the whole area, police riot squads began to assemble and were sent in.

Pitched battles commenced. Barricades were erected and dozens of shops set alight. The whole area was a battlefield.

Also at this time a TV man was beaten and the police barred all television crews and the media from entering the area. In parts of Handsworth, gangs of youth roamed the streets smashing

and looting shops. The police were totally helpless for hours, in 90 per cent of the district.

Handsworth is a district which has nearly 50 per cent male unemployment. The policies of the Tories over the past six years have had a devastating effect on the whole population and on youth in particular. Faced with a situation of no jobs, factories closing all around, the youth have been driven into a desperate situation.

Not only high unemployment but atrocious housing conditions, and dereliction are rife across the whole of the district.

But the rioting has not solved these horrific social conditions. In fact it has led to more devastation of the area, and to the tragic deaths of local Asians.

In the final analysis the cause of the riots come down to the material social conditions in the area. The Tories, the media and unfortunately some Labour politicians like Dick Knowles the leader of Birmingham Labour Council, have blamed the riots on something to do with drugs. But high drug taking in the area is more a result of the crisis and conditions facing the youth who turn to it as a way out.

The drugs question is secondary to the main point that while mass unemployment, (in Birmingham over 120,000 are unemployed) and rotten conditions exist in Handsworth and other inner cities, there will always be social tensions and an anti-police mood. As a black youth in the riot-torn street said: "Hungry men are angry men."

LPYS Public Meeting 12 September 7.30pm. Summerfield Community Centre, Dudley Road, Birmingham. Speakers: Clare Short MP, Mark Meredith (LPYS) and Bob Lee.

By Mark Meredith (LPYS West Midlands National Committee member)

Liverpool workers decide on action

LIVERPOOL local authority workers are calling for a one-day general strike in Liverpool on Wednesday 25 September to back the council.

Local authority workers and all those in the private sector will be asked to come out. In addition Liverpool council workers are approaching others to plan for national solidarity action.

Immediately the District Auditor issued surcharge certificates to the councillors in Liverpool, the broad labour movement began a campaign in defence of the council.

An emergency meeting of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee was called to plan industrial action. "It isn't a question of *if* we respond," commented chairman Ian Lowes, "but *when* and in what form. We won't confine action to Lambeth and Liverpool, we will be looking for national action".

Emergency meetings were also planned for the District Labour Party, the Labour Group and the full Liverpool City Council. A mass

meeting of the entire 30,000 workforce will be called some time next week.

A rally had already been planned in the run-up to Labour Party conference on Saturday 21 September. It has now been suggested that there should also be a meeting of the National Local Authorities Co-ordinating Committee representing workers from over 60 different council workforces on the same day, possibly combining the two.

The broadest possible support must be organised for the Liverpool and Lambeth councillors, in District Labour Parties, trade unions, especially local authority unions, and throughout the labour movement.

The one day strike must be turned into a huge demonstration of support for the councillors pilloried by the Tories. The Liverpool council are fighting for the jobs and services of the people of Liverpool, but they are also fighting for the other Labour councils and council workers around the country. They must not be allowed to stand alone.

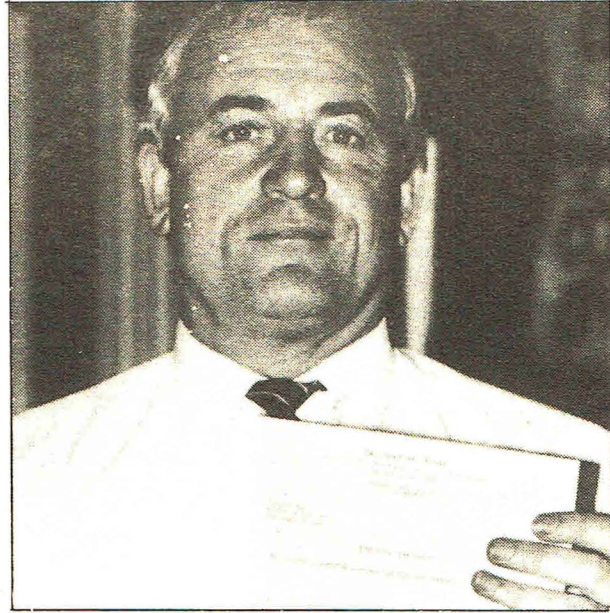


Photo: Tommy Carroll

Councillor Tony Mulhearn, President of Liverpool District Labour Party, displays his surcharge letter from the District Auditor.

Solidarity conference

MERSEYSIDE TRADE union and labour movement campaign committee conference, "Defend local councils under attack". Saturday 21 September 11am. to 4.30pm. Central Hall Liverpool. For conference credentials contact

Andy Pink, Conference Organising Secretary, Central Support Unit, Liverpool City Council, Room 41, Municipal Buildings, Dale St, Liverpool 69 2 DH. Telephone 051 227 3911 Ext 517 or 525.

Crucial three months ahead

THE FINANCIAL problems the City of Liverpool now face are entirely the responsibility of the Tory government.

It has robbed the council of hundreds of millions of pounds in Rate Support Grant in recent years.

They have starved the city of cash, and in effect, when the cash runs out in December it will be a **lockout** by the Tory government.

Liverpool has recently negotiated a loan of £30 million which it needs to fulfill its capital programme—mainly for the continuation of its house building. This still leaves £64 million that the council will have to negotiate on the money market. If the banks and financial institutions were to refuse this it would mean lay-offs in the private sector.

Wages

But this cash is separate from the council budget—which mainly covers wages and services, where there is a deficit of £117 million. On this front the council will only have money to cover the ordering of materials up until the end of September, after which council officers will not be able to place orders or contracts.

This will mean that the council services will be radically affected from October, even though workers will be paid up until December.

The trade unions together with the City Council have agreed that essential and emergency services should be maintained. A contingency fund has been established to provide the cash for such

services—although the labour will be provided voluntarily by the trade unions.

This laying of contingency plans is of course important but will not assume the central feature of the campaign. If the next three months are utilised, sufficient pressure can be exerted on the Tories to force them to provide the cash. It is around this demand that the campaign has to be waged.

However, the press has also tried to distort this aspect. Many of the so-called 'serious' papers have implied that a council resolution which asks the Secretary of State for permission to borrow £25 million means that Liverpool will get itself off-the-hook by placing itself in debt to the financial institutions thus resolving the problem by financial wizardry.

But Liverpool would firstly need special permission to borrow any cash and also all penalties would have to be removed.

In reality it is moderate to demand the return of £30 million to protect the jobs and services of the people of Liverpool. If this was agreed by the Tories then it would represent an outright victory for Liverpool.

But there seems little chance that new Environment Minister Kenneth Baker will agree to such a demand. He has already indicated that no cash will be forthcoming for Liverpool.

Nonetheless, it is still a fact that the Tories have robbed £350 million in Rate Support Grant money since 1979 and this from a city which is regarded as being one of the poorest in Western Europe.

By Dave Cotterill

Labour Party pulls out of demo

AMONG THE latest press smears concern the decision of the Labour Party, City Council, Militant supporters and trade unionists to pull out of a demonstration against social security cuts on Saturday 7 September.

Although there were serious short-comings in how it was prepared, the Labour Party fully intended to participate. Particularly welcome was the fact that the original route went through Liverpool 8, an area where the Tories and their allies have done everything possible to create division.

But the route was changed when the march organisers reported that they had had threats from unnamed individuals that if the march went through Liverpool 8 it would be attacked.

Then a number of self-proclaimed black leaders, including the 'Black Caucus' declared their intention of organising a separate march from Toxteth as a 'feeder' march into the main one, no doubt so they could claim to represent Liverpool 8.



A 'Black Caucus' supporter holds an anti-council placard up in front of a black speaker at the end of march rally.

The DLP representatives asked for two simple assurances: 1) guarantees of safety of marchers from physical attacks 2) that in the tradition of the labour movement the feeder demo should join the back of the main march.

In fact the organisers sug-

gested that to appease the Black Caucus, they should join the march near the front, ahead of the District Labour Party, the City Council and the council workers' contingent.

This outrageous proposal led to a decision by a big proportion of the march to

pull out. All the Labour Party and LPYS banners were pulled out, the contingent of council workers angrily withdrew as did busmen and firemen amongst others, including a number of blacks from Liverpool 8.

The march was regrettably small—1,500 at most. About 500 withdrew and the events that followed justified that decision. The Black Caucus utterly failed to mobilise local people for their march. About 150 joined them and more than half of those were whites, mainly linked to the so-called "Communist" Party.

When they joined the main demonstration the main slogans were against the city council instead of anti-Tory.

At the rally workers were outraged as Eric Heffer, the only Labour MP there was jostled and shouted down and had to leave the platform without being able to speak after Black Caucus banners were waved around his head.

By Richard Venton

Labour 'lefts' stab council in the back

THE CAMPAIGN of Liverpool City Council against the government's vicious economic cuts has been clouded to a degree by the dispute over the appointment of Sam Bond as Community Relations Officer in the city.

Almost every political faction from 'left' to extreme right is lining up against the council on this issue.

The capitalist press, the Liberals, and the Tories have opportunistically criticised

the council over the appointment. Even the National Front have chanted "support the Black Caucus" on their marches in Liverpool.

Merseyside police chief Kenneth Oxford has added to the efforts of the gutter journalists by his outrageous assertion that a *Militant* leaflet—simply explaining the issues involved in the Bond affair—was somehow responsible for a siege of Admiral Street police station in Toxteth last week.

But particularly galling for Labour activists are the snide

attacks of so-called Labour 'lefts' against the council. Margaret Simey, chairman of Merseyside police authority, has attacked so-called "Militant fascists" for "interfering" in the affairs of Toxteth.

Ken Livingstone, fresh from his betrayal of workers in the GLC also declared at a *Tribune* meeting that the City Council has not consulted with the electorate.

Most of this in other circumstances would be entirely disregarded by workers on

Merseyside. But at a time when Liverpool is under attack by the Tories, faced with bankruptcy, has councillors served with certificates of surcharge which means the possibility of removal from office and personal bankruptcy, it is absolutely disgraceful that members of the labour movement should join in a chorus of ignorant and ill-informed criticism.

By Josie Aitman

Media steps up lie campaign

THE DELIBERATE and co-ordinated campaign by the media to spread lies and distortions about Liverpool has reached a new intensity since the council announced it was to run out of cash.

The national newspapers have been full of the usual smears and personal attacks on leading Labour councillors, and the Merseyside radio and TV are attempting to imagine splits where none exist within the Liverpool labour movement, and even among supporters of *Militant*.

Liberal MP David Alton, working himself up to his usual frenzy, added his own outburst about *Militant* supporters creating "mayhem in the streets" of Liverpool. "It is all going to be very frightening indeed", he bleated.

The campaign of disinformation ran wild last week with the announcement by the City Council that the cash to pay wages would run out in December. In some newspaper reports December is coming as early as "next month", but typically, there was an outcry about the council "sacking 30,000"

ample, carried a headline: "Union fury, 30,000 to be sacked".

In fact, council officials advised the council to give the statutory 90 days notice of termination of contract. It was a tactical mistake for the council to go along with this because they were also trying to make it clear that **not one single redundancy notice would be issued**.

When the position was clarified the next day the press only added to their previous distortions, with comments like the *Morning Star's*, that the council had dropped its plan "after strong protests from local trade unionists".

In fact, the vast majority of the workforce has been behind the council all of the way, and still are. Ian Lowes, chairman of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee, at the press conference following the issue of the surcharge certificates, made that clear: "There is no difference of opinion amongst the trade unions", he said "The workforce will respond to the actions of the District Auditor with industrial action".

Handsworth erupts as Tories attack inner-city councils

THE EXPLOSION of rioting and violence in Handsworth this week is a warning to the ruling class.

The policies of the Tory government are creating a powder keg with mass unemployment, social disadvantage and wholesale despair among youth, especially black youth in the inner cities. Yet the Tories are determined to cut more jobs and services provided by local councils and to punish those who have made a stand.

Two authorities with some of the greatest social problems, Lambeth and Liverpool, are facing a legal blitzkrieg for defying government policy. Liverpool has been singled out especially because of the victory it achieved over the hapless Patrick Jenkin, Environment Minister in 1984.

The simultaneous issues of surcharge certificates by the District Auditors in Lambeth and Liverpool, clearly a government decision, marks the end of the 'phony' war with these Labour councillors.

The 81 councillors involved are in the front line of the defence of jobs and services, not only in their own cities, but on behalf of all workers. If the Audit Commission is allowed to get away with its political attack on these councillors, it could signal a large-scale legal assault on hundreds of other Labour councillors who delayed setting a rate this year.

The courageous stand of the Liverpool and Lambeth councillors must be applauded by the whole labour movement. They have been prepared to put their own livelihoods on the line in the interests of the workers they represent. What a contrast to the self-seekers and careerists who so often influenced local government, even within the Labour Party in the past.

Leaders at last

The vast majority of workers will welcome the fact that 'at last' the Labour Party has leaders, albeit at a local level, who are prepared to show the same determination to fight for their class as Thatcher is to fight for hers.

But the answer of the Liverpool Labour movement to the provocation of the Tories will not be the blind and destructive violence seen in Handsworth, or the 'mayhem' predicted by Liberal MP David Alton. It will be an organised and disciplined response, and on a massive scale.

At every stage of the struggle Liverpool council have taken the council workforce and the workers of the city with them. All the other 'rebel' councils together have

not organised the same number of estate meetings, working place meetings or mass demonstrations in the last two years.

The Liverpool Joint Shop Stewards Committee have already declared their support for the council by calling a city-wide general strike on September 25, including the private sector. This action must be backed up by support nationally. The National Local Authority Co-ordinating committee, representing workers in over 60 authorities must now begin to campaign nationally. The rally in Liverpool on September 21 must become a national focal point for a campaign including local authority trade unions and district Labour parties.

David Blunkett, chairman of the Labour Party NEC local government committee, has declared his support for the councillors. But the full NEC must also respond immediately, to give concrete support and a cast-iron assurance that any surcharge be reimbursed and disqualifications lifted by an incoming Labour Government.

The last Labour Party conference passed two resolutions dealing with the fight put up by Liverpool council and one specifically called for support for 'any councils which are forced to break the law as a result of the Tory Government policies.'

That resolution must be the starting of a massive Labour Party and trade union campaign behind the threatened councillors, a campaign that will use the enormous authority of the Party nationally and in local government, to force the Tories to back down from their attack on these councillors.

Expulsions a threat to party unity

THE OUTBREAK of attacks on *Militant* and the ideas of Marxism continue from pockets of right-wing support in the Labour Party up and down the country.

Militant supporters have been unceremoniously expelled or disciplined through unconstitutional methods, its ideas distorted or misrepresented and in one recent case *Militant* supporters have suffered physical assault. (See below). Rarely are the attacks on *Militant* made through the traditional methods of debate and discussion in the movement. Often they are backed up by scurrilous lies in the Tory press.

Conference

All this is taking place in the lead up to Labour's national conference. An exposé of these attempts to club socialist ideas out of the Party will do enormous damage to Labour in the public eye—for which the right wing must be held wholly responsible. Now is the time, with the Tories' support dwindling, to catch the sympathy of workers with Labour's traditional socialist backbone and to bury the bureaucratic stifling of socialist ideas.

Bridgend

★ Bridgend branch Labour Party in South Wales has passed a resolution recognising that "party unity around socialist policies is an essential condition for the defeat of the Thatcher government." It calls for an end to witch-hunts and for the disbanding of the misnamed Appeals and Mediation Committee which has previously initiated disciplinary hearings leading to subsequent expulsions, often on very flimsy evidence.

Ray Powell, right wing

MP for neighbouring Ogmores Constituency, and prime mover of the attempts to remove *Militant* supporter Chris Peace from the Wales Region Executive is a member of the Bridgend branch.

Powell was quoted in the *Western Mail* urging members to attend the branch to "ensure that the right and proper decision is taken" and to prevent organisations using the party for the "furtherance of their own isolated and political opinions." But it's Powell's political opinions which are becoming isolated as the passing of this resolution shows.

The resolution will now go to the Bridgend Constituency Labour Party which is a marginal seat won from Labour in the 1983 election, when the attacks on *Militant* within the party nationally were partly responsible for Labour's defeat.

Wright's diversion

★ George Wright, Regional secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union in Wales, and another fierce advocate of taking organisational action against *Militant*, has now proposed a referendum of all party members in Wales because of what he calls doubt in the minds of party members over the position of the *Militant* tendency and the Labour Party.

Wright has now put forward these proposals because the TGWU in Wales is out of step with the union's national policy of opposition to witch-hunts. Socialists in the movement have long been opposed to all-member referendums because they are less democratic than decisions being taken in the ordinary party meetings when all sides

of the issue can be fully debated, without the interference of the Tory press and other outside agencies.

Apart from this such a referendum would be expensive and totally unnecessary diversion from the real task of fighting the Tories.

Peace returns

★ *Militant* supporter Chris Peace will be attending the next meeting of the Labour Party Wales Executive Committee on 16 September despite the fact that the right-wing ruling majority on the committee voted to exclude him from all meetings.

Peace comments: "The regional organiser made it clear at the time that the decision to exclude me was unconstitutional and this has since been confirmed by David Hughes, the Labour Party's National Agent. I therefore still consider myself a full member of that committee. After all I was voted onto that committee from South Wales Constituency section with more votes than any of the other eight delegates elected in that section. The rank and file put me there and in a democratic party it is not the place of a few right-wing bureaucrats to overrule that vote".

Witch-hunt

The attempts to remove Peace from the Welsh executive have been seen in Wales by rank and file Labour Party and trade union members as part of an increasing witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters in the party in Wales. Reaction has been one of outright anger with a flood of resolutions and letters of protest being sent to the Labour Party in



Militant supporters at Labour Party conference last year. Both Labour's national executive and local right wing parties have distorted the decisions of conference as an excuse to attack *Militant*.

Wales.

Peace has been given the full backing of the South Wales NUM executive council, the Campaign Group of MPs, his own constituency, and many other bodies in the labour and trade union movement. Last week Cardiff City District Labour Party voted by a two to one majority to back Peace and censor those executive members who voted for his expulsion.

Applications for delegates' credentials are still pouring in for the **Wales Labour Unity Conference** which has been called to express rank and file opposition to witch-hunts. The conference will call for party unity around socialist policies to get on with the real job of returning a Labour government at the earliest opportunity.

Speakers include Terry Fields MP, Derek Hatton, Deputy Leader of Liverpool City Council, Chris Peace and Tony Wedlake, Labour Party Young Socialists National Committee.

Applications for credentials have been received from CLP's Labour Party branches, Women's Sections, LPYS's, Socialist Education Associations, the Wales Organisation of Labour Students and branches of the NUM and TGWU, AUEW and GMBATU.

Peace commented: "Support for this conference shows that Labour Party

members in Wales don't want a purge of socialists from the party. It is suicidal to turn on socialists in the party when the real enemies are the Tories and the rotten system they represent."

Wales Labour Unity Conference
5 October, 11.00am
Temple of Peace,
Cathays Park, Cardiff
Credentials £2, from:
21 Manor Street, Heath,
Cardiff

Lobby of the Wales Region Executive meeting. All urged to come! Monday 16 September, Transport House, Cathedral Road, Cardiff, at 1pm.

Assault

★ *MILITANT* SUPPORTER Laura White has been assaulted by a right-wing Labour councillor after a Labour Party meeting held at Wrekin District Council headquarters on Monday 2 September.

Councillor Herbie Hirst verbally abused White and grabbed her by the arm, scratched her and forcibly took her copies of *Militant* which she was selling.

Her brother, councillor Laurence White, also selling *Militant*, came to assist her and was pushed to the ground and invited to 'step outside'. Councillor White

refused which prompted Councillor Hirst to call him a 'jerry and a woman.'

Previously *Militant* supporters had been told to sell outside the meeting by the regional party organiser. They did so, although they complained at this bureaucratic demand. The matter will be raised at the Regional Executive Committee and resolutions of protests are being planned.

Faversham

★ *THREE MILITANT* supporters threatened with expulsion from Faversham Labour Party will put their case to the party's general management committee on 20 September.

The expulsions have been called for by the Sittingbourne branch despite the fact that none of the three, Malcolm Young, Tom Seddon and Alan Ursell, have received any written charges required by the party's rules. Their 'crime' seems to be that of selling *Militant* on the streets. All three are prepared to answer criticisms and questions in a climate of free debate, but not on the basis of unconstitutional methods used by the movers of this witch-hunt.

By a Militant reporter

Compromise and consensus but no fighting strategy

TUC '85

IT WAS the success of the miners' resolution calling on Labour to reimburse the National Union of Mineworkers which broke through the cosy and insulated atmosphere at the 117th Trade Union Congress in Blackpool.

The decision to back the NUM broke all expectations. It was the pressure of ordinary rank and file members, expressed at their individual union conferences which made delegates sensitive to the stand they took.

Thus the bank workers' union, BIFU, and the AUT, the university teachers' union, normally expected to support the General Council, abstained on the issue as did other unions.

The ASTMS delegation voted to support the miners' motion against the advice of their general secretary Clive Jenkins. The COHSE delegation reminded its leaders of the union's position to support the miners' amnesty and voted in favour.

The long struggle of the miners has left an indelible mark on all unions and on society as a whole—it is more than likely that equally titanic battles will break out before the election of another Labour government.

The leadership of the TUC remains as it was, with only a slight change in the political spectrum. With the Communist Party-inspired split from the Broad Left in the civil service union, CPSA, Alistair Graham regains his seat on the general council as champion of the "new realism" approach—in other words collaboration with the trade union movement's enemies, the bosses and the ruling class.

The decision to back the miners underlines the weakness of the TUC leadership who had voted 25 to 16 against the NUM motion. It is shameful that the leaders haven't learned a single lesson from the miners' strike which, as Arthur Scargill was quick to point out, has been responsible for the boost in Labour's fortunes recently.

This weakness was even more apparent over the fiasco of the AUEW accepting Tory money for ballots.

Suspensions

At the start of the week it seemed likely that the AUEW would be suspended and the electricians' union, the EETPU, would follow them out of the hall. But as the TUC 'fudge machine' ground into action, and the interminable discussions took place, the possibility faded into the background.

At stake was the ability of the movement to effectively fight the Tories' anti-trade union laws.

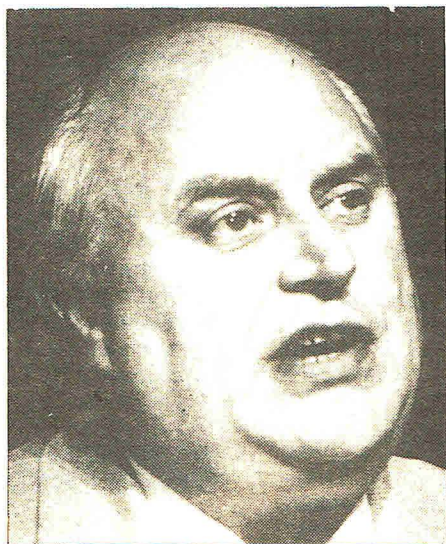
By accepting the money for ballots the AUEW has made it more difficult to mobilise the ranks against all aspects of trade union law. The compromise decision now makes it all the more difficult to prevent other unions breaking the Wembley decision and accepting the money.

It is now vital that a campaign is waged in the AUEW, spearheaded by local broad lefts and the Broad Left Organising Committee to win a 'no' vote on taking the money.

A 'yes' vote by the AUEW will mean the union being suspended pending a decision at a future special conference or at next year's annual conference when the union could be expelled.



Above: Addenbrookes Hospital strikers on strike for 11 months. Their campaign for support was restricted inside the conference hall. Below, left: Norman Willis—not prepared to use the power of the trade union movement. Right: Alistair Graham and Kate Losinska, right-wing leaders of the CPSA, the largest civil service union.



Photos: Dave Sinclair.

Any inaction by the TUC leaders will bring the TUC's authority into question and lead to a rash of applications for government money for ballots.

The success of the miners' motion was the only highlight in an otherwise dull and flat conference. Strikers from Addenbrookes Hospital, Silentnight Bedding, FTAT and Morris's in Glasgow were forbidden to take petitions or leaflets into the hall.

The serious threat to trade union strength by the signing of no-strike agreement by the electricians' union was not resolved satisfactorily. The EETPU refused to agree not to sign any more "sweetheart deals"—which should be outlawed by the TUC.

Unless the leaders are firm in upholding policy, then all other decisions by congress are worthless. The unity of the TUC is vital, but unity can't be won at any cost.

The TUC General Council has placed all its eggs in one basket—hoping for the return of a Labour government. But even to achieve this the leaders are dragging their feet. They seem incapable of mounting a campaign which could make a Labour government a reality in the near future.

The whole movement must be armed with a political programme of full employment, renationalisation of all assets robbed by the Tories and the nationalisation under workers' control of all the major monopolies, the cornerstones of the economy.

A motion was carried calling for a review of the policy on nationalisation under the guise that it

is 'unpopular', and congress was asked to renege on previous promises including that of renationalisation of assets sold off by the Tories. But there was no proposal to campaign for a programme of nationalisation under democratic control, which could win immense popularity as the only means of eliminating mass unemployment.

Incomes

Finally Congress agreed to a 'pact' between Labour and the TUC which excluded a formal agreement on incomes policy. However, David Basnett's introduction to the General Council's report of the economic committee included the statement: "Our objective is a government which plans on the basis of consensus... then from the trade union movement let us say income determination must have its place in that process of agreed planning". This shows that a form of incomes policy is being considered by some leaders.

However, the working class in Britain, from past experience will have no truck with any form of incomes policy, which inevitably would mean the holding down of wages, no matter what dressing up it gets from the next Labour government.

The TUC's slogan of a new partnership and a new Britain also implies a consensus with the bosses to 'plan' the economy. This is proposed at a time of increasingly bitter class war, waged by the bosses to drive down wages. There can be no planning unless industry is under

the control of the working class.

It is utterly utopian for Willis to say that because the employers have the 'power and the money'—'they have the responsibility too.' They have responsibility to their shareholders and the profit system they defend.

The TUC leaders are at the head of a mighty force but they are terrified of using it, and bring the working class to power.

Activists can be left with no doubt that the TUC needs to be changed from top to bottom. The campaign to transform the leadership of the trade union movement must be carried out by building active broad lefts in every union. The times when a few crumbs could be scraped from the table during the post-war boom are now over. In the new climate of economic recession the trade unions have to fight for every gain that was made in those years.

The defeats of recent years involving ASLEF, the NGA and GCHQ will be repeated again unless the TUC drops its spineless approach of 'new realism' and takes up a fighting, socialist programme.

The miners showed that workers are prepared to struggle if they are given a lead but their fight also made it clear that no battles can be won unless they receive the active backing of the whole movement. As Engels once said: "There is no power is the world which, for a day, could resist the British working class organised as a body".

By Bill Boyle

Best fringe meeting at Congress

THE MILITANT Readers' Meeting this year reflected the reality of the class struggle (in a way the Trade Union Congress never could).

With Chris Herriot, a sacked miner. Gerry Dominey expelled member of the IOW Labour Party, a striker from 'Silentnight' and Derek Hatton, all speaking on their various battles, it showed clearly the need for bold leadership. Derek made the point that the Liverpool campaign had won many workers to its side. Peter Jarvis then spoke on the lessons of the congress and the desperate attempts to find unity. He said that the unity that had been achieved was a false unity and that there was no willingness for a real fight by the leaders.

This opening was followed by excellent contributions from the floor, especially one by Sylvia from Addenbridge (COHSE), who had been standing on the picket line for 11 months. It brought tears to your eyes when she described how the strength of our class could be used.

A further indication of the determination of the Marxists to succeed was shown by the collection of £580 from 70 people. All agreed it was one of the best meetings held at Congress.

By a Militant reporter

Strikers left out in the cold

YES SECURITY was certainly tight at this year's Trade Union Congress. It was easier for a member of the Special Branch to gain entry than an ordinary trade union member. The stewards stuck vigorously to their tasks, weeding out dangerous explosive literature, like petitions and leaflets from Addenbrookes Hospital strikers on strike for 11 months, which might subvert the delegates. Anyone with a bomb would have got in easily.

The purpose of this exercise, it seems, was to allow the union leaders to stand unmolested at the bars downing large quantities of their members' subs in the form of beer and spirits, carried on into the evening with lavish free beans laid on by some of the unions. Of course the union leaders keep in touch with working class life!

Yet while the Tory press were given all the facilities they needed and set up their stalls inside the hall, strikers on strike for months, sacked miners, and socialists who sold *Militant* were all left out in the cold.

By Peter Jarvis

FIghting FUND

This week
£1512

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London South East	334		2100
2 London East	449		3250
3 Scotland West	488		3750
4 Wales West	344		2950
5 London West	274		2650
6 London South West	117		1200
7 Southern	538		5400
8 Lancashire	100		1300
9 Eastern	241		3500
10 East Midlands	222		3050
11 Merseyside	394		6550
12 Northern	298		4750
13 Manchester	134		2850
14 Yorkshire	303		5800
15 Humberside	74		2100
16 Scotland East	113		3150
17 South West	63		2150
18 West Midlands	124		4700
19 Wales East	7		3000
Others	769		5800
Total received	5387		70000

This week £335

THE SURCHARGE notices served on Liverpool councillors mean that the councillors are risking all their possessions in the fight against Thatcher. Many stand to lose homes, cars even jobs if the Tories get away with surcharging them.

But it's not only the councillors who stand to lose their money. In defence of the council and councillors the corporation workers have pledged to take strike action so losing their wages. If the council loses, of course, many thousands of those same workers will lose their jobs.

Councillors and council workers are prepared to make these sacrifices because they are sure their tactics give them the best chance of

Marxist Daily Building Fund

	£
Eastern	2996
East Midlands	3350
Humberside	1792
London NE	3524
London NW	4127
London SE	2148
London SW	2184
Lancashire	606
Manchester	2658
Merseyside	5197
Northern	3371
Scotland East	2238
Scotland West	2546
Southern	4079
South West	939
Wales East	1946
Wales West	1546
West Midlands	2118
Yorkshire	1894
National	1302
Total	50559

defeating the Tories.

All stops must be pulled out to build the only paper that supports Liverpool. Finance is needed, not to pay councillors' fines or surcharges because that won't secure the jobs of council workers but to help build the political campaign to ensure that the council is successful.

If you support *Militant's* ideas, if you want to see a

Marxist daily paper but haven't yet donated a week's wages make sure you send yours in now.

Donations this week to the Marxist Daily Building fund include £100 from a reader in Bradford and £50 from a supporter in Avon. A reader in Humberside has given us £110. Don't be left out, make sure you donate now.

ads

CLASSIFIED: 15p per word, minimum 10 words.
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per column centimetre. Three weeks for the price of two. *Militant* meeting ads free.
All advertisement copy should reach this office by Saturday.

LPYS 'Fighting for our future' T shirts (red, yellow and green on white). Available now from Lesley Phillips, 3 Alverstone House, Kennington Park Road, London SE11 5 TS.

M, L, XXL for £4 or for £4.50 get an enormous baggy one! Cheques to: 'London LPYS Campaign Fund' and add 25p p&p.

SCHOOL STUDENTS UNION: recruitment leaflets—£8 per 1,000, stencils for leaflets—70p each, posters—£5 per 50, activists pamphlets—20p each (orders over 20, 15p each), Badges—20p, Stickers—£10 per 1,000. All prices include p&p. From YTURC, c/o 109 Rannoch Road, London W6.

PARLIAMENTARY Selection: Enfield North CLP invites applications for prospective parliamentary candidate. We recognise that white middle class males are already over represented in the PLP. This equal opportunity Labour Party particularly welcomes applications from members of ethnic and minority organisations within the labour movement. Closing date for nominations, first post 6 December. All replies to Secretary, Enfield North CLP, 324 High Street, Ponders End, Enfield, Middlesex.

PUBLIC SEMINARS on Marx's Capital with authors of books on Marxism. Including: Barry Hindess, Bob Rowthorn, Peter Binns, Robin Blackburn, Sheila Rowbotham, Eric Hobsbawm, Hillel Ticktin, John Harrison, Barbara Taylor, Chris Arthur, Alex Callinicos, Simon Clarke, Hilary Wainwright, Geoff Pilling, Ben Fine, Mick Williams, Barbara Bradby, Alan Freeman, Raphael Samuel, Geoff Kay, Simon Mohun, Geoff Hodgson, Marni Hanlon, Liz Heron. Every Friday, 7.00pm. 1st Floor, Bloomsbury Tavern, 236 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2. Nearest Tube: Holborn, Tottenham Court Road. Contact: Capital Reading Seminars. Tel: 01-354 0668. Tel: 01-398 4852.

PAULINE and Pete (Leicester) proudly announce the safe arrival of their beautiful baby Sofia. The fight for socialism acquires a new urgency for us!

WANTED—FOREIGN stamps, football programmes and cigarette coupons for FF. K McKay, 5c Cedar Place, Barr Head, Glasgow G78 2JT.

"LOW WAGES? Nonsense. Anyone can manage with frugal planning and good housekeeping. Some people just don't know how lucky they are." Can't you just imagine Thatcher's condescending tones preaching to us the need for economy?

I wonder what she'll say about Lord Gowrie who resigned as Arts Minister because the salary was not enough. "£1,500 a month is not what people need for living in Central London" he says.

We should remind Lord Gowrie and the others that £1,500 per week is more than a worker on a YTS would earn in a whole year! The sooner we do away with the system that breeds creatures like this the better!

As Lord Gowrie is finding it hard to manage we cannot really expect any financial help from him. But there are many workers who are prepared to sacrifice their much needed money to finance our paper. We need your help in raising the cash to pay for the production of *Militant*.

Still this quarter the money is coming in very slowly but we expect it to pick up now that the summer holiday period has passed. Events must now be organised—parties, video nights, meals and jumble sales. And don't forget to ask other workers for a donation. If we ask and explain what the money is for then we will be able to raise the cash.

LPYS branches should follow the examples of those that have sent us donations.

Preston LPYS have sent us £3.08, Benton LPYS £31 and Cambridge and Peterborough branches £13.50. At the Southwark Youth Festival £55.60 was raised. There is plenty of scope for raising the money and plenty of workers who will help if we ask. Let's get cracking.

Donations

Donations include: Mr and Mrs Sellers, Mosborough LP £10; A Livingstone Sheffield Darnell NUR £5; E Slott, Sussex £8; I Rowe GMBATU Hackney, £100; M Mitchell Hackney, £10; T Gregory, LT Bus conductor, £1; K McCombes, NALGO Strathclyde, £4; J Mullen, Cambslang OAP, £1; B Hamilton, Bedworth NUM, £1; I Moldydzuk, Coventry UCATT, £1; T O'Brien, Hackney EETPU, £3.60; K Hutchinson Keresley miners' wife £1; Workers at Self-Changing Gears, Coventry £1.

THE SURCHARGE of the Liverpool and Lambeth councillors places a large responsibility on all of our sellers. Liverpool council is in the front line against the Tories, but they need the support of council workers throughout the country.

The best way to build that support is through sales of *Militant*, the only paper that has stood by Liverpool council. Don't leave workers who want to know what's going on to the lies in the bosses' press—let them read the truth in *Militant*. In every town *Militant* sellers must as a priority set-up sales at council depots.

Sellers in Leeds showed the way the paper should be used. They worked out a



strategy to ensure that the ideas of Marxism had a base throughout the area. Pudsey was one part of Leeds where *Militant* was not on sale so estate sales were done every week until a group of workers had been found prepared to sell our paper and fight for Marxism.

Every group of sellers

should have the same approach. The sales campaign in the Autumn is not far away. Plans should be laid and acted on until every estate, factory and council depot is a base for Marxism. Watch out for details of the Labour Party conference week sales drive, 27 September to 3 October.

Militant Meetings

ABERYSTWYTH: Weekly *Militant* discussion groups. Details, phone Alan Huyton on 615911.

GLASGOW MILITANT Public meeting. "Liverpool—How to fight the Tories." Speakers—Derek Hatton (deputy leader, Liverpool Council), Larry Flanagan (Glasgow City Councillor). Tuesday 17 September, 7.30pm, McLellan Galleries, Glasgow.

MILITANT Marxist Discussion Group meetings held monthly in Swindon. Phone Martin on 24796 for details.

NOTTINGHAM MILITANT Readers meeting: "Fight for jobs and services." Speakers—Vinnie McGrane (Liverpool Council), Graham Till (Sec NUR Midland District Council), Albert Hall institute, Derby Road, Nottingham. Thursday 12 September 7.30pm.

ORGREAVE: Sunday 15 September, 7.30pm *Militant* Miner public meeting. Speakers: Geoff Bright (Tinsely NUR and expelled member of Sheffield Attercliffe Labour Party) and Gary Ironmonger (NUM delegate, Cortonwood, personal capacity). Red Lion, Catcliffe, near Orgreave Coking plant.

THAMES VALLEY Militant public meeting: Fight the Tories, not the socialists. Speaker: Keith Dickinson. Coopers Hill Youth Centre, Bracknell. Thursday 19 September, 8pm.

MILITANT Liverpool Broad-sheet "Defend our City" 25p (including postage) Orders of 10 or more 10p each. To Circulation Department, 3-13 Hepscoth Rd. London E9 5HB.

Conference greetings

GET YOUR LPYS, trade union or Labour Party to place a greetings ad in our Labour Party Conference edition. Hurry, the closing date for copy is 18 September.

Make cheques payable to *Militant* Publications and send with your greetings to 3-13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB. Rates: 3 column centimetres £6; 6 col. cm. £12; sixteenth of a page £20.

BACK THE PAPER THAT BACKS YOU!

TROTSKY Commemoration Meeting on C-90 tape: Dave Hemson—the Struggle in South Africa. Ted Grant—the life and ideas of Trotsky. £1.25 plus 25p postage. From World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5 HB. Also available: C-90 The Rise of Bolshevism Tape 1. The 1860's to 1890's by Alan Woods. To accompany the articles in the MIR. Also £1.25 plus 25p P&P.

MILITANT FF pocket address books, Diaries 60p, plastic paper sleeves 20p, pens 20p, bookmarks 40p plus post to: Militant, 10 Rodney Court, Anson Drive, Sholing, Southampton, SO2 8RU.

WANTED: Co-op stamps. Loose, part or full books for F/F. Send to Circulation Dept, 3/13 Hepscoth Road London E9 5HB.

INTRODUCTION TO MARXISM STUDY PACK CONTENTS:

- Capitalism at an impasse
- Socialism Made Easy
- The State—A Warning
- Bureaucratism or Workers' Power
- Northern Ireland—A Marxist Analysis
- The Communist Manifesto
- The Communist Manifesto Today
- The Transitional Programme
- plus study notes

For £3 (please add £1 postage for 1 copy £2 postage for 1-5 copies £2.70 postage for 6-10 £3 postage for 11 or more)

From: WORLD SOCIALIST BOOKS, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB

NOTTS MILITANT supporters congratulate Joanne and Kevin Slattery on the birth of baby Ian.

MILITANT MINER POSTERS: "Miners unite, no splits". Bulk orders from Circulation Department, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB. Price 50p per dozen (post free).

MAKE some Fighting Fund for your area! *Militant* "No Slave Labour On YTS" stickers now available. Price: £1.50 for 100—but they must be sold for a donation! Send order to *Militant*, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB. Cheques/POs made payable to *Militant*.

Southwark festival - brilliant first

OVER 8,000 people attended Southwark council's first youth information festival, organised with the help of the Youth Trades Union Rights Campaign. Stalls offering advice and information were well used, bands played throughout the day, and speakers were given a good reception. The poor weather couldn't dampen the enthusiasm of the local youth.

THE GROUNDWORK and organising for the festival was done by a handful of new and enthusiastic Labour Party Young Socialists, with the valuable help of a Southwark Council worker.

As well as masses of administrative work a thorough campaign was mounted in the run up to the day. 30,000 leaflets and over 2,000 posters were used. Public meetings and (very) early morning council depot gate meetings, canvassing, flyposting and intensive street activity took place throughout the two weeks before the event.

The peak of the campaign was when 30 of us took a large, colourful and loud

float, with a car cavalcade following, out around the borough (picture top right).

"I think the festival was a good idea. The speakers all talked a lot of sense and I agree with them. Of course we should get rid of Thatcher".

—Christine

The whole of Southwark was blasted with news of the festival and our ideas. We jumped out at four shopping centres with petitions, stickers and megaphones, leaflets, papers and 'Mrs

Thatcher' (or someone remarkably similar). Sixty names for the LPYS were collected and nearly £30 raised for YTURC.

The comrades who organised the festival did brilliant work and the proof came on the day when easily 90 per cent of the people at the festival were local working class youth.

The success of the festival made the six weeks of seemingly endless council meetings, telephone calls, letter writing and various headaches more than worthwhile.

By Sharon Gunning
(Chair London LPYS and one of festival organisers)



Festival photos: Militant

"We wanted to go on strike on 28 April. We went into the playground and wouldn't go back into school. But our teachers made us go back in..."

"Thatcher's a dictator. She doesn't know what she's doing and won't let anyone else have a say..."

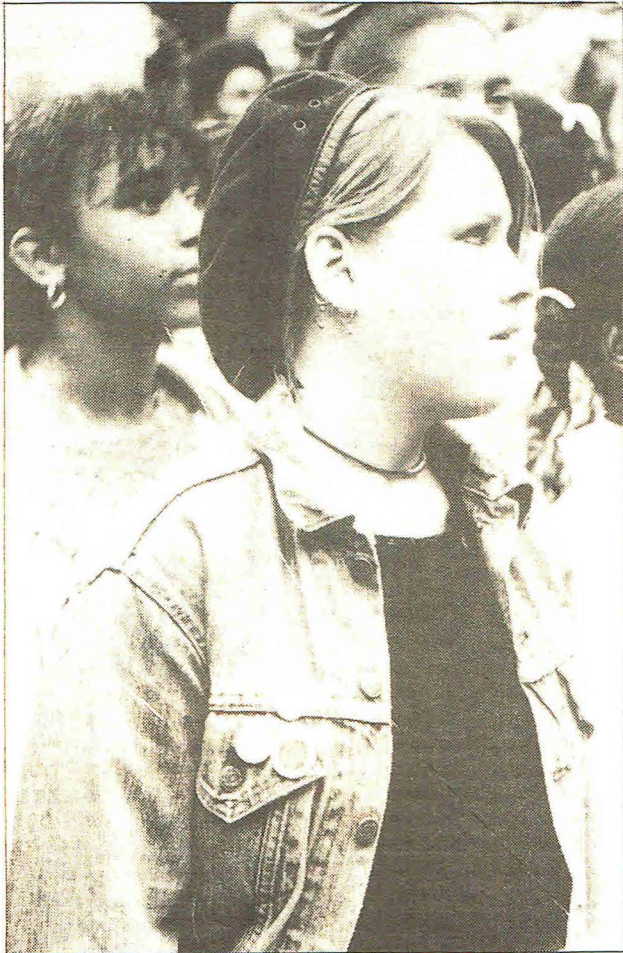
"We really hate Thatcher. School students should have their own union as no-one else listens to us..."

—Karen, Angela, Louise, Sharlene, Pauline and Jackie, school students from the Old Kent Road.

Chalice UK special poem

Chalice UK a reggae band from North London rounded off the day with a poem written for the occasion:

"Treat the youth right
Instead of giving them a fright
Treat the youth right
Or you'll be playing with dynamite
For when they go to get a job
There's someone giving them a fight
Like they want them to go and rob
But we know that ain't right
Treat the youth right
Or you'll be playing with dynamite
The boys and girls of today
Are the men and women of tomorrow
So heed these words Maggie
Or your days will be filled with sorrow
Treat the youth right"
Our love from
Chalice UK



An attentive listener to one of the speakers at the Southwark youth festival.

YS 'welcome' for Thatcher

MARYHILL YOUNG Socialists helped give Thatcher a hot welcome when she visited a Glasgow children's home on a 'secret' public relations exercise.

Her plan was to pat a few heads at the East Park home, smile for the cameras and show how 'caring' she really is. But news of the visit was leaked to the YS, and we knew how important it was to show how unwelcome she is in our community.

The visit, on Thursday 5 September, coincided with a YS drive at the local schools, so we decided to link the two up and call students out on strike against Thatcher.

LPYS members in the schools did the groundwork

by approaching their classmates and explaining why they should strike. The LPYS followed this up with a lunchtime call for a disciplined all-out protest.

Despite pressure from the headmaster and some teachers, hundreds of students answered the call.

We linked up with Maryhill Action for Benefits and a large number of pensioners. Our numbers were swelled with passers-by, women out shopping, and even some people who got off buses to join the demo.

Nearly 500 people gathered to demonstrate, a brilliant number considering there was virtually no advance notice, particularly for the school students. Our contingent was magnificent,

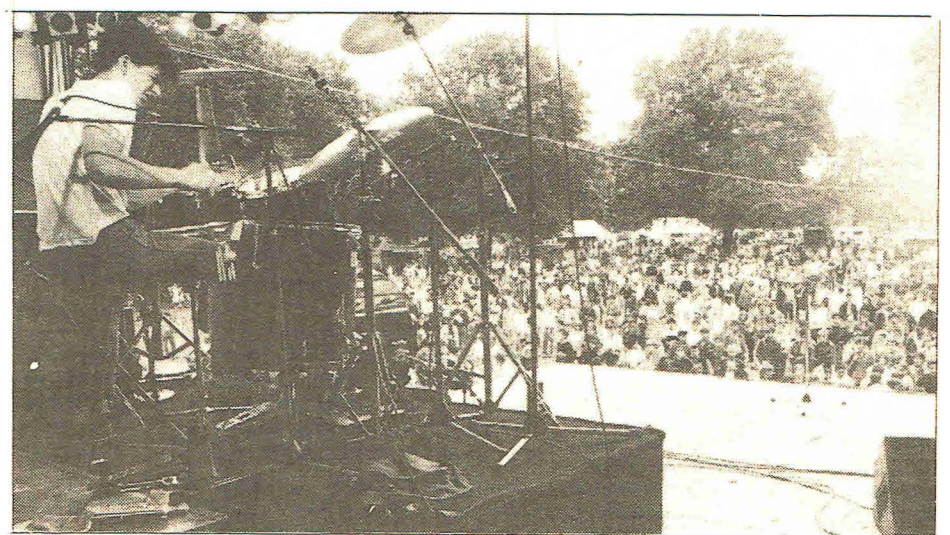
roaring our anger into the faces of the massive numbers of police.

The huge volume of shouting would have deafened Thatcher if she'd been in Aberdeen. The press could not help but give us plenty of attention. The event was reported in four news programmes.

Names were taken for the LPYS, papers were sold and cash raised for the schools students union. But best of all was the hundreds of pensioners, women with pushchairs and school students, all sporting our red 'Get Militant stickers.'

Maryhill got *Militant* and our YS is now on the map.

By Peter Barry
(Secretary Maryhill LPYS)



Moans from worried Liberal

THE FESTIVAL was a brilliant day and enjoyed by all—well almost. A certain Simon Hughes, Liberal MP (not for long) for Bermondsey was looking decidedly worried.

In the following issue of the *South London Press* he expressed his concern for the well-being of his constituents. Was it that 28 per cent of them, twice the national average, were unemployed, or that there are over 2,000 homeless families in the borough?—No. Mr Hughes said: "Pushing propaganda to school children and the vulnerable unemployed is nothing short of a scandal."

We think it is a scandal that Hughes has got nothing better to do than waste taxpayers money trying to get cheap publicity for himself. Why doesn't he try to do something positive for the youth of Bermondsey? Perhaps Bermondsey YS have the reason. Just an hour before our public debate with the Young Liberals we were told they couldn't get the numbers out to attend.

By Mark Harding
(Bermondsey LPYS)

Win FE students to Labour

THIS WEEK marks the beginning of the new term for FE students.

One third of youth between the ages of 16-18 pass through FE colleges and around 700,000 of FE students are members of the 1.2 million strong National Union of Students.

The Tories' attacks on local authority spending mean that Further Education will be the area most to lose as 60-70 per cent of local authorities' budgets is spent on further education.

Coupled with the possible future strike action by the teachers' union NAT-FHE over pay it is vital that this massive section of youth is organised by the labour and trade union movement.

Further Education

Labour Students members in Mid-Cheshire College have started the campaign already, where one member collected 51 names to join a Labour Club and has seen all the trade union representatives within the college for their support for setting up a Labour Club.

LPYS branches should follow this example and adopt a local college. Copies of *Socialist Youth* should be sold at the colleges, stalls should be set up inside or outside the college to sign people up to join FELS and the LPYS so that a Labour club can be set up.

Hold FELS public meetings within the colleges inviting your local councillor or MP to speak. College gate meetings are a good way to draw a crowd.

The student union should be approached and discussed with about adopting the FELS charter of demands, which was drawn up by 178 LP members in the FE colleges at the founding conference of FELS in November 1984.

The demands include the claim for a £30 a week minimum grant for 16-18 year olds. If a campaign by every LPYS branch was taken to get their local college to adopt the FELS charter of demands by a student union general meeting, the NUS leadership would have to recognise the support and willingness there is of FE students to fight such demands.

By Louise James
(FELS Organising Secretary)

IF THE media is to be believed then the US trade union movement is on the verge of collapse and disintegration. In fact it is the largest organised labour movement in the world and the most powerful force in US society. This does not mean, however, that there have been no setbacks over the past four to five years. ROBERT O'NEIL looks at the events of the past years and perspectives for the US trade union movement.

THE PRESENT attacks on the American trade union movement are the most ferocious since the McCarthyite period of the late 1940's. The source of the recent onslaught is the economic crisis now facing US big business.

While the US economy is still the most powerful on the planet, its advantage over its rivals has been seriously eroded. In 1950 the US accounted for 52 per cent of the world's goods and services; today the figure is 22 per cent. In 1945 the US accounted for 30 per cent of world trade; today the figure is 11 per cent.

In response to this weakened position of US capitalism as well as to the world economic crisis in general, Reagan, backed by the employers, was elected to power in 1980 on the slogan—'Make America strong again.' His strategy was to cut wages, weaken the trade unions and cut social spending. This he hoped would increase profits and investment so that US capitalism could win back its position both in home and world markets.

He smashed PATCO, the air traffic controllers' union in 1981. He moved the personnel of the National Labour Relations Board to the right.

Pressure on wages

The Supreme Court took a more openly pro-employer stand. Health and safety controls were weakened. De-regulation with its increased competition between businesses also added to the climate for cutting workers' wages. And the high dollar, up 53 per cent against other currencies from 1980 to its February 1985 high, by making imports cheaper, also added to the pressure to cut wages.

With Reagan giving the lead and setting the stage for them, the employers went on the offensive with a vengeance. 75 per cent of firms now employ union busting consultants.

Added to this was the widespread demand for concessions to be made in new contracts, even for contracts to be re-opened and concessions made by the workers. Companies filed for bankruptcy so they could legally reopen contracts and seek wage cuts, and at the same time threaten the workers with closure unless they accepted cuts. On top of this, a massive propaganda onslaught was launched to blame the rise in imports and unemployment on the level of wages.

This massive offensive of the employers and Reagan's administration undoubtedly resulted in setbacks for the working class. New contracts signed in 1984 give first year rises of 2.4 per cent. This was the lowest since records were first kept 17 years ago. Concessions were wrung from the workers in airlines, trucking, building, supermarkets, auto, engineering and steel.

One of the most dangerous of the developments in this period has been the two tier wage system. Newly hired workers in many cases are being hired at a lower rate of pay. This divides the workers and of course as more and more newer and younger workers come on at the lower rate, it will not be long before the employers demand that all should go to one rate—the lower

And as the *Wall Street Journal* (9 March 1984) said: "If another recession develops in 1985, efforts to eliminate high wages will be redoubled".

There are many examples of concessions that have been made. Workers in the American Motor Corporation, members of the Union of Auto Workers, recently signed a contract which cut 61 cents per hour off wages, nine days vacation were taken away and full-time shop stewards are to be drastically reduced. In the 1982-83 auto contracts, concessions worth \$3 billion were wrung from the workers and in the 1984 contract more concessions were forced through. Two hundred thousand teamsters recently signed a contract in which the cost of living adjustment was removed, new workers will be paid 39 per cent less and temporary workers will have a wage cut of 8.3 per cent.

In steel, centralised wage bargaining has been ended. There has been a tendency in several areas for the employers to go back to plant bargaining to divide the workers. There has also been a development away from wage rates being agreed as a norm for the industry and more based on a company by company assessment of what the management admit to being their profitability. There has also been a serious attempt to break down demarcation and job classification in the workplace. This is to get more work out of fewer workers.

So undoubtedly the US trade union movement has been on the defensive and suffered some setbacks over the 1980-85 period.

The decisive and central reason for this is the role of the national trade union leaders. It is they who are responsible. These echoed the propaganda of the employers that unless wages were cut jobs would be lost to imports. They also told organised workers in industries such as construction that wages needed to be cut to allow unionised firms to compete with non-unionised firms. When PATCO was smashed, the AFL/CIO organised no serious fightback. Reagan should have been given an ultimatum to reinstate all the workers or the country would be brought to a halt by organised labour.

US Labour has traditionally grown in sudden, explosive bursts. In four years from 1936 to 1940, for example, the number of workers organised increased threefold, to 10 million. A similar explosive growth today would see union membership leap to 60 million—60 per cent of the workforce.

The union leaders instead organised the solidarity day demonstration in September 1981. This in itself was a worthwhile event but it was no substitute for industrial action and in no way did it put any serious pressure on Reagan to retreat on PATCO or any of his policies.

The solidarity day demonstration was a very good success, showing the willingness of the workers to fight back. But as soon as it was over the union leaders, instead of organising nationwide in a real fightback, turned all their resources, including \$20 million, and the attention of the activists to elect right-wing Democrat Mondale as President. He promised to raise workers' taxes and naturally lost the election.

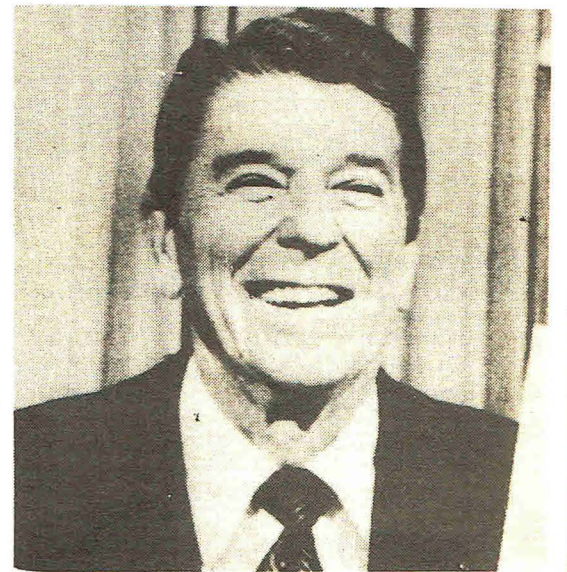
This lack of fightback by the leaders, their refusal to organise the

US Trade uni

Set-backs will gi to new offensive



George Meany, former head of the AFL-CIO trade union federation. He once boasted, "I never went on strike in my life. I never ordered anyone else to run a strike in my life, I never had anything to do with a picket line..."



When Reagan came to power in 1980 one in every ten Americans lived in poverty, now it is one in six.

enormous resources of the trade union movement, inevitably had an effect on the rank and file. A certain caution began to develop. Workers could see that Reagan and the employers meant business. Also from 1980-82, unemployment rose sharply and job security became an important issue in workers' minds. Many workers therefore considered carefully before going into a serious battle with the new hard-nosed attitude of the employers and government when the union leaders had obviously crumpled in the face of the attack. With a lead from the union leaders the situation would have been entirely different and the

of the number of workers on strike at one time and in one co-ordinated struggle. In the Caterpillar strike stretching for 205 days from 1982-83, 21,000 workers were out and were victorious in winning concessions. Chrysler workers in Ohio struck and won back many concessions. Continental Airlines were struck and, most significant in some ways, the Greyhound workers struck in November 1983 against demands for concessions of up to 30 per cent.

This strike which, like AT&T and Continental, was nationwide, showed the enormous determination of the workers. Mass picketing took place and violent confrontation erupted. At the funeral of a striker killed by a scab bus, rifle shots were fired over the grave. The workers clearly saw the strike as a war. Other workers began to mobilise around the Greyhound workers with mass demonstrations in Boston and elsewhere. Once again the union leaders capitulated and held vote after vote until they got the result they wanted, which was to end the strike by making concessions. 1984 saw fewer strikes such as these although 91,000 General Motor workers struck in the second half of the year.

According to the Bureau of Labour Statistics strikes are at their lowest level for 40 years. So it is clear that the movement has been pushed onto the retreat in the past few years. However, this must not be exaggerated and must also be put in perspective. Despite the events of recent years, the fundamental strength of the trade unions is still intact.

Much attention is given to the fall in the percentage of workers organised. However the number of workers organised, at 18.5 million, while less than the peak of 22 million in the mid-1970's, is more than the 15 million members the AFL/CIO had when they

amalgamated in 1955. 1.4 million union members have been lost through closures in manufacturing industry. The percentage organised in manufacturing industries has gone down from 32 per cent to 27 per cent. This is a small decline compared to the fall from four million to 2.6 million from 1920 to 1934, and it must be remembered that union membership rose to 10 million by 1940 and 15 million by 1945—an increase of more than five times in 11 years.

So the fall in union membership does not reflect any significant anti-trade union mood amongst workers. In fact in the service sector union membership went from four to seven million in the 1970's and it is the service sector which is growing most rapidly in the American economy at present.

A similar development to that which has been taken place in the US over the last five years has been taking place in most of Western Europe. Union membership has fallen in Britain, the Netherlands, West Germany, Sweden, Spain and France.

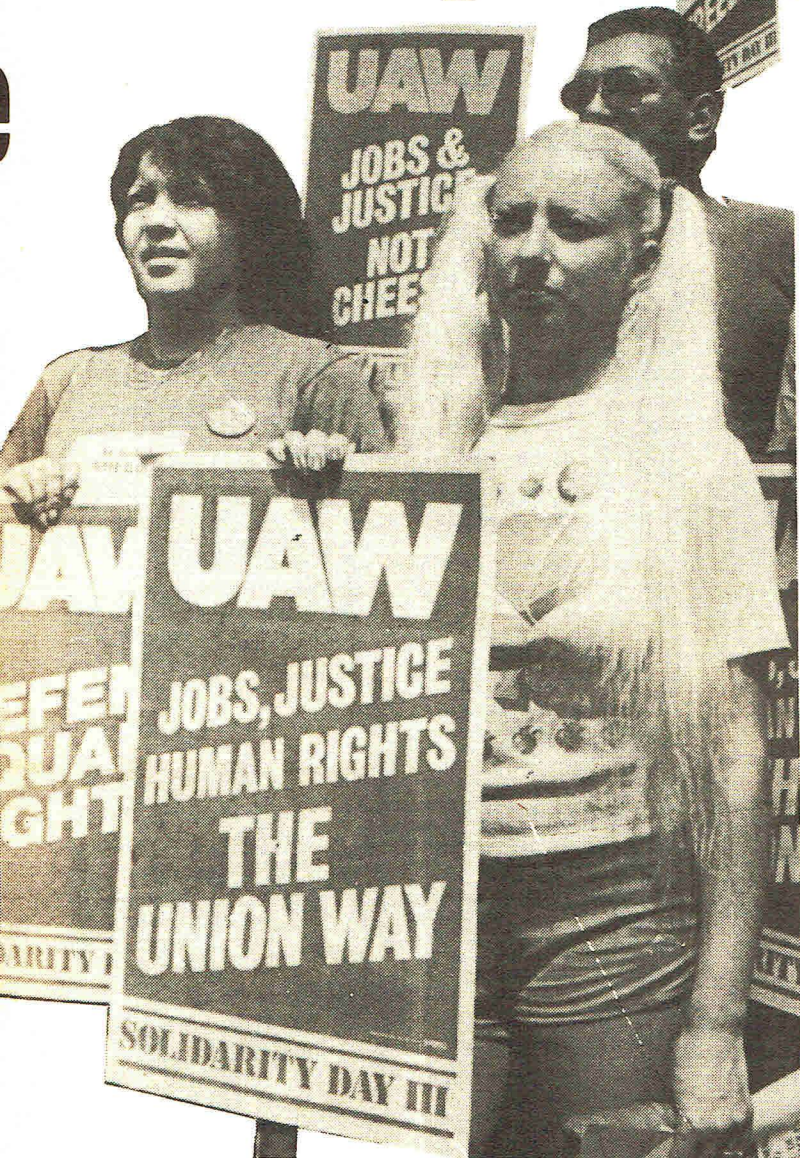
Record budget deficit

The new recession will see an intensification of the attacks on labour. Reagan's economic policies have been a disaster for US capitalism. The fireworks of the upswing have died down. This upswing was mainly based on increased government spending on arms—that is the production of scrap metal—and was financed by sucking in the rest of the capitalist world's savings. Far from making the US strong again, Reagan has presided over a record budget deficit, a record trade deficit, and a record current account deficit. The US in 1985 will become a net debtor nation for the first time since 1914.

Reagan will be seen as the presi-

ions

ve way



Members of the UAW on strike. In spite of the boom, conditions in the factories remain extremely dangerous and the workloads very heavy. More auto workers were killed and injured every year on the job than soldiers were killed in any year of the Vietnam war.

dent of the deficits. He has not made the US strong again but has weakened US capitalism still further and pushed it into indebtedness. So as the new recession unfolds later this year or in 1986 the employers and Reagan will demand the present concessions be made permanent and even further cuts made in living standards. The lower wage rates of the newly-hired will be imposed on all, the attacks of the past five years will be seen as mild in comparison. Unemployment also will probably rise to 11-12 per cent or more.

The new idea of sections of US big business that it can find a way out through the work practices of the Japanese employers, as now being tried by General Motors in the Saturn Project are illusions. The Japanese 'miracle' unfolded in the years of the post war boom and after the serious weakening of the Japanese unions in the late 1940's under McArthur. The boom is over on a world scale and will not be repeated and the US unions are still powerful.

The employee stock ownership plans will show no way out either. Workers will see less and less reason to take over the stocks of loss-making companies threatened with closure. Elected workers on the boards of companies will also be seen to be just a way for the bosses to cover up their own

mistakes by involving workers' representatives in decisions which cut workers' standards. US capitalism will find the only way will be the road of confrontation as in the pre war period.

'Enough is enough'

The working class will also come to realise this. The setbacks of the past five years have not gone unnoticed by workers. New and more militant conclusions are being drawn by many. When the new recession hits many workers will say: 'We made all these concessions, and for what? Unemployment will be the highest post-war and the economy will be in recession. Workers will begin to say 'enough is enough'.

An indication of the future process can be seen in the present strike at Wheeling Pittsburg. This is the first big strike in US steel for 27 years. It is against the demands of the bosses for 30 per cent wage and benefits cuts. In the past five years the workforce has been cut by one third and wage concessions to the value of \$80 million have been given to the employers. Now the attitude is 'enough is enough'. The workers' union, the United Steelworkers, has \$200 million in the strike fund. In US history some



The Greyhound strike and other struggles shows the determination that US workers will show in future conflicts.

of the most spectacular strikes came after many concessions were made by the workers, and the bosses, not satisfied, continued to demand more and more.

The workers' rage was fuelled by the concessions they had already made, as well as their inability to live if they made more. With their backs to the wall they moved into a massive offensive. At some stage in the future this process will develop amongst large layers of workers and the fightback will begin.

Along with this strike, there are the recent and present strikes against concession demands at Western Union (6,500 workers), Massey Coal in West Virginia, (1,500 out for nine months and a scab driver killed by a sniper), 21,000 teamsters who haul new cars from the auto industry to the dealers are on strike, and 25,000 New York hotel workers at 53 hotels were also out for 27 days and won a 6.5 per cent pay rise and 30 per cent over five years. These strikes show the determination of the workers is hardening, that the strength of US labour is still intact. The future will see bitter defensive battles against closures and cut-backs.

Already statistics show that strikes are becoming more drawn out and bitter.

Strikes like Greyhound will become more widespread and more long-lasting. They will develop like the British miners' strike which lasted a year, with the workers getting no strike pay but living on the support given by the labour movement in Britain and abroad. Developments such as the partial general strike which took place in British Columbia in November 1983, or the partial general strikes which have erupted in Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Netherlands Spain and the 35-hour week strike in Germany, will also be on the agenda. Such developments may come in the coming recession. This is one possibility. The spread of strikes at present may indicate this.

However, it is also possible, given the present leadership of the trade union movement at national level, and the lack of a nationally co-ordinated shop stewards movement with a clear cut alternative, and the rise in unemployment to 12 per cent or more, that the full power of organised labour may not move into action until the new upswing takes place.

Whenever it comes, in the coming recession or in the following upswing, the US working class will move onto the offensive. Given this, one aspect of the US labour

movement should be considered. Workers in US picket lines are much quicker to raise the idea of all-out national action than workers in many other industrial countries. "Everybody should come out, this is the way to win" is a common attitude, in other words a *general strike*. This is probably closer to the surface in the US given the lack of a labour party, as workers see no political alternative and therefore look to how to mobilise their industrial power to the limit.

Of course not all the battles will be victorious. The role of the union leaders is of vital importance. They are incapable of organising a serious battle. This will mean many defeats but that is the price that will have to be paid for the right wing leaders' control over the trade union movement. However, out of these battles and defeats will rise a more hardened and conscious working class which will see the need to organise seriously for the battle with the employers. Out of this process will also emerge a new and fighting leadership with a clear programme to lead the movement.



Jack Presser, President of the Teamsters Union and reported to be an FBI informant, earns \$534,143 a year.

However, it is not only the processes within organised labour that will be important in the coming period. The tendency will also be for unorganised labour to become organised. Unionised workers wages are 30 per cent higher than non-union.

During the boom, unions raised wages for the organised and at the same time pulled up the wages of the unorganised, so many unorganised workers saw no need to join a union. At the same time the union leaders made no serious effort to organise the unorganised.

The budget of the AFL-CIO in this period saw 25 per cent spent on foreign affairs—helping drive out socialist ideas from organised labour in Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe—and only three per cent on organising in the US.

If the union leaders had taken their huge resources and explained how wages were 30 per cent higher with unions, and organised the unorganised, there would have been 50 per cent and more organised in unions over the boom years.

The present situation, however, cannot continue. The US had the lowest percentage of workers organised of any of the advanced industrial countries. In Japan it is 29 per cent, in Britain and West Germany 40-50 per cent, and in Sweden 90 per cent.

Under the impact of the crisis great new organising drives will erupt.

Historic movement

The shift of industry to the so-called 'right-to-work states' with stronger anti-union laws will not halt this development. In fact by setting up large plants and bringing together large numbers of workers in these states, this development will add to the widespread nature of the movement to organise once it begins to develop.

The US working class have won a lot in the past 40-50 years. They will struggle before they give it up. In the course of this struggle they will have no choice but to organise. Union membership will explode to 30, 40, 50 per cent of the workforce and more, as this elemental movement unfolds. The white workers, black workers, Latino workers, the young, the old, the blue collar and white collar, all will be affected by this movement.

The enormous energy and strength of this movement will produce an historic shift in class forces in the USA, comparable to the War of Independence, the civil war and the struggles around the building of the CIO in the 1930s.

This movement to organise will tend to merge with movements of already organised labour and will represent the next great decisive shift in US society. While US direct military involvement in Central America could temporarily delay this process, or a 1929-type collapse could possibly stun the working class temporarily, this process of the transformation of the US working class is inevitably rooted in the developing economic crisis of US capitalism.

Continued on page 10

1934 Teamsters' strike

Captain of the pickets

MARXISM, IT has been said, is the generalised experience of the working class. The Militant Rally annually commemorates the struggles and experiences of workers past and present and draws all the lessons.

Harry De Boer is a human reminder of America's militant working class tradition. He was a picket captain in the great Teamster strike in Minneapolis in 1934. Farrell Dobbs' book "Teamster Rebellion" relates Harry's role in this battle between newly organised workers and the bosses and their police:

"I heard some strikers talking excitedly about cruising pickets sweeping through the north side of town. 'A guy named Harry De Boer is leading them' one said, 'they sure are hell on wheels.' This picketing technique, known at the time as cruising picket squads, was a forerunner of the flying squads later made famous by the auto workers."

These pickets were very successful, so much so that a concerted scabbing operation was organised. The first attempt was defeated by the union.

The union leadership expected another strikebreaking move on Friday, most likely in the wholesale grocery area of the market. Since plenty of pickets were available and some activity would be good for their morale—things having been rather quiet—large numbers were assigned early in the morning to patrol the district. Harry De Boer was in command of the operations.

Before long the police were on the prod, their change in attitude coinciding with unusual activity at Slocum-Bergen, a wholesale grocery house near Third Street and Sixth Avenue North. It appeared that an

attempt was going to be made to carry out a delivery by truck.

The new development was reported to strike headquarters and reinforcements were sent up to the scene, bringing the picket force up to about 5,000. All the strikers were completely unarmed. We knew we couldn't challenge the riot guns, and it was our intention to conduct a peaceful mass protest against the anticipated strike breaking move...

A foot patrol of some fifty cops was on the scene, carrying riot guns as well as service revolvers and clubs. Around 2pm they became quite tense, and within a few minutes a scab truck pulled up to the Slocum-Bergen loading dock. It was escorted by about 100 more cops in squad cars, riot guns sticking out of the car windows like quills on a porcupine.

Police fired to kill

The truck had wire mesh around the cab and the licence plates had been removed. A few small cartons of groceries were loaded onto it, the pickets jeering the scabs doing the rotten job. Then the fink rig pulled away from the dock and started up the street. It was followed by a picket truck, an open-bodied vehicle of the type used for dirt hauling, in which nine or ten unarmed pickets were standing.

Suddenly, without any warning whatever, the cops opened fire on the picket truck, and they shot to kill.

In a matter of seconds two pickets lay motionless on the floor of the bullet-riddled truck. Other wounded either fell to the street, or tried to crawl out of the death trap as the shooting continued. From all quarters strikers rushed toward the truck to help them, advancing into the gunfire with the courage of lions.

Many were felled by the police as they stopped to pick up their injured comrades. By this time the cops had gone berserk. They were shooting in all directions, hitting most of their victims in the back as they tried to escape, and often clubbing the wounded as they fell. So wild had the firing become that a sergeant was shot by one of his own men.

The criminal nature of the police action was later attested to by a special investigating commission appointed by the governor. In its findings the commission stated: "Police took direct aim at the pickets and fired to kill...No weapons were in the possession of the pickets in the truck...At no time did pickets attack the police, and it was obvious that pickets came unprepared for such an attack."

One of the many women actively involved in the strike, in all capacities was Marvel Scholl, Dobbs quotes her description of how the wounded and dying pickets were brought back to strike headquarters.

"When the first man was carried in (by the returning pickets), foaming at the mouth, gray as cement, unconscious, someone screamed. In less time that it can be told, 47 men lay on improvised cots, their bodies riddled with bullet wounds. Action! Water, alcohol, cotton, men and women bathing horrid blue welts from which blood oozed..."

Harry De Boer lying on a cot. Angriily he ordered the attendants to 'Take care of the other guys first.' Harry had a slug in his leg, embedded in the bone just above the knee. Now the ambulances were being filled to

their doors with all the men who were able to stand. Full to the brim, they back out, one by one, until the 47 men are on their way to beds of pain and some to oblivion."

A total of sixty-seven people were wounded, over fifty of them pickets and the rest bystanders who got caught in the police fire. The overwhelming majority were shot in the back. Dr McCrimmon reported to the union that the thirty-four men on whom he performed surgery carried 160 pieces of lead in their bodies. Those most gravely injured were Henry Ness, John Belor and Otis Shugren. Of the three only Shugren survived.

Volunteers

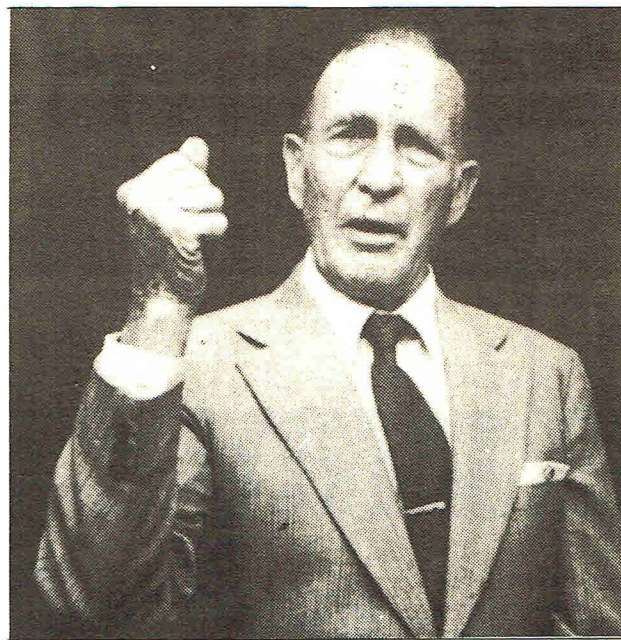
There could have easily been more fatalities, except for the promptness with which Dr JA Enright and Dr BI Salterman stepped in to help Dr McCrimmon after the tragedy. Many people came forward to volunteer blood transfusions.

No less than twenty-five registered nurses made themselves available without pay for emergency calls twenty-four hours a day. The women's auxiliary set up a special committee to make daily rounds of the hospitals, assisting the wounded.

...Harry De Boer later described his situation, 'I wound up with forty-five pounds of weights hanging on my leg and guards to see that I didn't run away!' Once the surgery was over and his long convalescence began, Harry had a lot of unoccupied time on his hands.

Oscar Coover, Sr. brought him volume one of Marx's basic work *Capital* to read. It's hefty to handle when lying on one's back, and besides Harry wasn't much of a reading man at the time. He preferred to talk politics with those he respected and he did a lot of thinking..."

From then on Harry became a committed Marxist. Hear Harry De Boer at the rally on 3 November—get your ticket now!



Harry De Boer last year.



Police firing on the picket truck.



Teamsters union members place a memorial wreath and plaque for murdered striker Henry Ness over strike HQ entrance.

Teamster Rebellion by Farrell Dobbs, (£3.95 + 95p Post & Package) available from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoth Road London E9 5HB.

US trade unions (Continued from centre pages)

Such a movement will take place with the energy and speed of the growth of the CIO in the 1930s. Mass nationwide occupations, area and city general strikes, conflict with the employers and the state: these will be the features of the coming movement. As the struggle unfolds, the old conservative leaders will be exposed and brushed aside and new fighting leaders will be pushed up. At the same time the old ideas, which have taken root amongst sections of the working class, that capitalism can solve the problems of their daily lives will also be burnt out of their consciousness.

During the years of boom and relative quiet between the classes in the US many workers did not see the need to build unions and many workers in unions did not see the need to be active

in them. This was what allowed the right-wing leaders to seize control and also gave the opportunity for gangster elements to gain a foothold in many unions. This is of course exaggerated by the privately owned media as a way to put unorganised workers off joining trade unions. But under the economic crisis and the movement of workers into unions and the activation of workers already in the unions, they will be cleaned out and won back to the control of the rank and file themselves.

Clear programme

The future for organised labour in the US is therefore one of great upheavals and instability, of great battles of the organised to fight back and transform their organisations and of the

unorganised to organise.

For this transformed labour movement, success or failure will be determined by whether or not it can develop a clear programme to change society. The task will be to identify the source of the problems of the US working class. This is the private ownership of the big corporations and banks which constitute a dictatorship over the lives of American workers. The US labour movement must have as its objective decent wages, shorter hours, secure and safe employment, but must see that these basics for a decent life can only be won if the huge corporations are taken from private hands and nationalised under democratic workers' control and management.

The US trade union movement will also see that struggles cannot be won by in-

dustrial action alone. A political arm is necessary. The Democratic Party is like the Republican Party—a party of big business. The unions will break from the Democrats and form a Labor Party.

Labor Party

The coming period will see an expanded, radicalised and democratised trade union movement and a powerful labor party based on it.

As this development takes shape the US working class will decisively take its place as the most powerful working class in the capitalist world. It will be in a position to strike at the heart of the most powerful capitalist class in the world and so open the way for the socialist transformation of the entire planet.



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ANC needs a clear strategy

A PRESS statement from *Inqaba Ya Basebenzi*, journal of the Marxist Workers Tendency of the African National Congress (ANC) takes up a broadcast by ANC's Radio Freedom based in Addis Ababa, on 2 September.

The broadcast called on ANC forces in South Africa to shatter the complacency of the whites and let them feel the "flames of revolution" by taking the battle "right into their homes, kitchens and bedrooms."

The Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC regrets and deplors this call for indiscriminate killing of whites and appeals to the ANC leadership to repudiate the broadcast.

The murderous atrocities of the apartheid regime, the intolerable suffering inflicted on black people; the cruelty and arrogance of the oppressors—all necessitate a firm revolutionary response. The peaceful elimination of apartheid by "reform" is impossible: it has to be forcibly overturned. The preparation and use of arms in the struggle in South Africa is necessary and inevitable.

But the strategy and tactics of the movement must be clear-headed. Especially now when the state is trying savagely to crush and demoralise the black youth and workers and regain a grip on events, blind acts of despair can only weaken the movement and strengthen white reaction.

Mass movement

The recent attack on white motorists near Duncan Village and the attack on the suburb of Amalinda; the clash between black youth and armed white residents in the working-class suburb of Kraaifontein—these are clear examples of counter-productive actions playing directly into the hands of the regime.

We must in no way repeat the disastrous methods of Poqo in the early 1960s, whose desperate and futile acts of violence against ordinary white people contributed to the crushing of

the movement by reaction at that time.

The heroism and readiness especially of the youth provides an immense reservoir of strength for the revolution. But the responsibility of the ANC is to weld together on that basis a self-disciplined mass movement, guided by a clear understanding of its tasks. This is far more difficult and demanding for a leadership than to broadcast calls for bloodshed in frenzied tones.

There is no short cut possible in South Africa. Power cannot be 'seized' immediately or in the short term. The relationship of forces is still heavily weighted in favour of the ruling class and the state. That cannot be overcome by sheer mass heroism or all-out attack.

The formidable task facing our movement in South Africa is to unite all struggles of the black people into an ever more powerful mass movement, skilfully divide the whites, split the forces of the state, cripple the ruling class, and so prepare the overthrow of the system. The tactics advocated in the ANC broadcast will have exactly the opposite effect.

They will divide and demoralise the oppressed people, unite whites into a ferocious bloc of racist reaction the like of which has not been seen, strengthen the state forces, and bring down ever more savage attacks on black communities, youth organisations and trade unions.

The way forward is to systematically build the strength of the mass movement round the growing power of the organised black working class, uniting the militant youth and workers in well-planned nationwide action campaigns against apartheid and capitalism.

There is no way at this stage to effectively take the



Black workers and youth hatred of the murderous apartheid regime has grown in recent years. A strategy to end the system is needed.

struggle beyond the flaming township streets and into the camp of the oppressors.

A clear class appeal to white workers and middle-class people, themselves in various ways exploited and used by the system, must be patiently maintained at all times. Only by this route, long and hard as it is, will the regime be weakened to the point where it can be overthrown by an armed insurrection of the black working people.

No time to lose

What the mass movement needs above all is a clear sense of direction from its leadership. Incredibly, however, the ANC is presently combining calls for bloody attacks against ordinary white people with reported preparations to receive a delegation of South Africa's white monopoly capitalists anxious to find a basis of stability for their continued rule.

It is time for the ANC leadership to rethink fundamentally its policy, strategy and tactics for the liberation struggle in South Africa. There is not a moment to lose.

Regime bans students union

THE BANNING of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) by the apartheid government has been condemned by the Socialist Links with South African Youth Campaign (SOLSAY).

SOLSAY found out that 85 per cent of all those killed

ed and arrested over the last six weeks were between six and 25 years old. The twinning of the Labour Party Young Socialists and School Student Union branches with COSAS will now be delayed. But SOLSAY urge all Young Socialist members to pass

resolutions through their branches, and through Labour Party and trade union branches condemning the action and supporting COSAS.

Resolutions and financial help to: SOLSAY, 27 Cannon Hill Lane, London SW20.

Books on Southern Africa

Inqaba No. 16/17 with supplement on South African perspectives: *Workers revolution or racial civil war* . . . 75p
SALEP—Mineworkers direct links campaign 1985 . . . 20p
SALEP's socialist education work—why does the Labour Party NEC want to ban it? 40p
Zimbabwe Trade Unionist Defence Campaign—Jailed by Mugabe 30p

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The South African state still has the armed backing of the white population. An urgent task is to divide the whites on class lines.

London firm's golden profits

GOLD FIELDS of South Africa are one of the multinationals who threatened to sack miners who struck for a better pay deal last week.

They are part of a British multinational based in the City of London, Consolidated Gold Fields.

Consolidated owns 48 per cent of GFS, and even though it claims the Johannesburg firm is 'autonomous' the parent company's control is obvious. The gold mines provide over half the profits for the multinational, which also owns quarrying concerns like Amey Roadstone.

The main gold companies have many close links. Anglo American has a "liberal" reputation. It recognises the NUM in many mines and increased its offer to nearly the full NUM demand. But Anglo American have a 29% share in Consolidated with a number of overlapping

directorships.

Consolidated's gold mines produce an eighth of the world's total gold. Its costs are \$111 an ounce, like their wages, the lowest in the industry. With prices of \$333 an ounce, they can easily afford to pay more. Their profits went up from £90 million to £105 million last year.

Their employees are on the lowest wages in the industry, R300 (about £100) a month for a machine operator, R50 less than the average for unskilled black workers.

Tory Funds

But Consolidated Gold Fields could afford to dish out £125,000 to Tory funds between 1979 and 1982 and their own highest paid director was paid nearly £100,000 a year back in 1981.

The board of directors is almost a microcosm of the British ruling class. Company President Lord Erroll of Hale is an ex-Tory

minister, he is now chancellor to the Institute of Directors. He was formerly on the central council of the Economic League, a Tory front which specialises in information on "subversives" and blacklisting of trade union activists.

The chairman Rudolf Agnew is on Anglo-American's board. His hobbies are the World Wildlife Fund and shooting. His deputy Phillip Dunkley is a director of the multinational holding company Mitchell Cotts. His hobby is shooting.

Another marksman on the board, Peter Elton, is a director of Hill Samuel who finance many South African companies, and of British Alcan and others.

Few directors are content with just one job, so Consolidated Gold Fields have links with many different sectors of British capitalism. No wonder Britain's ruling class are so averse to action against apartheid.

On strike in Seville

SPANISH workers have been forced more and more into opposition to both the 'Socialist' Party government and the capitalist system they are upholding. An article from a Spanish correspondent describes just one of many disputes:

WORKERS from the Novalim contract cleaning company at Virgen del Rocio hospital in Seville went on strike in August to defend their jobs. The company is owned by Gerardo Martinez Retamero, the president of a famous local football team.

A local workers' leader explained that the company have not paid the workers' social security contributions (amounting to 500 million pesetas, over £2 million) for the last two years. Even though the workers have had no pay rise for 4 years the

bosses owe them 200 million pesetas.

Things got a lot worse when the Serlima company paid 650 million pesetas to take over the hospital cleaning rights. They want to sack all 560 workers then take back 413 of them. Those re-employed would lose all seniority pay, all money owed to them by Novalim and all accident pay and pension rights.

Internationalism

Workers, mainly women, found this unacceptable and took strike action. Nothing has been achieved by negotiation. They have proposed an alternative that staff should be maintained as public employees. Of course neither the hospital administration nor Serlima accept this. The bosses also don't accept the company's local agreement, only a pro-

vincial agreement paying workers 10 or 12,000 pesetas less.

Workers have held marches, demos, lock-ins and, best publicised of all, a boycott against the president of the Andalusian junta during a public commemoration ceremony. The president had to leave after only three minutes after workers frequently and angrily interrupted him.

The trade unionists think however, the most important development was the international solidarity from British and Irish delegations at the International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY) congress, all supporters of *Militant*, who presented a petition from the workers to congress. Internationalism isn't just words, but action as well.

By Agustin Romero

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism. Write to *Militant*, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB

Police intimidation

Dear Comrades,
On Tuesday 6 August, 12 members and supporters of Huddersfield CND were arrested at 2 am in the town centre whilst participating in CND's national campaign to celebrate Hiroshima day by creating whitewashed 'shadows' in public places to

symbolise the shadow effect left behind when people were vaporised by the 'A' bomb.

The participants have all been charged with criminal damage despite the fact that whitewash can easily be removed and does not in effect cause any damage.

After being arrested the 12 were detained at Huddersfield police station for up to fourteen and a half hours, during which they were each denied their one

phone call supposedly granted by law.

Whilst they were detained in police cells, the police raided the house of a local CND activist and seized copies of *Militant*, CND pamphlets and other political literature as 'evidence.'

The 12 are now on bail and are due to return to Huddersfield police station on 6 October.

This is yet another example of petty intimidation which is used by the police to attempt to deter people from becoming politically active.

Yours fraternally
Ian Brooke
Home Valley LPYS

Sunny Blackpool

Dear Comrades,
Blackpool is a fitting setting for the TUC conference. This area typifies the result of Tory economic policies on what was once a prosperous area.

There is a high unemployment rate in Blackpool and the Fylde coast, with young people coming to look for work for the summer season.

Blackpool's rich employers capitalise on this influx of youth, paying poor wages and making staff work long and unsociable hours.

In the local job centre recently there were only eight vacancies for young people under 18, and eight Youth Training Schemes. Most of these jobs were in shops or catering with low rates of pay.

The worst case was in nearby Preston, for sewing machinists earning only 40 pence an hour. Most of the workers are Asian women, and this is the only work they can find.

One of the larger employers here is the civil service with over 5,000 staff in the Fylde area. A large



Photo: J Sutton (Reflex)

Sewing machinist in East London—now sweatshop conditions are spreading fast.

percentage of these are under 25 and are on low wages. Some are taken on as casuals for 13 week periods, to be thrown back on the dole when the work peaks finish.

For the unemployed here, there is no future. All the facilities are geared to the holidaymaker at holidaymaker prices. In October,

Blackpool is the venue for the Conservative Party conference. We are hoping to organise a demonstration and rally against Thatcher and urge all trade unionists to lend their support.

Yours fraternally
Julia Baskerville
CPSA, Blackpool
personal capacity



Government fear of public support for CND has led to a police crack-down on peaceful protests.

Red carpet treatment

Dear Comrades,
The other day John MacKay, the Scottish Minister for Health, decided that he wanted to visit one of the projects in my workplace. Being overwhelmed by such an honour, the workers decided to roll out

the red carpet for him. Unfortunately we weren't able to find a red carpet so instead we organised a 'reception' picket line.

As the limo, arrived, no doubt expecting the usual fawning handshakes and smiles, about 30 of us, joined by various others from the locality, burst into our welcoming song... "Maggie

Maggie Maggie... Out Out Out!"

After the minister was escorted into the building by the back door—we'd forgotten to lock it, several of us felt like leaving as we had achieved our aim, stating our opposition and getting that publicised through the local media. However, one woman said: "This is my

first demonstration. I'm not leaving till we have a right good shout at him as he leaves."

With that, we all stayed and saw him off with a few more renderings of our favourite chant and a few others not as easily printed.

Yours fraternally
Steve Smellie
East Kilbride LPYS



The costs of default

THE COSTS OF DEFAULT by Anatole Kaletsky. A Twentieth Century Fund Paper. Priority Press Publications, New York 1985.

*You load sixteen tons and what do you get?
Another day older and deeper in debt.
Saint Peter don't you call me 'cos I can't go,
I owe my soul to the company store.*
—Sixteen Tons, American miners' song

WHICH COUNTRIES have the highest trade surpluses in the world per head of population—higher than Japan's? The answer is Brazil and Mexico. Yet those countries are regarded as economic basket cases, caught in the pincers of the debt crisis.

Last year Brazil exported \$12.1 billion more than it imported, but paid out £11.2 billion in interest payments. It ended up deeper in debt than the year before. The countries of Latin America are being reduced to bonded slavery.

The problems flow from the easy lending 1970s. After the oil price rises of 1973-74, OPEC surpluses shot up to over \$100 billion a year. Western banks desperately recycled the cash by lending it out to what were regarded as 'miracle' economies in the Third World. By the late 1970s much back-patting was going on in world banking circles about this 'triumph' of private enterprise.

Then came the collapse. Interest rates doubled and the commodity prices of raw materials exported by the underdeveloped countries collapsed to levels not seen since the 1930s.

Brazil and the other debtor countries were running faster and faster just to stay still. As Kaletsky points out, the debt mountain reaches crisis point when the debtor nations are paying out more on interest payments than they are getting in new loans. As the big banks retrench, Brazil will be paying \$14 billion in interest

this year and only getting \$1 billion in new loans.

Why not repudiate the debt and save the \$14 billion if you're only getting \$1 billion out of the deal? With its \$12 billion trade surplus Brazil could still pay its way in the world trade. The rumble of protest at this massive tribute to imperialism is growing more threatening throughout Latin America. Kaletsky demonstrates quite convincingly that massive savings could be made for the peoples of the continent.

This is a burning issue for the people of the underdeveloped countries. As the crisis broke in 1982, the IMF—the financial sherriff stepped in to demand sacrifices. The brakes were slammed on and imports cut by savaging the living standards of the common people. Mexico paid for its 1983 \$12 billion trade surplus with a 4 per cent cut in living standards for its already hungry people. Imports were cut to the bone—at the price of running down productive resources of the country.

If things go on \$150 billion will be pumped out of the continent in the five years from 1983 to 1987. The IMF imposed austerity measures will mean production per head will be 50 per cent lower per head by 1987 in Brazil. This is the rape of Latin America.

The crisis in turn reacts back on the advanced capitalist countries. If Latin America as a whole defaulted 1.1 million jobs would go in the USA—Brazil alone would put 400,000 on the dole. But the slashing of imports in Latin America has already cost jobs. According to a recent report by the international trade and development organisation, UNCTAD, the West has lost 8 million jobs in industries exporting to the debtor nations.

World capitalism is in a double bind. Default is nothing new. Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Chile and Bolivia all repudiated their debts in the economic crisis in the 1930s and yet here we are again. Cuba

which refused to pay the debts of the Batista regime after the revolution now owes as much per head to Western banks as Indonesia or Thailand, despite embargo by the USA. A country can survive and thrive outside the stranglehold of the imperialist banks by playing the capitalist powers off against each other.

Kaletsky spills a great deal of ink on the positions in international law. He favours a 'conciliatory default' where a capitalist debtor country stops paying the main bulk of the debt to the big banks and fobs off its creditors with vague promises.

The big countries are not likely to be so 'conciliatory' where such vast sums of money are at stake. The banks are part of the ruling class and bound up with government policy. As the seizure of Iranian assets over the hostage crisis and the British freeze on Argentine assets during the Falklands war shows. But what can they do? In 1878 gunboats took anchor in Alexandria as debt collectors for imperialism and in 1882 the whole of Egypt was annexed as 'collateral' for their debts. Times change, it would be out of the question to invade a country like Brazil with its 130 million population.

Why then haven't the Latin American countries defaulted so far? For the simple reason that their governments represent the interests of the capitalists who may squabble with their imperialist backers over the division of the spoils, but have a common interest with them in the preservation of the system. Repudiation of debt would be a first salvo against imperialist oppression. One step would lead to another.

Cancellation of debts incurred by a country's oppressors will be part and parcel of the wrenching of that country from the imperialist orbit and the beginning of a socialist transformation of society.

By Mick Brooks

Priorities

Dear Comrades,
A recent visit to the Isle of Wight was marred for me by the pervasive evidence of racism: stickers on the window of an Asian restaurant, the blocking out of the faces of the 'Three Degrees', with the word 'white', graffiti, and so on.

Angry, I looked around

for signs of a Labour Party campaign against the racists... in vain!

Small wonder! It seems that the executive of the Isle of Wight Labour Party has been far too busy—trying to hound socialists from the party to have had the time or energy spare to mobilise against fascism.

Yours fraternally
Sheila Woodhead
Rochdale

Black sections

Dear Comrades,
Support for the setting up of black sections in the Labour Party has come from an unusual source. In response to a resolution passed at a London branch the National Front directorate have adopted support for the Labour Party black sections as national policy. The reason being they

believe politics should be segregated along racial lines.

To take on and beat the Tories we need a united movement not one split into sections. The fact that the NF support black sections being set up should be enough for anyone to oppose it.

Yours fraternally
Alison Grundle
Coleraine Young
Socialists.



Quote of the week

LORD GOWRIE was recently forced to resign as Minister of the Arts because his £33,000 a year Parliamentary salary "... is not what people need for living in central London...". He goes on to describe his six and a half years working for the state and the government as "... an extremely expensive interruption of my business career."

Healthy business

THE JUNE edition of the *World of Private Practice*, a publication distributed to medical practitioners, included articles about holidays in Nepal, cars priced between £30,000 and £60,000, wines, golf, yachting, and rowing at Henley. Out of a total of 450 column inches of text, only 46 were allocated to medical articles whereas 116 were given over to 'personal finance' such as offshore investments and tax avoidance. Ironically the same issue included an article which described private practice as an industry "where image is very important... to avoid accusations of elitism and profiteering from the sick"... as if.

Organise to defeat EETPU right wing

THE EETPU have been in the news during the TUC over their extreme right wing stance on a number of issues, especially Eric Hammond's threat to split the trade union movement right open.

There has never been a more crucial time for EETPU members to get active in their union to prevent the right-wing leadership turning the EETPU into a company union and opening the way to a disastrous split in the labour movement.

In this interview last year, Jim Greer, secretary of EETPU Edinburgh Plumbers' Lodge talked to Pat Craven about the state of the EETPU and the tasks facing activists trying to turn local branches into active bodies fighting for the members.

When I joined the lodge ten years ago, it was moribund. There was an older member in his fifties combining the posts of secretary and treasurer, and at meetings he would concentrate on taking contributions.

There would be no political or industrial matters raised. It was really a paying-in branch, almost like a bank. There wouldn't be many in attendance, only people coming up to pay their contribution card.

I got elected on to the branch committee and then as president. Then the secretary/treasurer resigned very suddenly and I was elected in his place, because we were still at a stage where we couldn't get sufficient participation to fill those posts individually.

Over a period of time I began to get the branch active again, got younger members in to take up the posts of treasurer and chairman and fill all the committee places.

Wider issues

The way we did it was to get the shop stewards, particularly the younger ones, to come along and give reports of what was happening in their workplace.

We would also invite along speakers on the current struggles in the movement, from the Health Service, the Labour Party, and so on.

That began to revive the branch and encourage more members to come along. The majority of those active in the branch are now younger members. We also tried to encourage apprentices to come along and take part in the union.

An example of the sort of issue we took up was Lothian Regional Council when the Labour Party were in control and the Tories began to cut back the Rate Support Grant.

There was a fight within the region on the question of what the Labour Party should do. Our lodge argued they should not cut services, shouldn't sack anyone, and, on the other hand, they shouldn't increase the rates to make up for the Tories' cuts in RSG.

We invited along regional councillors to discuss that position with them. We took part in delegate conferences of the movement—the party and the trade unions. We argued our position and at one stage it was carried by a majority.

We also bitterly opposed the union's agreement to a cut in apprentices' wages from £41 to £28, a cut in wages of one of the weakest and most exploited sections of the membership.

The national executive argued that the number of apprentices coming into the electrical industry had been falling off dramatically because of the recession and that the employers were arguing that one of the factors was the high wage costs.

It is only in the last ten years that we have won an agreement whereby apprentices each year have got a percentage of their wage related to the tradesman's rate, and that had been fought for for a long time.

We argued that instead of agreeing to cut wages, in line with the Tory propaganda that youth were pricing themselves out of jobs, as a trade union we should be fighting for better wages and conditions, not cutting them.

We saw this as the thin end of the wedge, to go on and attack other sections of the membership and their wages and conditions.

When I was elected as secretary/treasurer, there was only one member who was a delegate to the Labour Party. Over the next three to five years, I encouraged other members to join the party and we got the number of delegates up to nine or ten, which covered most of the constituencies in Edinburgh.

On the trades council, where the lodge had not been playing a part, we got all our delegates to attend, and I was elected eventually to the executive and became vice-president last year.

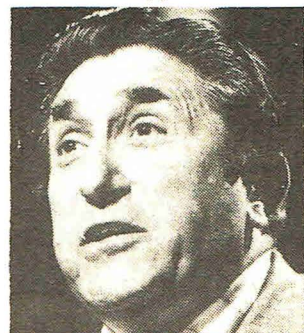
We carried out what we were entitled to do under the rules and transformed the lodge from a moribund branch to an active and campaigning organisation. The full-time officials and the national leadership were quite hostile.



Members of a 'merged' branch protest to the EETPU executive—there have been a series of such 'rationalisations' as the right-wing centralise power.

More and more we in the lodge opposed the decisions that the union leadership were taking. An example was their decision not to support any action taken by our members in British Shipbuilders, in particular our local shipyard, Henry Robb in Leith, in spite of the yard being destined for closure.

Even when it was occupied they refused to sanction any action. There was a lot of bitterness about that, because the yard provided not only employment for electricians and plumbers, but also for quite a large number of apprentices.



Architect of EETPU policy, recently retired Frank Chapple.

We have attempted to get wider support by visiting other branches in the area and raising issues like this with them, and we found a measure of support, particularly at the time of the general election when Frank Chapple supported the SDP candidate, John Grant, in Islington. There was outrage at that from a number of branches and lodges in the area.

Most branches are inac-

tive. The proportion of the membership attending is not very high, like ours ten years ago. The answer to that is to give more power to the branches. Edinburgh put forward a rule-change at the 1983 biennial and rules-revision conference, that branches should have the right to correspond with each other, which is at present against the rules of the union.

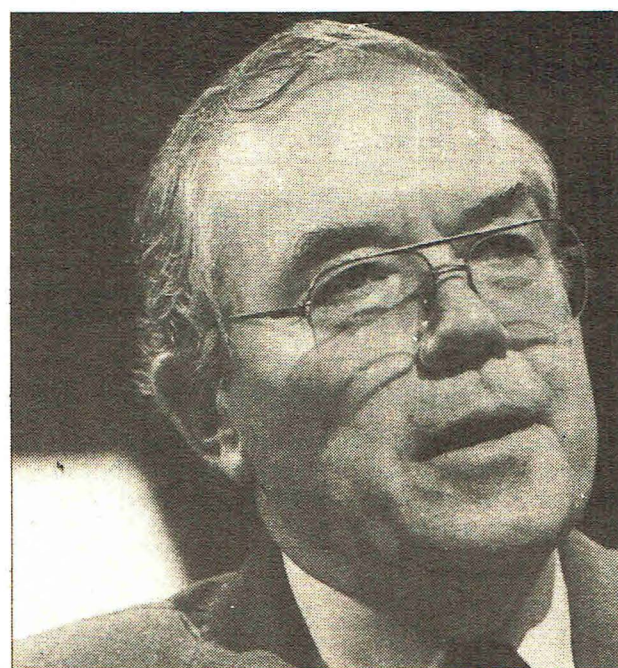
We put that amendment firstly to build links with other branches, which are the basic foundations of the union, and, secondly, to have a check on the executive's powers of making decisions between conferences, so that branches could criticise, or support, whichever the case might be, the executive's decisions.

The executive said that, on the advice of the union's lawyers, Edinburgh Lodge's amendment to rule could bring them in conflict with Tory laws and therefore open up the funds to the government confiscating them through the courts.

I don't think that was the real reason; I think they recognised the possibilities it would open up.

Coincidentally there was a rule change put forward which gave the right to branch chairmen to decide if any visitor could speak. It is a tribute to the work that has been done by active members in the EETPU in visiting other branches that they attempted to reduce the possibilities of those members being allowed to speak.

I don't think though that



New general secretary, Eric Hammond.

it will work in practice, because the majority of members will generally want to hear someone who has come 20 or 30 miles, to hear what he's got to say.

I think there should be combination of workplace branches, which there are already, mainly in engineering and electronic factories and some power stations; and area branches, in order to combine the experience of the members in the different industries and to provide support for each section of the membership when they are under attack.

That would be an important weapon, a lever in the hands of the rank-and-file to have control over local affairs.

Involve rank and file

We still have a structure where the shop stewards in each area of the country can link up and formulate their demands for meetings with the employers nationally.

At the moment they are really only talking shops. Because of that, in some industries over a period of time, the shop stewards have not participated and they have fallen away. The answer to that is to give these shop-stewards' committees powers to decide on various issues they are involved in, like the national claim in that industry, after full consultation with the membership, with no agreements signed over their heads, which is happening all too frequently just now.

Quite a number of branches over a period have been suspended, some for two or three years. There's one, Birmingham Northfield, that has been suspended for at least 3 years. They do it mainly on the basis of opposition to the leadership by the branch, and through some minor point on the rules or constitution of the union, the executive has then closed them down.

Then normally a full-time official is put in just to collect contributions. There is no actual discussion of any matters.

They have also merged branches for various reasons. Under the rules they have to consult the branch members. They do consult them; the members say 'no' and that is the end of the consultation. They then decide they are going to close it!

In one instance, they decided to close a branch, but forgot to consult the members and there was an outrage about it, so that they had to go through the process of consulting them; then, having consulted them, they still decided to close it!

It's not an overnight struggle to transform a moribund lodge or branch into an active part of the organisation, and turn it to taking a full part in the struggle of working people.

You have to be consistent over a period of time. But once the process has begun, it does have its effect; it does transform that part of the organisation.

BEACON No 7

JOURNAL OF EETPU MILITANT SUPPORTERS 25p

A fighting alternative for EETPU workers

De industrialisation

The industrial revolution has been a disaster for the working class. It has brought us poverty, disease, and death. It has destroyed the communities that once existed. It has turned us into a mass of alienated, isolated individuals. It has taken away our humanity and our freedom. It has turned us into a mere commodity, a thing to be bought and sold. It has turned us into a slave to the machine, a slave to the profit motive. It has turned us into a slave to the state, a slave to the ruling class. It has turned us into a slave to the system, a slave to the system of exploitation and oppression. It has turned us into a slave to the system of capitalism, a slave to the system of capitalism.

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INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Print war in the making

Murdoch prepares Fleet Street move

THE MEDIA'S attention recently has been concentrated around Maxwell's successful attempt to move the *Sporting Life* out of Fleet Street. But more sinister action has taken place at Rupert Murdoch's News International site in Wapping.

Millions have been invested in developing the new plant, which remains unused pending union agreement on manning levels and new technology.

But news has leaked out

that management have had the machines operating on dummy runs, with plates flown in from the USA.

These moves unmask a new stage in the Fleet Street

bosses' preparations to smash the print unions.

The press barons are gaining confidence that they can win the impending showdown with the print unions.

Preparations

News International have hired Pole Carew, the well-known union basher from Nottingham. The press barons are taking the coming conflict seriously and preparing well.

The unions are taking a common approach. This is a welcome step. It has appeared recently to rank and file members that the union

tops seemed more interested in attacking each other than our common enemy the bosses.

The management of the various newspapers must be left in no doubt that every muscle of all the unions will be used to defend jobs and the closed shop.

The whole trades union movement must be prepared to rally behind the print unions in the battle to defend the closed shop. Defeat will represent a set-back for every trade unionist.

By Peter Jarvis
(London NGA)

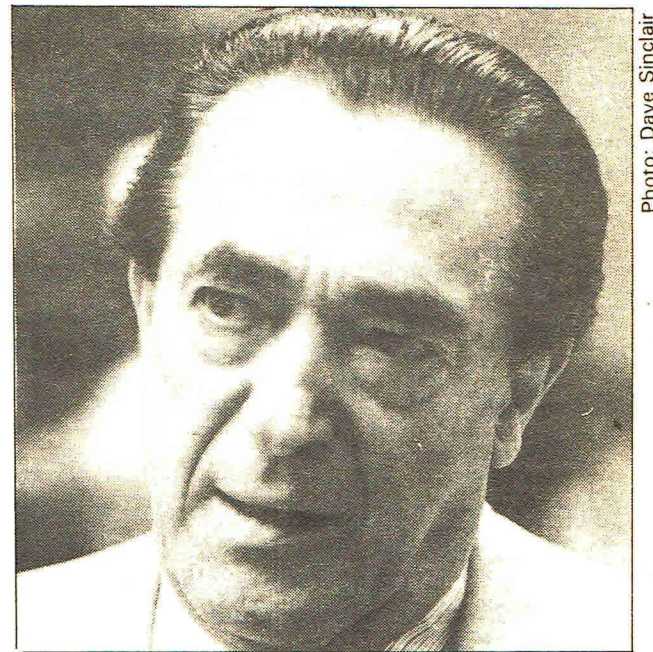


Photo: Dave Sinclair

Mirror Group owner Robert Maxwell, following up confrontation with the NGA over the *Sporting Life*, has sacked 279 SOGAT '82 members on the *Sunday People*. SOGAT '82 want the protective dismissal notices issued to all Mirror Group SOGAT members during the *Sporting Life* dispute withdrawn and payment for casuals who worked normally. Maxwell is insisting on removal of so-called restrictive practices.

Swan's Tyneside strike continues

DESPITE TAKING the backward step of ending their occupation and reverting to strike action, workers at Swan Hunter Shipyards on Tyneside are continuing their fight to save trade unionism in the yards. The occupation was ended after legal writs were issued to the unions.

The mood is that of determination. Every day 250 men are on the picket line.

The media have mislabeled it as the "tea break strike" in order to attempt to trivialise it.

However the lads understand that basic trade union rights are being threatened by a ruthless management hell-bent on clearing the ground for privatisation.

An EETPU member and Swan's worker told *Militant*: "We've had an agreement with management since 1964 over a 10 minute off-the-job tea break because the boat is filthy."

A month ago the union negotiated two minutes each side of the tea break as travel time to and from the canteen but within two weeks management rode roughshod over procedure and scrapped the agreement telling the lads they would have

to stay on the job.

Management then suspended two lads for being caught off the job. This brought matters to a head.

All accumulated grievances have come to the fore. The mood of the strike committee was electric. Even older blokes, who initially argued against industrial action, supported the strike call. This mood is reflected next door in the Neptune yards.

Fightback

As one worker commented "management want to bray our brains out". They want us to jump when we are told... We are putting up a show. All we want is the right to drink our tea and eat our sandwiches in comfort. They want us to go to work with our tails between our legs."

Wallsend LPYS and Wallsend Women's Section have organised a public meeting to be held on Thursday 19 September, Wallsend Town Hall, 7.30pm. Speakers: Paul Stockdale, Alan Wilkinson, Secretary and Chair of Swan Hunter shop stewards' committee. All welcome.

Leicester strike builds union

WORKERS AT Tungstens factory (Hawker Siddley subsidiary) in Market Harborough, Leicestershire have been on strike on two separate days recently.

The factory, which is the biggest employer in the area has been hit by these strikes due to a derisory £2 a week offer from management.

Strike vote

Less than 50 per cent of the 300 workers are unionised. At a mass works meeting a secret ballot had been called for and this was defeated.

The workers then voted to take industrial action by an overwhelming majority. The first strike was on Wednes-

day 28 August. Scabs were met with a huge picket and only three people crossed the picket line.

On Monday 2 September all the company's drivers came out in support of their mates in the factory and the following day the works were closed again after a mass walkout.

This dispute shows that even unorganised workers will go on the offensive. The stewards' sub-committee has been recruiting all non-union members into the union.

By Martin Page
(Market Harborough Labour Party, personal capacity)

Kent Messenger mass picket

THE DISPUTE between NGA members and the Kent Messenger Group, publishers of the *Kent Messenger*, *Kentish Gazette* and the *Kent Evening Post* is now entering its 22nd week.

144 NGA members at the company's two printing centres in Maidstone and Canterbury were sacked because they were not prepared to have new technology imposed upon them without a negotiated agreement.

The determination of the members is as strong as ever. This is reflected in the fact that they have picketed both factories, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week since day one of the dispute.

Scabs

The company attempted to break the resolve of the sacked members by bringing in 'scab' labour. Office 'temps' and school leavers have been employed on vastly inferior wages and condi-

tions to those fought for by the NGA membership.

It is now clear the management are unwilling to negotiate a settlement. The men and women sacked by the company are now seeking the support of the trade union and labour movement, by asking you to join them in a mass picket at the *Kent Messenger* factory, Larkfield near Maidstone Kent on Thursday 3 October from 4pm till late.

A demonstration through the streets of Maidstone followed by a mass meeting is also being planned for Saturday 19 October. Trade union leaders will be attending.

Please support both events:

- ★ Bring your banners
- ★ Boycott Kent Messenger Group publications
- ★ Help to keep print unionised

By Dick Henley
(NGA member, Sittingbourne, Kent)

WE WANT YOUR SUPPORT AT A

MASS PICKET

AT THE

KENT MESSENGER FACTORY AT LARKFIELD

ON

THURSDAY 3RD OCTOBER FROM 4 P.M. 'TILL LATE!'

On the 22nd April 144 NGA Members were dismissed by the Kent Messenger Group, publishers of the Kent Messenger and Kentish Gazette because they were not prepared to have new technology imposed upon them without a negotiated agreement.

Since then our Members have picketed the two factories 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The Management are clearly unwilling to negotiate a settlement and we are now looking for the support of the wider trade union and labour movement.

Dulwich hospital



Photo: Ben Eastop

FIFTY TRADE unionists, Labour Party members and members of the Health Service union, COHSE, picketed St Frances Hospital in East Dulwich, South London on Monday this week to support industrial action being taken by COHSE members after victimisation by hospital management.

Seven COHSE members had been suspended in June, mostly for trivial offences they were alleged to have committed. The union has demanded an independent inquiry in the absence of key management staff who instigated the suspensions. It has also demanded they are removed from their responsibility in the hospital's psychiatric wing.

Management refused to meet these demands so the union decided to take industrial action, and agreed not to work overtime, and take in only emergency admissions and opted for a policy of non-cooperation with management.

On Wednesday last week

(4 September), after talks with management failed COHSE members occupied the switchboard as a protest. No calls were interfered with although this was claimed by management. The following day three switchboard workers were suspended.

After the sizeable picket on Monday, called at short notice, management made accusations of intimidation and said pickets were breaking the law. The police then threatened to bring in reinforcements and reduced the picket to six, but this threat didn't materialise.

The union's action has been backed by Southwark Labour Party Trade Union Committee and by Southwark Council Labour Group. Labour councillors Brian Kelly, Tony Goss, Andy Troke and Tony Ritchie, the leader, were on the picket line. Other Labour Party members and trade unionists in the area are urged to give their support and attend the pickets.

By Ben Eastop

Right-wing revivalists



Photo: Dave Sinclair

Roy Hattersley and Bill Jordan (seated, centre) AUEW presidential candidate joined fellow right wingers on a Labour Solidarity platform at the TUC, as part of the attempt to get an organised right wing trade union faction going.

LAST WEEK at a meeting in Rotherham, the new right wing trade union group Mainstream tried to dip their toe, and feel the water locally.

The meeting was booked by a Labour councillor, Gavin Reed, under the guise of 'Labour Solidarity'.

Chairing the meeting was Trevor Bell (General Secretary COSA). Speakers were Bill Jordan (AUEW) and Roy Evans (ISTC).

The wine was that if the worst came to the worst they

would form an alternative TUC. Jordan warned that if a Labour government get's elected at the next general election and they ask for wage restraint—then come hell or high water, they will get wage restraint.

The sooner these Tories masquerading as Labour and trade unionists, stand on their rightful platform—at Tory conference—the better.

By a Rotherham reader

Rail ballot over but battle continues

THERE IS growing anger amongst NUR members at the tactics of the British Rail Board management in their drive to impose Driver Only Operation of trains.

By Dave Evans
(SGM delegate)

Many rank and file members are particularly angry that two weeks after the guard's ballot result which lifted the threat of immediate national action over DOO, more than 250 guards who were sacked for taking local action over the issue have still not got their jobs back.

The Board are cynically holding these men hostage to enforce a humiliating climb-down by our union over DOO and to dictate a change in our policy of opposition to productivity deals in general.

It is vital that the forthcoming SGM is used to reaffirm our policies, to reject the Board blackmail and bullying, to draw the lessons of the ballot and to prepare the membership for a

fightback.

About a dozen branches have adopted policy along these lines, including East Ham, Brighton Joint, Wirral, Sunderland No1 etc. My own branch Liverpool No5 adopted similar policy including the following points:

"This SGM therefore resolves that there can be no question of this union entering any talks or negotiations with the Board on DOO until every single guard sacked for opposition to DOO has been reinstated unconditionally to their former post and grade. This SGM resolves also to mount a campaign throughout the entire membership to prepare them for strike action if necessary to win the reinstatement of our sacked members.

"This SGM also therefore reaffirms this union's opposition to DOO and futher resolves that in any future negotiations on DOO after the reinstatement of our sacked members, this union will demand cast iron guarantees and written assurances from the Board that there will be:

- 1) No job losses
- 2) No cuts in manning levels

3) No reduction in or deterioration of levels of operating safety standards.

This SGM reaffirms also, our previous decision to oppose productivity deals in general."

The indications are that the NEC will be making a statement to the SGM which unfortunately falls short of the just demands which we believe must be pursued.

Campaign

It is vital that the SGM isn't just given a choice of NEC statement or nothing.

With so many branches putting forward resolutions and so many other delegates mandated to vote along similar lines the SGM must be given a chance to fully discuss these ideas and to adopt the sort of programme and strategy outlined here.

We have to rebuild confidence and prepare the fight against the decimation of our jobs, working conditions, union rights and the rail industry itself. That requires a national campaign be launched immediately to reach every railworker and prepare them for action.



In 1983 the NUR NEC invited BRB chairman Peter Parker to speak at the AGM. *Militant's* warnings of continued attacks on jobs have been only too well borne out. Bob Reid won't be at the SGM but will the NUR leaders be outlining fighting strategy.

Southern region solidarity

RAILWAY GUARDS in the southern region at Brighton station, Horsham and Streatham Hill have been on strike during the week against driver only operation of trains and in solidarity with victimised guards in Scotland and Wales.

Guards at Norwood junction have remained out despite the ballot result. Feelings are especially strong because the southern region voted 87% for strike action against driver only operation in the recent ballot.

Management at Brighton have been trying to intimidate staff over a lot of petty issues and the mood is doubly angry here.

Casey Jones

The strike, on Monday, though unofficial was announced a week before the action and was very successful with nearly all the guards out. Even the women workers in the Casey Jones buffet joined the picket during the day.

In a debate on local radio the Southern District NUR secretary Greg Hewitt hammered British Rail's area manager. An important point he made for the public, and which shows management's hypocrisy, was that BR knew about the action well in advance, yet never warned passengers.

DICK ROBINSON, assistant branch secretary, Brighton Joint NUR, talked to a *Militant* reporter.

Silentnight look for lead

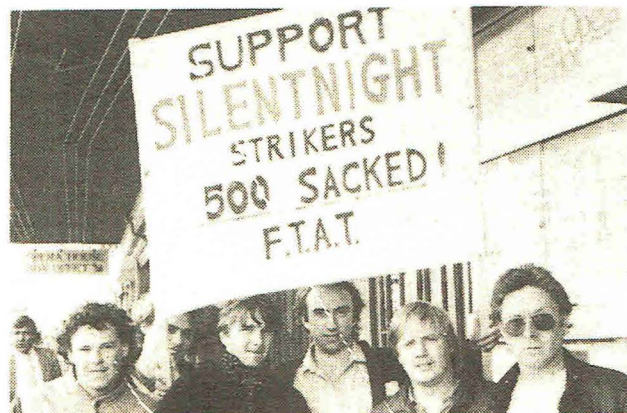
AN EMERGENCY resolution in support of the strike at Silentnight Bedding Company was unanimously carried at the TUC conference in Blackpool last week.

Silentnight strikers were lobbying the TUC all week, gaining support from trade unionists including Arthur Scargill and Ray Buckton, and getting wider publicity for their fight.

FTAT members campaigned hard to get their leadership to push forward an emergency resolution. The resolution was eventually moved by the FTAT general secretary, Ben Rubner, on the final Friday morning, when many delegates had already left Blackpool.

Strikers were disappointed that their general secretary and other FTAT leaders had earlier made no mention of Silentnight when addressing conference, particularly since Arthur Scargill had made specific reference to the Silentnight dispute when speaking from the rostrum.

It was felt that Ben Rubner did not give enough weight to the urgent need for backing from other trade unions, and his appeal to



conference delegates to read the *Morning Star* for a report on Silentnight was publicity for someone, but not an obvious means of winning sympathy for the strikers.

Mr Wonderful

As Ben Rubner did point out to the conference, the Silentnight chairman, Tom Clarke, Thatcher's 'Mr Wonderful', has a personal wealth of around £50-£60 million, yet pleads that he cannot afford to give his workers a pay rise.

Ordinary FTAT members will be expecting to see

greater evidence from their union officials that they are as committed to fighting the bosses as are the men and women on the picket lines.

At the *Militant* readers' meeting in Blackpool, FTAT shop steward, Gerry Cumiskey emphasised the need for workers to organise themselves within the labour and trade union movement, and to support the ideas of *Militant*, in order to win the common fight against the bosses and the Tory government.

By Linden Stafford
(Skipton Labour Party)

threat to jobs.

BT will make a big mistake if they take the vote as a green light to try to impose their plans. The union executive should show their determination not to be intimidated by insisting on the full seven per cent offer—without strings.

As Phil Holt, Broad Left candidate for general secretary explained to *Militant*: "The most important job now is to reject being tied to negotiations under duress and launch a campaign to prepare the membership to fight any job losses.

Manchester Heritage

ON 27 August 15 workers came out on strike due to management provocation, at Heritage Photoframes in Altrincham, South Manchester.

This small factory employs 37 workers and has a history of poor working conditions; eg lack of heating, no canteen (with the shops half a mile away) and a badly maintained drinks machine.

The normal take home pay is £45 for a 37½ week. The workforce is young, mainly in the 16-20 age group, with two thirds of them female.

Wage rises are arbitrary and spasmodic—

management prefer to negotiate on an individual basis and refuse to recognise collective agreements.

Recently, the workers decided to join the TGWU and 90 per cent completed union application forms. The management reacted by dismissing three employees and refused to recognise the union.

Donation, letters of support etc should be sent to Mrs Margaret Graham Flat 5, 86 Brooklands Rd, Sale, Manchester.

By Gordon Cormack
(Davyhulme Labour Party, personal capacity)

Southend postal casuals victory

AFTER TWO years of working under the threat of the Post Office using casual labour in Southend's sorting office management finally moved 14 casuals into the Bircham Road Sorting office, which deals with all outgoing mail from the area.

Thanks to a strong Union Committee, when the casuals came in the entire office walked out and management got a bloody nose.

After picket lines managed to convince eight of the casuals to turn back on the Friday evening the sorting office was closed and everyone was locked out as negotiations got fully underway.

Even though some postmen were not in 100 per cent support for the strike, nobody crossed the picket lines for the five days of the strike.

New jobs

After three meetings between UCW and management the UCW won its case for full time employment with the introduction of nine full-time postmen duties, nine Higher Grade postmen positions and five Associate Grade positions.

Management collapsed comprehensively and the UCW won a major victory against the current national trend of employment of casual staff in the Post Office.

There is a lesson to be

gained by all Post Office employees in this fairly short strike.

If decisive action had not been taken, this time next year the sorting office would have been swamped with casual labour. The postmen sacrificed their pay and stood solidly against management's proposals.

Let us all hope that more and more UCW members will follow in the footsteps of Southend to oppose the use of casual labour in the sorting offices and on Crown office duties up and down the country.

By Nick Rayner
(Southend UCW PO/PA Committee, personal capacity)

NCU pay vote

MEMBERS OF the National Communications Union have voted by a small majority for acceptance of the British Telecom and Post Office pay offers, against the executive's recommendation.

In the Post Office the UCW had already accepted the pay offer and NCU members, a small minority of Post Office employees, clearly felt too isolated to take on a battle on their own.

In British Telecom the engineering section voted

43,230 to 41,551 to accept the offer whilst the clerical section voted for rejection by 9,952 to 10,676.

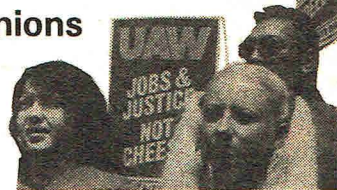
BT is trying to tie acceptance of the offer to progress in introducing new technology. They have actually offered an extra quarter per cent for acceptance of a timetable of talks on new technology.

The big vote against acceptance of the offer shows that there is a hardening of mood against British Telecom, but that there is more concern about the

Militant

US unions

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Smash Pinochet

For a socialist Chile

EVERY YEAR, the anniversary of the Pinochet dictatorship's seizure of power in Chile is commemorated in cities throughout the world.

The crushing of the Allende government, and the murder, torture and disappearance of the workers' movement activists after 11 September 1973 is a reminder of the ruthlessness of capitalism.

Twelve years after the coup, the most urgent task for workers internationally is to aid in the rebirth of an opposition which can put an end to this vicious regime. The youth of Chile in particular have shown tremendous heroism in braving the guns of the military in monthly protests on the streets. Last week's protests in Santiago ended with ten people dead.

Hundreds of opposition leaders in the localities were arrested and accused of "inciting trouble," trying to shift the blame for the security forces' violence on to the opposition.

Under Pinochet's emergency powers the regime can detain oppositionists for three weeks or even send them for three months' internal exile, all without charges.



Chilean youth have taken to the barricades against Pinochet.

The Labour Party Young Socialists in Britain are actively involved in aiding the reconstruction of a trade union movement in Chile. International solidarity is not just a question of words. Workers in Chile need financial help, not only because half the population are unemployed but because the capitalist class who brought Pinochet to power have the resources to keep the regime in power. The fight will be long and difficult and international solidarity is essential.

The lessons of 1973 must be remembered by the British labour movement.

America is in deep crisis. It is has not got the capacity to install and maintain democracy. Even though most of the bosses now oppose Pinochet because of his long term economic and political effect, they are scared of the impact of lifting the repression on workers and the youth.

General strike

Events are developing fast, despite the failure of the workers' leaders to take demonstrations further than the regular protests of the past years. The LPYS sup-

ports the call for an insurrectionary general strike to topple the Pinochet regime. The only guarantee of lasting democracy is through the establishment of a revolutionary constituency assembly by the cordones, the workers' committees which have grown throughout Chile.

This assembly's main task should be to organise for the socialist transformation of society to ensure that no more Pinochets are allowed to oppress the Chilean people.

By Italo Savastio

Strike in Brazil

170,000 BANK workers in Brazil have struck threatening two major banks with collapse. An eye witness reported "they are more like miners than bankers" such is the militancy on the picketlines.

The bank workers, amongst the bottom quarter of the population in living standards, are demanding a 25 per cent increase. Over the last four years Brazilian

banking profits have increased 5400 per cent yet their lowest paid employees get starvation wages for their nine hour day.

Get your union branch or Labour Party to make its stand against slave labour in Latin America. Messages and donations to: Sindicato Bancarios De Sao Paulo, Rua Sao Bento 365, 18 Andar, Sao Paulo. SP, Brazil.

Councillors face ruin

(Continued from front page)

The Joint Shop Stewards' Committee (JSSC) have called for a general strike in the city of both local authority and private sector workers on 25 September. All Liverpool would suffer if the Tories won the day. All Liverpool will join battle against the Tories.

Every local government

worker in Britain is threatened by Tory plans. Every local authority union should mobilise to defend Liverpool and Lambeth. No more massacres of local authority jobs and services. The phoney war is over, the battle for the inner cities is now on.



A common sentiment on Merseyside.

Photo: Philip Gordon (Reflex)

Handsworth: Inner city crisis

Socialists have never condoned riots. It is an expression of blind, destructive and aimless violence. These riots were all the more tragic because of the loss of life involved and the destruction of services and facilities used by working class people in the area.

But the Tories and their system are responsible for the horrendous social conditions that created the riots. The real organisers of the riots are in the Tory Cabinet and in Number 10 Downing Street.

Their policies have cost Birmingham 190,000 jobs

during the recession—more than Scotland and Wales together.

The plague of drug addiction—one of the features of Handsworth, like many other areas—has not dropped from the sky. It is also a reflection of the blind alley facing young people. And as the Tories cut down on workers in Customs and Excise and tighten immigration laws it seems easier to come into the country with a suitcase of heroin than with a black face.

The labour movement is opposed to the use of hard drugs in Handsworth, or

anywhere else. But the police in the area are completely incapable of tackling the problems because they are outside any democratic control and the local population have no confidence in them.

Community leaders afterwards spoke of "growing tension" in the area before the riots. Even David Webb, former Superintendent of police in Handsworth said he was "not surprised" at the riot.

These kind of events will repeat themselves over and over again as the policies of the Thatcher government increase the decay and

(Continued from front page)

demoralisation in the inner cities. Tory policies "have brought South Africa to the streets of Britain".

Only the Labour Party, campaigning around socialist policies, with the promise of fundamental social change, can effectively tackle the problems of the inner-cities.

Campaign

The Labour Party Young Socialists, because of their socialist policies and their campaigns, have a better record of work and recruitment among black youth

than any other section of the party. The LPYS must be given the proper resources by the Party to step up their campaigns.

The Labour Party as a whole must make a direct appeal to youth not to riot. They must give the enormous frustration of unemployment a sense of direction and purpose. The energies of young people must be directed away from blind riots to a political struggle to change society on socialist lines and so change the conditions in which they live.

Mobilise against fascists

THE FASCIST British National Party (BNP) plan a rally in Leicester on 27 September to "demonstrate BNP support for South African whites in the fight against black terrorism."

The Leicester Anti-Fascist Defence Campaign are calling for a mass mobilisation against these fascists' filthy attempt to spread racial hatred.



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