

# Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth 30p

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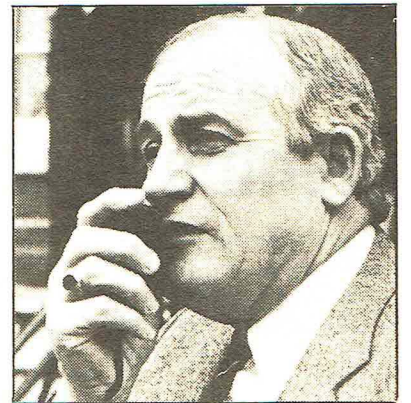
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# Tory jobs slaughterer

## Stop the purge



Tony Mulhearn, before his NEC hearing.

A LARGE crowd, reaching 600 despite the rain greeted the Labour leaders as the NEC began its new disciplinary moves against Liverpool socialists who had won a marvellous council election victory less than a fortnight before.

The flimsiness of the NEC's 'evidence' became apparent when they had to agree to adjourn to allow Liverpool District Labour Party chair, Councillor Tony Mulhearn to seek legal advice.

"I've been a Labour Party member for 23 years and our council has been fighting for Labour Party policy. We are determined to have justice" Tony told *Militant* reporters.

Many people on the lobby decried the huge expense of these disciplinary hearings, the barriers outside Walworth Road HQ, hired from a private company, and the police "on leave from Fort Murdoch" as one veteran Brighton Labour Party member put it.

### Serious message

Janet Seymour, on strike for jobs, conditions and union rights at Silent-night in Barnoldswick for nearly a year told *Militant*: "We got an emergency resolution in our support at last year's Labour conference. Many individual party members and MPs have helped us. In the last few days a *Militant* supporter has arranged for me to speak at four Labour Party and trade union branches in Suffolk.

"But this NEC should be discussing how to beat the anti-union laws which tie us and the printworkers in knots. They should be fighting to get rid of Thatcher".

The lobby was confident and good natured. When union leader Sam McCluskey put two fingers up at the lobby, Liverpool Broadgreen MP Terry Fields said: 'That means he's voting for us twice'. Well-known media personalities were ridiculed as they got wet. But the real message to Neil Kinnock and the NEC was very serious, call off this divisive witch-hunt and start fighting the real enemy, the Tories and the bosses.

By Roger Shrivs



Govan shipyard workers lobbying Scottish Tories' conference, against the closures.

THOUSANDS OF jobs have been slashed by this callous Tory government in the past two weeks:

### Shipbuilding

3,600 jobs threatened. Yards at Troon in West Scotland and Middlesbrough to close, and pay-offs at Sunderland, Clydeside and Appledore in Devon.

### British Rail

Over 7,000 jobs to disappear at four plants (see back page).

### B. Caledonian

1,000 workers to be made redundant.

### Kodak

900 workers at the photographic multinational to lose their livelihoods.

**THE ONE-day shipyard strike on 21 May shows how angry workers are at even more job losses after years of cuts in conditions and pay to 'save' the industry.**

Peter Fitzsimmons, a worker from Austin and Pickersgill, Sunderland told *Militant*:

"Areas like Sunderland and Middlesbrough just cannot absorb yet another dose of Tory job cuts.

"When one job is lost in the shipbuilding industry another three

are lost in service firms and other community spin-offs.

"You are looking at a realistic figure of 20,000 jobs lost in the North East alone".

Les Cooper, a 20-year old apprentice welder at Austin and Pickersgill told *Militant*:

"I've only got one month to go before I come out of my time. That'll be four years apprenticeship with no job at the end.

"My chances of finding another job in Sunderland are very remote. I'd say about three million to one against.

"We won't accept it, we've got no choice but to stand up and fight."

Workers at the yards will now demand a plan to escalate national action. No to any redundancies! No yard must remain isolated. There must be no more erosion of pay or conditions.

Stewards at Austin and Pickersgill have a tradition of fully involving workers through mass meetings, leaflets, etc. Such a campaign nationally would defeat all the Tories' plans.

More and more workers will see from these attacks the need to rena-

tionalise the sections of BS privatised by the Tories and take BS out of the hands of the capitalists in the top jobs and into workers' control and management.

See feature, page 5

### Sunderland *Militant* Readers' Meeting

Wednesday 28 May, 7.30pm, Sunderland North Labour Club, George Street. Speakers from A&P and Sunderland Shipbuilders. Chairman: Tony Carty, chair, Shipbuilding Negotiating Committee.

# Demonstrate against low pay

Manchester  
31 May  
(See page 4)



# SA terror raids won't quell revolt

**THE SOUTH AFRICAN attacks on neighbouring states have again hammered home that there is no basis for a negotiated settlement between the white minority regime and the oppressed black majority—an illusion which the Commonwealth "Eminent Persons Group" on its abortive mission to Southern Africa tried to keep alive.**

Thatcher and other international backers of 'reform initiatives' have been exposed as apologists for a brutal dictatorship dominating Southern Africa by armed force.

But what agreement could be acceptable to the bosses and the whites in general, as well as the revolutionary fighters among the

black workers and youth?

This regime can only be removed by force. But the struggle to overthrow it is one of the hardest facing the working class anywhere in the world.

## Basic demands

The regime and the ruling class have no policy for solving the explosive problems of South African society. They can only shift to and fro, from gestures of 'reform' to vicious repression and back, according to the pressures they are under.

In January, Botha announced his latest and most far-reaching package of 'reforms'. These included repeal of the hated pass laws in their existing form, and the pro-

mise to consult selected black 'leaders' in writing a new constitution.

None of these moves come even close to meeting the basic, non-negotiable demand of the masses: one person one vote in an undivided South Africa. None of them alter in the slightest the savage exploitation and grinding poverty of the black masses.

But even these limited changes have alarmed many whites and provoked a sharp swing towards the racist ultra-right. It is this which forced Botha to unleash the military, to snuff out the illusory hopes of negotiations with the ANC, in order to prove to his rank and file that he is not selling out their privileges.

Now the country may be laun-

ched into a new spiral of class and racial struggle. Anger and frustration will intensify among black youth and workers at this latest, arrogant display of the regime's intransigence.

## General strike

Major struggles by the organised black workers—now united in the Congress of SA Trade Unions (COSATU)—loom in the next months. In the engineering industry the Metal & Allied Workers' Union is deadlocked with the employers. Critical negotiations are impending between the National Union of Mineworkers and the mining bosses. Youth activists have appealed for a national general strike on 16-18 June which, following the

spectacular success of the general strike on May Day, is likely to become the biggest co-ordinated action of the South African working class in its entire history.

These struggles will demonstrate in practice the brutality of every section of the capitalists, as well as the power of the working class on the move. They will convince new layers of activists of the need for revolutionary working-class leadership, for a workers' ANC with a socialist programme, as the only force that could mobilise the whole movement, split the whites and prepare the conditions for the overthrow of the regime.

By George Collins

## Union's leaders mislead members to back purge

**THE GENUINE desire of NUPE conference delegates for the return of a Labour government has been abused by their leaders.**

They have channelled fear of another Tory government into support for a witch-hunt of *Militant* supporters in the Labour Party.

But they have blocked any strategy for a national campaign against cuts, low pay and privatisation, the issues which are really hitting NUPE members.

The executive's resolution stated that differences between socialists should be resolved by debate and persuasion and not by political exclusion.

But the intentions of ex-

left Tom Sawyer were clear. He made a vicious attack on Liverpool council and *Militant* supporters. He accused opponents of the witch-hunt of being supporters of the bosses against the workers.

## Stonefrost

Whilst the union general secretaries had been negotiating over the Stonefrost proposals, for Liverpool's budget, he said, the leaders of the council were arranging a deal with the Swiss banks behind their backs.

This is totally untrue, but more to the point, the Stonefrost recommendations were completely unacceptable to the Liverpool

Labour Party and the Labour council as they involved major cuts and rate increases.

But significantly, even if it were true, then why is the architect of the eventual deal, non-*Militant* Tony Byrne, chair of finance, not up for expulsion?

The Broad Left meeting attracted over 200—the biggest ever. It was only marred by about 25 of the leadership's supporters, including many full-time officials (even a Divisional Organiser) shouting, heckling and interrupting Derek Hatton and other speakers.

By Nick Toms

## Blunkett remembers socialism

**SOFT-LEFT NEC member David Blunkett has expressed concern about the party leadership relegating socialist commitment from Labour's campaigning. Many party members have been alarmed about the significance of the dropping of the traditional red from the current 'Freedom and Fairness' campaign. "Is the leadership trying to create an SDP Mark 2?" they wonder.**

## Mistake

"It seems to be a grave mistake", Blunkett told Labour's Campaign Strategy Committee, "to believe that in order to present a successful campaigning profile we need to remove from it the vital fundamental values that we hold as socialists... We may win an improvement in percentage points temporarily in the opinion polls, at the expense of failing to win people over to what we believe in".

But unfortunately



Derek Hatton is facing disciplinary action by Labour's NEC, but continues to support workers' struggles—as here speaking at a 3,000-strong demonstration in Keighley in support of Silentnight strikers.

Photo: Dale Cunningham

Blunkett has gone along with those responsible for emasculating party policy, in attacking Liverpool councillors and *Militant*. He

should realise that the right's organisational attacks on *Militant* are intimately linked to their political backtracking.

## Renewed threats from NF

**DISTURBINGLY a number of *Militant* supporters in Liverpool have received letters at their home addresses from the fascist National Front. At least two black *Militant* supporters received these letters, with additional racial taunts on the envelopes.**

With the recent incidents of fascist attacks on socialist paper sellers etc. in Liverpool, this issue should be treated with serious concern by all sections of the labour movement.

THE NEW tabloid *Morning Star* still can't resist the opportunity to mislead its readers about the policies of *Militant*.

In Saturday's issue, a piece beginning with 'Red faces at *Militant* HQ' mentioned the report in *The Guardian* that *Militant* supporters in Liverpool had been sent letters by the National Front.

Supporters of this paper have continually been threatened and physically attacked by the NF in Liverpool (see Page 6)—this latest gimmick is treated with concern and as

another threat.

But for the *Star* this is by-the-way. Evidently it wants to portray *Militant* and the fascist NF as of the same ilk, with its talk of *Militant* "needing to distance itself". The *Star*'s inference that *Militant* only now supports the emancipation of women and an end to the oppression of gays is an absurd lie. This paper has always stood for the emancipation of all oppressed groups. But this can only be done as part of the struggle to change society—that is the class struggle. This is a point which the *Star* itself was making only a few weeks ago in order to distance itself from the mainstream 'Communist' Party.

But what should cause red faces at the *Star*'s HQ is the thoroughly reactionary policies which it supports, like import controls, also advocated by the NF, which are put forward by the national capitalists at times of crisis to protect their interests. Another one is Black Sections for the Labour Party, supported by the *Star*—and by the NF who saw it

as a step towards racial segregation. Perhaps the *Star* should do some rapid distancing?

By Ben Eastop

Dear Comrades,

According to the *Guardian* article the National Front in Liverpool reckon they have a lot in common with *Militant* supporters.

Concerning the NF's activities on Tyneside recently and my own personal experience of these people, I'll say this:

*Militant* supporters have got nothing in common with a bunch of thugs who terrorised two of our female comrades (one who was still at school) whilst paper selling. *Militant* supporters have nothing in common with the same 'big brave boys' who attacked LPYS members in Newcastle with sticks and chains, who tried to smash their way into an anti-racist meeting using smoke bombs, smashing furniture and windows. We have nothing in common with them, not now, nor ever.

Bob Harker  
Gateshead East Labour Party



LPYS on the picket line at Wapping

## Tory MPs condemn Young Socialists on picket line

**THOSE WELL-KNOWN friends of working class youth, the Tories, are now attacking the Labour Party Young Socialists for their role in supporting striking printworkers at Wapping.**

A parliamentary motion submitted by several Conservative MPs (including Sir Eldon Griffiths, parliamentary representative of the Police Federation) calls on Neil Kinnock to disown his own youth section.

The motion accuses members of the Young Socialists of "taking part in attacks which resulted in more than 140 Metropolitan Policemen being injured."

John Ellen, the Chairman

of LPYS, has condemned this charge: "The only crime the LPYS is guilty of is giving full support to 6,000 sacked printers fighting for their jobs."

The Conservative MPs evidently haven't examined the BBC and ITV video recordings which showed the violent attacks of the police on the picketing printworkers.

John Ellen also challenged two of the MPs who have signed the motion to a public debate in their constituencies, on the question of youth unemployment.

The MPs, John Wheeler and Peter Bruinvels, both live in constituencies where the number of unemployed

is higher than their majority in parliament. Their efforts would be better employed in finding jobs for these young people. Particularly if they want to keep their seats.

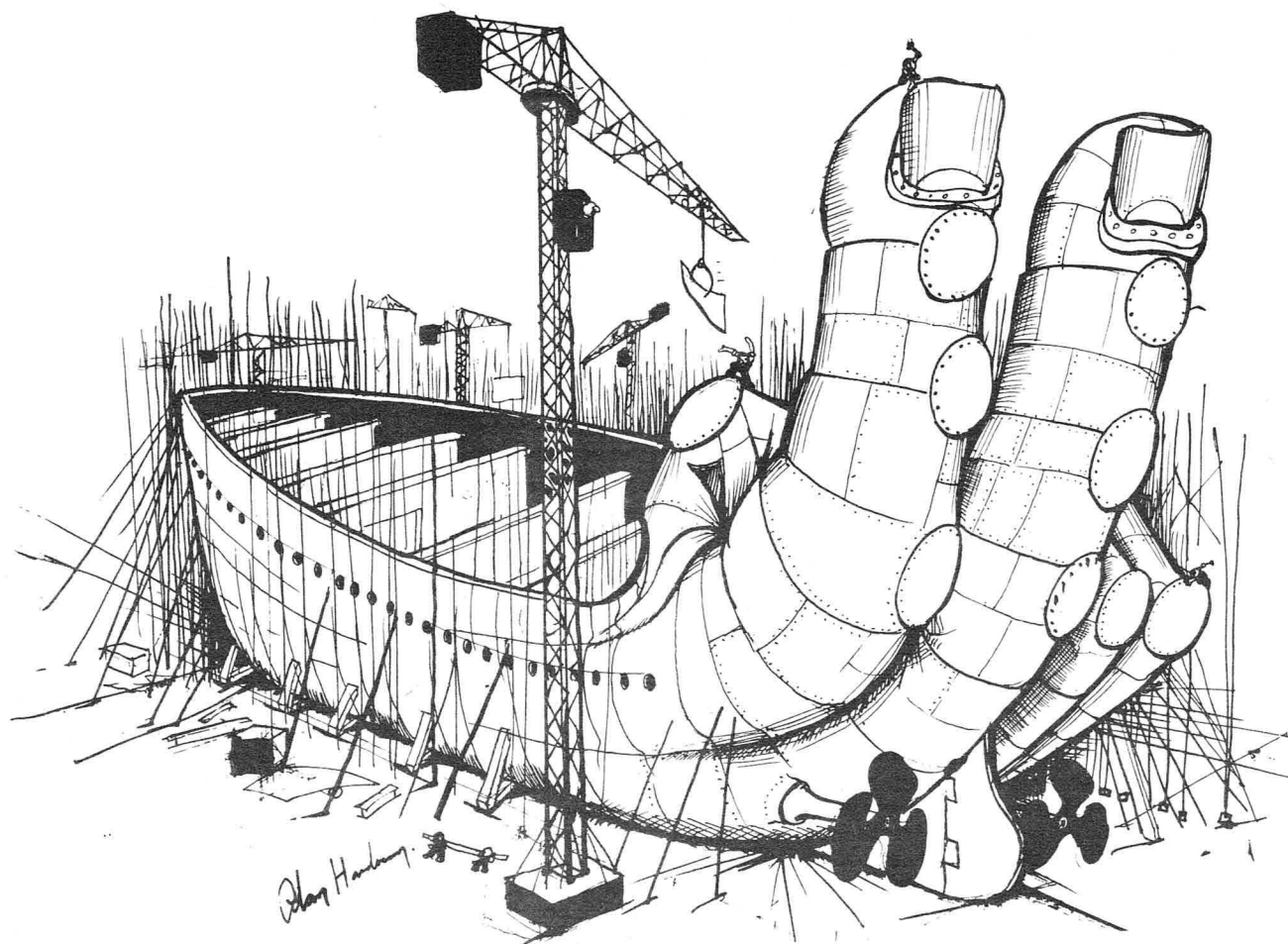
The motion is obviously another Tory attempt to divide the Labour movement by calling on Neil Kinnock to expel socialists from the Labour Party.

The Labour Party should tell the Conservatives to mind their own business and examine the behaviour of their own youth members, particularly the FCS, and root out fascist thug elements.

By Soraya Lawrence



# SHIPYARD WORKERS' MESSAGE TO TORIES



## Wales conference—expulsion vote passed but left win seats

**THIS YEAR'S** Wales Labour Party conference was again dominated by moves to expel *Militant* supporters. In a heated and bitter debate, right wing trade union bureaucrats and MPs reserved their venom not for the Tories but for *Militant*.

Opposition to George Wright's call for expulsions came from elected rank and file delegates who are closer to the membership than these witch-hunters.

The trade union bloc vote (including unfortunately the delegation from the South Wales NUM) ensured the motion was overwhelmingly carried. *Militant* supporters are now circulating a leaflet to all Welsh NUM lodges,

reminding them of the support given by *Militant* during their strike, compared to Kinnock's lukewarm backing. *Militant* supporters around the country who put up Welsh miners might wish to write to NUM offices expressing disappointment.

### Move to left

However, the victory of the right wing on this issue did not prevent a significant move to the left at the conference. *Militant* increased its support on the regional executive, with Muriel Browning being elected as part of the left's slate for women's positions. Several other right wing witch-hunters were also replaced by the left which is widely

seen as a rejection of the regional executive's activities over the past year. Resolutions on one member one vote moved by the electricians' union were thrown out by conference.

A *Militant* readers' meeting was the biggest fringe meeting of conference, attracting almost 100 delegates and visitors and raising over £500 for the Fighting Fund. Alec Thraves and Cheryl Varley pointed out that while in Wales Labour had lost seats in the local elections, in Liverpool, despite all the poisonous propaganda, Labour had remained firmly in the driving seat.

*Militant* supporters are confident that like last year the speeches of Wales' right



George Wright, Wales TGWU leader and witch-hunter.

wing witch-hunters will come to nothing and the support for *Militant* will continue to grow.

By Ian MacDonald

## Parties seek Liverpool-style democracy

**MANY LOCAL** Labour Party activists have been campaigning for their Labour-controlled councils to implement the socialist policies agreed by the party. The Liverpool party has been castigated for just such democratic accountability over councillors and the Labour Group. The Labour NEC's farcical inquiry in Liverpool even complained that the District Labour Party interfered too much in the running of the group. Now several district parties are trying to follow the Liverpool road.

### Edinburgh

IN EDINBURGH, in a complete show of disregard for the feelings of Labour Party members, the Labour Group of councillors has ousted Alex Wood as group leader and replaced him with former left Mark Lazarowicz.

Before the group's annual general meeting, Edinburgh District Labour Party met to recommend to the group the feelings of the delegates. Alex Wood was put forward unopposed. Nevertheless, the Labour Group of councillors, in a move aimed at changing the council's strategy, elected Lazarowicz.

There seems little doubt that the Labour Group will now be prepared to compromise with the government

on spending rather than fight against attacks on expenditure by central government.

The new leader is a prominent Labour Co-ordinating Committee member in Scotland who has steadily moved to the right, doing political somersaults in the process. Only last March in the LCC's magazine *Scottish Labour Activist*, Lazarowicz wrote an article entitled "stand firm" where he suggested councillors should be prepared to break the law.

Now however, he has done an about-turn, so much so that he can sit comfortably with right wing Scottish Shadow Secretary, Donald Dewar and discuss a common strategy on local government. He attacked the same man last March for 'not reflecting party policy'. Lazarowicz said recently

Labour Party members in Edinburgh will be disgusted at this blatant disregard of their feelings and, no doubt, the matter will not rest here.

• In a very similar episode in Liverpool in 1978, the Labour Group on the city council voted to replace John Hamilton as group leader by Eddie Roderick. The DLP then voted overwhelmingly in favour of Hamilton being reinstated and the group then reversed their decision. John Hamilton has remained leader ever since. Yet Liverpool DLP leaders are now charged with "arrogating to the DLP the improper function of dictating group strategy and action to the Labour Group on the city council".

### Camden

**THE NEW** Labour Group in Camden was returned to power with a much increased majority.

But right-wingers, and the remaining 'rebels' who ignored party policy and voted with the Tories to defeat the rate-capping battle last Summer, overturned the decision

of a joint party-group meeting which had proposed left-winger Kate Allen as group leader.

The right wing called in London Regional Officer, John Braggins. He would only say that the meeting, which proposed other lefts to positions was 'outside' the constitution.

Only councillors were allowed to vote and ignoring the views of the party they voted by 24-19 for right winger Tony Dykes as leader.

### Right's snub

While the left respected the views of the LGC and did not vote against anyone selected at that meeting for a chair or vice-chair—including right wingers—the right deselected several key positions, and replaced them with individuals whose commitment to Labour's election manifesto is doubtful.

The LPYS in Camden is pledged to defend party democracy and will lead the fight to make sure that having defeated the Tory and Alliance class enemy we are not sold short by our own leaders.

# Labour official disrupts L'pool party HQ...

**WHILE THE** majority of Liverpool Labour Party members celebrated the tremendous vote of confidence in the local election results for their Labour council, the national Labour Party leadership continued in their attacks on the Liverpool Labour Party.

A decision has been taken by national official Joyce Gould that the District Labour Party office should be closed down and that a new office of the Regional Labour Party should be opened, with the Labour Party organiser responsible for Merseyside and the District Labour Party when it is reconstituted, to work from there.

The temporary co-ordinating committee (set up by the NEC while the DLP is closed) welcomes additional resources for the Liverpool party but strongly opposes the closing of the DLP office.

The DLP has shared their office with Liverpool Trades Council since they were both established. The present office provides a service for the whole labour and trade union movement in Liverpool—Constituency Labour Parties, Labour MPs and MEPs.

It was agreed by the Temporary Co-ordinating Committee that urgent discussions should take place to arrive at an amicable settlement. But letters sent to General Secretary Larry Whitty to request this have merely been noted by him.

When Labour Party members walked into the DLP and trades council office to discuss the arrangements, they discovered that the electric typewriter which belonged to the DLP had disappeared, that DLP files had been taken and that the telephone had literally been pulled out of the wall and taken, leaving wires sticking out.

Peter Kilfoyle, the newly-

By our Liverpool correspondent

appointed organiser for Merseyside, admitted to taking the phone, an act of political vandalism which even shocked national and regional Labour Party officials.

The appointment of Kilfoyle was carried out without any consultation with the Labour Party membership in the city.

His behaviour has alienated many ordinary party members. He appeared uninvited at the 19 May Labour Group meeting, but only three votes were cast against a motion demanding he left, which he had to do.

The NEC should take note, however: as agreed by the Temporary Co-ordinating Committee, the DLP will continue to function as before, jointly with the Trades Council, constituencies, MPs, etc and the telephone is now re-connected. We appeal for finance in order to run the office and would welcome donations to the Treasurer of the Liverpool Temporary Co-ordinating Committee, Ted Mooney, c/o Liverpool District Labour Party, 24 Harvey Street.

The NEC should reinstate the DLP at once and cease their attempts to split the Labour Party in Liverpool and let us get on with the job of attacking the enemy, the Tories and their system. Kilfoyle who has so flagrantly abused his position should be replaced by a new organiser after due discussion with the DLP.

# ...and derides Labour victory

**NOT SATISFIED** with trying to wreck the DLP offices, Kilfoyle has published an article trying to prove that Labour's 8 May victory in the city was really no victory at all. *Militant* is a vote loser after all, he says.

Can any Labour Party member imagine Larry Whitty after a general election, publicly rubbing his own party's efforts. He probably would not remain general secretary for long. It is no accident that this article appeared in *Tribune* in the run-up to the NEC meeting, where 11 leading Liverpool party activists face expulsion. It amounts to their own city's party organiser turning evidence against them.

Kilfoyle conveniently omits to mention that for 10 years almost uninterrupted by Liberals and Tories ran Liverpool Council. Or that prior to 1986 Labour had already taken 17 seats from

the Liberals in the last three elections. He ignores the damaging effect of the attacks on Liverpool councillors by the national party leaders.

Even the Tory *Liverpool Echo* is capable of a more balanced judgement. It recognises that the "low turn-out—down more than 20 per cent on the last town hall elections—could be expected to hit Labour much harder than the other parties", yet "the scope of *Militant*'s victory still confounded all the experts".

It is unprecedented for a paid party organiser to publish a factional article. When Youth Officer Andy Bevan was appointed he had to give a commitment not to write articles in the papers of the different groupings in the party. Even more so when Kilfoyle's article tries to denigrate the success achieved by the efforts of those he is employed to organise.



# Militant

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## Tories will never care

NEITHER RESHUFFLING the Cabinet nor promoting a more 'caring' image will save the Tories from the anger of those who have suffered at their hands. It is the crisis in the British capitalist economy, not the preferences of individual Tories which has dictated the ruinous policies which Thatcher has adopted. It is not this or that minister but the whole pack that needs changing. Even the removal of Thatcher herself, welcome though it would be, would change nothing fundamental.

The fall of one per cent in manufacturing output between the last quarter of 1985 and the first quarter of this year, show how empty are all the Tory claims that the economy has 'turned the corner'. Unemployment is still rising and the redundancies at BREL, British Caledonian and the shipbuilding industry will push it up still more. Even the inflation rate, low though it is, is still higher than in all Britain's main competitors. The main reason for lower inflation has been the drop in oil prices, which for Britain as an oil producer, also means falling revenues for the Treasury.

This economic crisis has left the Tories no choice but to conduct a relentless attack on workers, the unemployed and the poor. There is no way that they can now finance either significant increases in public expenditure or major tax cuts, whatever the political attractions. The kind of marginal rises in spending in health and education which they are talking about would anyway make a negligible impact this side of a general election.

That is why the Tory party is in the grip of such unprecedented splits. John Biffen openly calls for "a balanced ticket" to fight the next general election. David Mudd MP has even said that his support for the government can no longer be assumed. When Parliamentary seats are in jeopardy the coded statements which traditionally the Tories use when they have differences are replaced with open demands for changes in policy and leadership.

If the reshuffle fails to revive Tory fortunes, a change in leadership, with Thatcher succumbing to a sudden diplomatic 'illness', is still possible. But whoever the leader is, no cosmetic change in policy will benefit workers. The capitalist class which the Tories represent has no alternative but to insist on measures to curb wages and public spending, however electorally unpopular.

Hence the move to cut mortgage relief for the unemployed, the removal of under-21s from the protection of Wages Councils and the Fowler measures to cut social security and other benefits. Hence Lawson's plans for 'profit-related wage increases', a disguised method of cutting wages.

There are hints that the government is reconsidering some of their worst proposals for cuts in student grants, and mortgage relief, but overall the logic of capitalism leaves them with no alternative but to attack the unemployed's living standards. The jobless are then us-

ed as a threat to intimidate workers with jobs into accepting wage cuts, so that big business profits can rise.

For Labour the prospects of victory have never been brighter; they thrashed the Tories in the council elections and lead in the opinion polls. Yet defeat could still be snatched from the jaws of victory if the leadership do not pull back from their bid to plunge the party into conflict by expelling Marxists. With the Tories so divided, never has the need for Labour unity been stronger. A purge and the civil war within Labour which it would provoke would give Thatcher new hope.

No less important is that Labour's leaders learn the political lessons of the Tories' crisis. It is the capitalist economic system which imposes austerity on working people. A Labour government will not be able to carry out reforms in education, health, housing and welfare benefits if it tries to work within the straitjacket of the same system.

Although Thatcher is a particularly rabid and obnoxious representative of her class, it is not just she who is responsible for the crisis, but capitalism itself. A Labour government will have two alternatives. They can either accept the system and be forced to follow policies no different in essentials to the Tories, or they can adopt the policies of the Marxists they are trying to expel and begin the socialist transformation of British society.

This would mean taking over the monopoly industries which dominate the economy and dictate Tory policy, placing them under the democratic control and management of the workers, with compensation paid only on the basis of need. Then with a plan of production, it would be possible to revive and expand manufacturing industry and create the wealth to raise wages and finance all the reforms demanded by Labour's ranks.

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## Labour women's conference denounces expulsions

THIS YEAR'S Labour Women's Conference was the best for many years. By 275 votes to 115, delegates unequivocally rejected any witch-hunt and an even better resolution congratulating the seven left-wingers who walked out of the NEC and calling for the reinstatement of all expelled Labour Party members was passed by 260 votes to 115.

By Jane Hartley

The overwhelming majority also rejected the unfounded allegations of corruption and intimidation against Liverpool members.

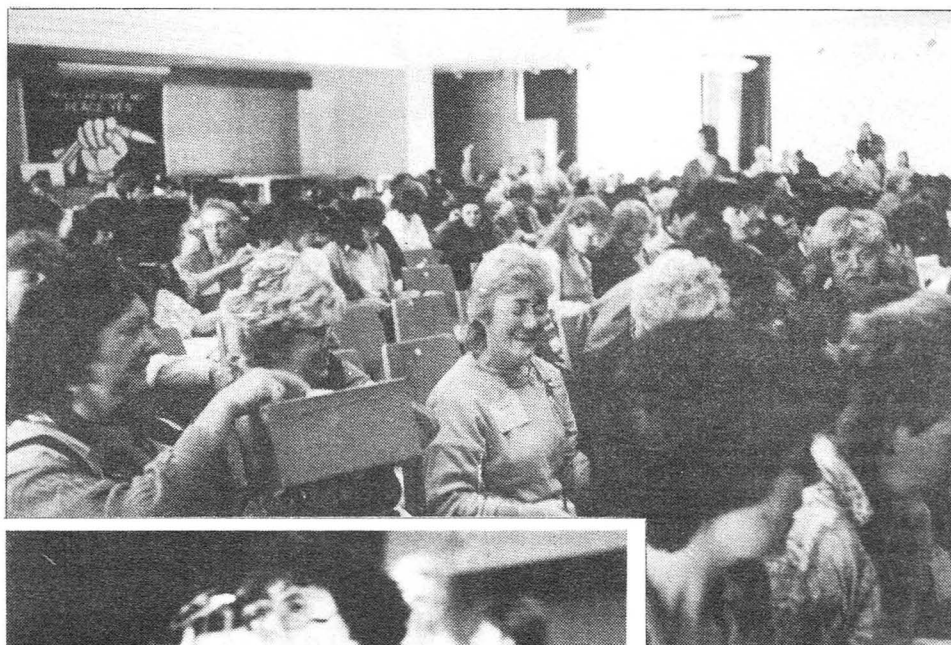
Liverpool City Council had tremendous support in the local government debate, when the delegates heard of their equal opportunities policy, the achievements for women and particularly the housing programme.

Conference left no doubt of its support for those councillors in Liverpool and Lambeth surcharged for taking on the Tories.

In the main discussions on the welfare state, housing, disabilities and local government, there was unease over the shift in policy of the Labour leadership.

In the first debate on the welfare state, Mandy Williams from Brighton described the attacks that were going to take place under Fowler's social security proposals and the loss in jobs that would take place in the Department of Health and Social Security. Since 1979, 10,000 jobs have been lost and now 25,000 more are threatened.

She argued that it wasn't enough for Labour merely to return to the *status quo* on social security benefits. In 1945, when Beveridge introduced the social security system, he expected that women would be dependent on a man all their lives and benefits were based on the insurance principle, which discriminated against women.



Top—conference voting. Below—Lesley Holt who called for links with the South African trade unionists.



She argued that we should be demanding work or full maintenance, not by taxation of the working class, but by using the wealth of society. Despite opposition from the National Women's Committee there was overwhelming support for the idea that we do not want to redistribute poverty, but redistribute wealth.

In the debate on housing and disabilities, Cathy Wilson explained that we didn't want disabled people to be forever reliant on charity. She explained the role of the big multinationals in the production of artificial limbs to the National Health Service. Their profits were three times those in manufacturing industry. She singled out BTR who control around 80 per cent of the market for artificial limbs in this country and have sacked many of their workers in South Africa.

There was a need for the taking over of these companies. Against the opposition of the National Women's Committee that resolution was overwhelmingly carried.

On low pay, Jackie McDonan, a young shop worker in Sainsbury's, explained why she would be on the 31 May low pay demonstration in Manchester. "Susan Sainsbury spent £20,000 on a 'satanic' con-man. I would have to save my wages up for 32 years to be able to do that."

### Part-timers

A speaker from the North West pointed to the lack of protection for young women in particular, as half of the women employees were part-timers in the North West and there were only six wages councils. Unfortunately the composites that called most clearly for a national minimum wage of £120 or two-thirds of the national average were defeated.

An emergency resolution on Chernobyl called for the end of the nuclear power station building programme, the closure of Sellafield and the replacement of John Cunningham as the front-bench spokesman. The only opposition came from the EETPU and TASS, but they

only mustered a handful of votes out of the nearly 600 delegates.

Whereas in the past, the Women's Action Committee had enormous support in the conference, when they attempted to hold a shadow election for the women's places on the National Executive Committee (their main campaign during the course of the year) out of almost 600 delegates only 381 took part in the elections, 75 of whom deliberately spoiled their ballot papers. This meant that only half the conference participated and the highest vote in the election was 276, only a third of the conference.

This conference really nailed its colours to the mast. At the end of the conference not only did they sing the Red Flag, but for the first time, the Internationale, with a young comrade waving a red flag at the back.

**SUPPORT FOR the 31 May demonstration against low pay is growing fast. Coaches have been booked by COHSE branches in Leeds and Wakefield, Southwark NALGO, Bermondsey Labour Party and London Hospital NUPE. Kent NUM have sponsored seats on a coach, three coachloads are coming from Nottingham, and two each from Coventry and Staffordshire.**

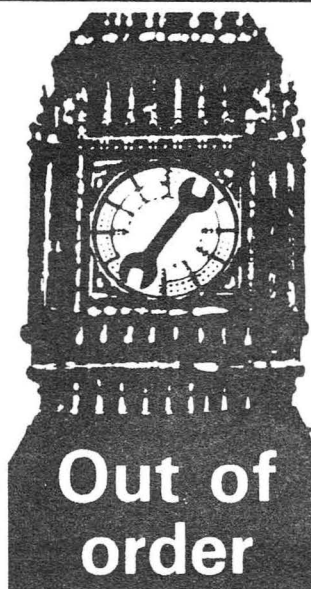
## Fight Wages Bill

LAST WEEK Parliament debated the third reading of the Wages Bill. This latest Tory attack on workers and their families will reduce the protection of the Wages Councils for thousands of low paid workers. It will hit some of the most vulnerable sections of society hardest—women, ethnic minorities and the young.

Wages Council rates are already near starvation wages—an average of around £50 a week. Yet Tory Ministers who earn almost £1,000 a week feel fit to tell 500,000 hairdressers and other young people who work in hotels, shops, restaurants, catering and clothing establishments that £50 a week is too much for them in Maggie's Britain.

Under this Tory government half a million young people have never had a job since they left school. Only 18 per cent of all 16 year olds are in work. This Bill, which attacks young people most by completely abolishing Wages Councils for under 21s is designed to continue the trend of making youth pay for the crisis of capitalism.

Last Thursday, during the debate, I said:  
"On 31 May thousands of workers will demonstrate, rally and



march in Manchester under the banner of the North-West Region Labour Women's Council, demanding a national minimum wage and a mass recruitment campaign to trade unions and the Labour Party of young workers who are affected by this provision. I hope that a repeal of such campaigns will signal the death knell of the Tory Government and the low wage, cheap labour economy, on which their big business backers depend for their luxury life styles."

The response to this call may, however, not be overwhelming from Members of Parliament—so make sure you're there on 31 May to make the demo a resounding success and to build a campaign that will get rid of the Wages Bill, the Tory government and their system.

By Dave Nellist MP

North West Region  
Labour Women  
**Demonstration  
and rally  
End low pay  
Fight  
privatisation**  
Saturday 31 May

Speakers from:  
Women Against  
Pit Closures;  
Silentnight;  
Tailor and Garment  
Workers' Union;  
USDAW

Assemble: All Saints (near Mancunian Way) Manchester, 11.30am.  
Rally: Crown Square, Manchester, 1pm to 1.30pm. Crèche available at the start of the march.



# Scrap the Tories rebuild shipyards

**THE LATEST crisis in the ship building industry is just another chapter in a long history of neglect, decay and conscious destruction.**

At the turn of the century, the yards on the Clyde and in the North East of England built three out of every five ships launched in the world. Even in 1948, Britain still produced 50 per cent of the world's ships.

But intent on making quick profits the private owners failed to invest and to keep pace with their competitors. By 1970 the assets employed per worker in shipbuilding were £825 in Britain, com-

pared to £2,800 in Japan. Investment per worker in 1971 in Britain was £80, in Japan £490. As a result the private owners were only too pleased to receive lavish compensation when the yards were nationalised in 1977.

## Tory privatisation

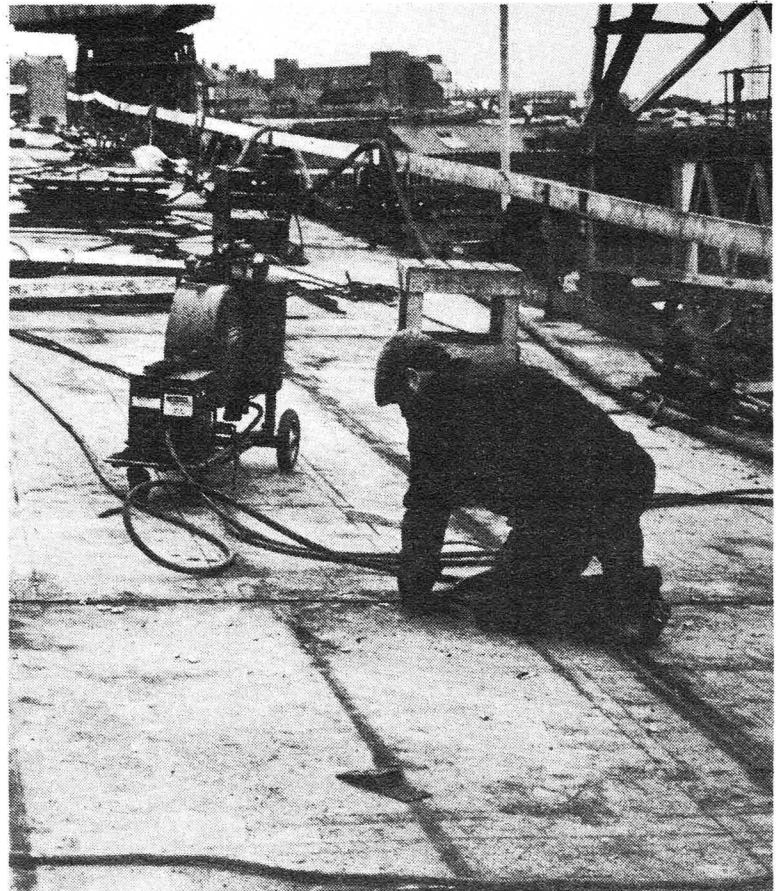
Since then the decline has continued with the nationalised industry being run on the same principles as private enterprise. Thatcher has forced through massive cutbacks and the sale of the more profitable naval yards to her big business friends, leaving merchant shipbuilding to die.

By 1979 Britain had less than five per cent of the world order book

and the decline has continued, made worse by the world crisis in the industry.

Orders worldwide have fallen by 33 per cent between 1983 and 1985. Scrapping is also running at record levels, with 44 million tons of shipping scrapped in 1985, most of it tankers.

As usual the main casualties have been the workers. In 1918 British shipbuilding employed 300,000 workers. Since nationalisation alone 40,000 jobs have been lost. If these latest proposals are implemented only 5,500 jobs will remain, less than in one medium-sized yard in British shipbuilding's heyday.



Shipyard workers in Sunderland.

## Another blow for Teesside workers

**SINCE 1979 Cleveland has been hit with a series of devastating blows. The two main industries steel and chemicals have seen a reduction in jobs from 25,000 and 15,000 to 7,500 and 6,000 respectively.**

Now comes British Shipbuilders' closure of Smiths Dockyard in December, despite just recently having invested £6.5 million in the yard. This either shows the complete lunacy of BS management, or as a T&G shop steward at the yard said: "It stinks of privatisation".

This area already has the highest unemployment rate in Britain. The two wards closest to the yards itself have male unemployment rates of over 40 per cent. Closure would push this up to over 50 per cent with a similar rise in the misery, social deprivation, illness and other problems caused by unemployment.

### School leavers

BS management have magnanimously agreed that apprentices at the yard will be allowed to finish their time but what then?

What about this and subsequent years of school

leavers who hoped for apprenticeships at the yard? The initial reaction of shock is turning to anger, particularly amongst the younger men.

Eric Porter, the T&G convenor said: "We cannot just surrender, we must fight". Unfortunately, some of the older men, afraid that the campaign won't succeed could waver given the prospect, as they see it, of a lump sum redundancy payment for a lifetime in the yard.

This underlines the necessity for a campaign uniting all the threatened yards and a clear programme for victory, including the commitment from the Labour leadership that privatised jobs will be renationalised and that shipbuilding will have a secure future under a Labour government. As Eric Porter put it: "You can scrap and build ships but you cannot scrap and build shipyards."

## Sunderland ghost town?

ABOUT 3,500 of British Shipbuilders' workers are to be made redundant with BS closing yards at Troon and Middlesbrough and pay-offs at Appledore, Clydesdale and Sunderland.

In Sunderland the two main employers are the pits and the shipyards. The town already has one in four unemployed, many ex-shipyard workers from previous closures and redundancies.

There are 28,859 registered unemployed in the town. With the redundancies from the yard that will become 29 per cent adult male unemployment. But the knock on effect on local trade and businesses dependent on shipbuilding could lose more than 12 to 13,000 jobs.

The Tories say that redundancies are caused by high wages, but our wages have

been eroded to the level that we are now 100th in the pay league.

Men working a full week in some cases in filthy and unhealthy conditions still have to go cap-in-hand to claim Family Income Supplement, supplementary benefit and rate and rate rebates.

British Shipbuilders tell us that with government support they will set up a new practical service for those facing redundancy. Workplace counsellors, will, they say guide them towards retraining and redeployment opportunities.

Do they propose to teach us skills that cannot be taught to the 3.5 million people who are already unemployed?

By Billy Richings, GMBATU A&P, Sunderland (personal capacity)

## Milked dry

STATEMENT FROM Micky Dodds, caulkers' shop steward, GMBATU at Austin and Pickersgill.

THE NATIONALISED yards are just being milked dry. I remember saying at a meeting in 1976 that we've got to nationalise the shipping companies like Trafalgar House and Cunard as well so we can plan things properly. Then we could really implement a proper 'scrap and build' policy.

## Labour's priorities

INTERVIEW WITH Peter St Clair, Secretary of South Shields No.2 GMBATU branch (personal capacity) and delegate to Northern Region Labour Party conference at the weekend.

ON WEDNESDAY the Labour Party NEC should be supporting our lobby of parliament and discussing how to revitalise British shipbuilding. I don't think anybody should be expelled from the Labour Party. But it's sickening that the NEC will be wasting time on Wednesday witch-hunting socialists from the party at the same time as we are lobbying for jobs.

## The stripper's pay-off

ONE RAT who just escaped from the sinking ship in time, Graeme Day, former Chairman of British Shipbuilders, received £80,000 plus bonuses for his hatchet work last year.

He had already stripped down the workforce to 9,000 a tenth of the numbers at nationalisation and sold off the profitable naval yards. Now, car workers beware he has taken over as Chair of British Leyland.

He boasted of increased productivity. Danny Morgan commented: "Day last year received about £15,000 in productivity bonuses, yet British Shipbuilders only got 11 per cent of the target number of orders, some productivity."

## National action now!

Interview with Paul Errington GMBATU shop steward in Austin and Pickersgill.

THE LADS at Austin and Pickersgill (A&P) are definitely ready to fight. Management had offered a

blood-money deal. A wage increase for other yards if they accepted the closures. They hoped to split us up but it has backfired on them.

Sunderland Shipbuilders men have voted unanimously for the strike. Now the fight is on, we need to push

as hard as the NUM did.

If, after Wednesday it means an all-out strike, then at the very worst we'll go down fighting. At the minute the next step is in the hands of the SNC. The NUM have one advantage over us, they had a leadership which would support them.

If the SNC propose all-out national action, our leadership will insist on a ballot and I can't see them enthusiastically campaigning for a 'yes' vote. But I'm convinced the stewards can counteract that at local level by making the members aware of everything that's happened and convincing them to vote 'yes'.

We must keep the action national. It's no good having just the threatened yards fighting alone. We've also got to enlist the active support of other unions.

## Keeping up morale

INTERVIEW WITH Tony Carty, Chair of the Shipbuilding Negotiating Committee (SNC), and Convenor of Austin and Pickersgill GMBATU.

THE SNC had no hesitation in recommending rejection of British Shipbuilders' plans. We passed a resolution which among other things requests from the membership the authority to call a minimum of one day of national action to support the campaign to save the shipbuilding industry. The response has been fantastic.

So far all the sections that have voted have voted overwhelmingly to strike so we are all out on Wednesday and we'll be lobbying parliament.

The morale among the lads is very high, we've got to make sure it stays that way.

## Workers must run our industry

INTERVIEW WITH Danny Morgan, GMBATU shop steward in Austin and Pickersgill.

THE WORKFORCE have made concession after concession to try and save this industry. In 1984 the unions agreed to "Phase Five" which eroded our working conditions. It involved composite working groups, interchangeability, new methods, new equipment, new systems and shift work.

British Shipbuilders still ran the industry down and now they are coming back for more.

In 1985-86 British Shipbuilders told us they needed 203,000 Gross Registered Tonnes (GRT) of orders to survive at the present man-

ing levels. In fact they got 23,000 GRT, 11 per cent.

But the package also includes massive subcontracting, temporary contracts and compulsory transfers between yards. In Austin and Pickersgill, the British Shipbuilders' document says "A&P will no longer be a shipbuilding yard, but a steelworks making units for Sunderland Shipbuilders".

### Foresight?

Earlier this year British Shipbuilders brought together yards in the North East, into North East Shipbuilders Limited. On 6 February they told us that they: "Didn't foresee any redundancies or changes in

working practices". We've now seen how far their foresight goes.

This government has set out to destroy the industry. It's the same approach for all nationalised industries. If this industry hadn't been nationalised it wouldn't be here at all now. But like the mines we have been starved of investment. The governments have left in charge the very same people who didn't want nationalisation in the first place.

Even the Labour government in 1976-77 tried to appoint Graeme Day as Chairman. It's time the industry was run by people who know and care about it. We need workers' control and management of British Shipbuilders.



# Thousands strike to foul up Fowler

WHEN THE National Union of Students held a day of action against the Tories' Fowler Review on 2 May, the best turnout was in South East Wales

On 1 May students at higher education colleges and Universities took part in a 24 hour occupation of college buildings. At South Glamorgan Institute the students were joined by NATFHE members.

The following day 13 out of 14 FE colleges took strike action involving 20,000 students, with NATFHE and NUPE members supporting the action and refusing to cross picket lines.

School students also joined the strike, despite threats of repercussions. One headmaster threatened to expel any students involved in the days action.

He happened to be the Liberal Party's prospective parliamentary candidate for Cardiff Central, who, eager not to damage his credibility, even pulled out of an all-party political debate on Fowler.

Despite such harassment, 1,000 students from schools

and FELS marched with CPSA, NATFHE and NUPE members to protest at the Fowler Review.

There has never been such opposition to Fowler's plans. Workers, students, school students and millions of other people threatened by the Tories want to stop Fowler.

The campaign could end in defeat for the Tory government if the NUS was to call 24 hour strike action, with an appeal to CPSA and NALGO members to take part.

By Simon Kesic  
(Area Convener  
South East Wales NUS)



Above and below: On the march in Cardiff

Photos: Maxine Smillie

## Sell Militant

EVERY WEEK at least 35 *Militants* are sold at GEC in Manchester, and 17 in Austin and Pickersgill shipyard in Sunderland. Another supporter sells 10 per week at the Wearmouth colliery.

Can you match, or beat, this? If so let us know—if not, keep trying.

*Militant* is the only paper which every week gives the workers' case written by workers in struggle. All sellers have a particular responsibility to sell *Militant* outside workplaces or to their own workmates.

### Outstanding

These sales have taken years to build-up. It may be slow work at times, but these comrades have built the base for a daily *Militant* in their workplaces.

This week's outstanding sale was at the CPSA conference where over 400 papers were sold.

Don't forget that industrial disputes should also be covered. It may be difficult to sell at Wapping when the riot police are running amok, but plenty of opportunities exist if you get there early—one supporter sold 30 at Wapping last week.



## Fascist thugs attack Young Socialists

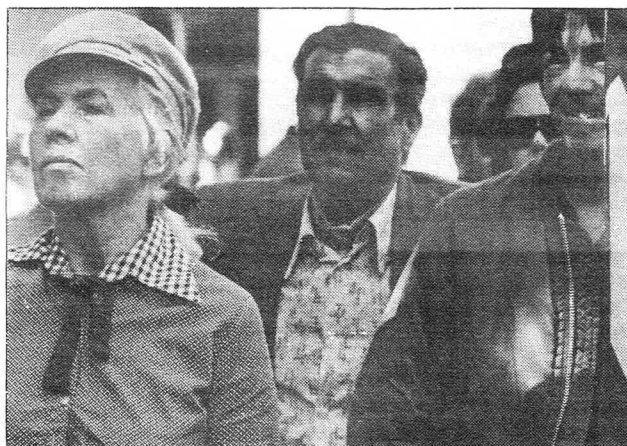
TWO *MILITANT* supporters were attacked by fascists after an anti-fascist meeting organised by Walton Labour Party Young Socialists in Liverpool on 12 May.

One of those attacked had stitches on his nose. He spoke to *Militant*.

"Earlier in the evening about nine fascists arrived at the YS meeting, demanding to come in. The stewards, recognising them to be from the British National Party turned them away. At this point one of the BNP members threatened to break people's kneecaps.

"After the meeting a group of us left together, to make sure no one went home alone. We were waiting at a bus stop at County Road when about nine BNP thugs came round the corner. It all happened very quickly.

"The main attacker was doing martial arts style kicking and punching, he seemed to have been properly trained. He kicked one comrade in the chest and did the



Stop the menace of fascism

same to an older man who was with us. He then apologised to the man, thinking that he was not with us.

"Then, he grabbed hold of me in a martial arts grip and punched me on the nose twice. Then they went away screaming. We knew who they were, they've been involved in harassment of other Labour Party members in Liverpool.

"We reported the attack to the police and have identified the assailants. It was a very cowardly attack, we think that one of the thugs may have been armed with a rice flail. The attack was typical of the fascists' cowardly behaviour, and we will be taking it up in the local labour movement to ensure that the menace of fascists and what they stand for is countered."

ON 7 June West Midlands Regional LPYS branches are demonstrating against the Tories' plans to cut social security benefits for under 25s. They will assemble at 10.30am at Sutton Coldfield and march to Birmingham where a rally will be held at 2.30pm in Chamberlain Square. Speakers include, Margaret Beckett MP (invited), Kevin Roddy (CPSA) and John Ellen (LPYS chair).

THE LABOUR Party Young Socialists in conjunction with the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign are holding a march, demonstration and rally against the Tory government's policies of unemployment and low pay on 21 June in Nottingham.

Assemble Forest Fields, 11.30am. March to Victoria Leisure Centre for mass rally. For further information contact: Richard Wheeldon, 85 Munday Street, Derby or phone Derby 367984.

## LPYS win marchers

THE LABOUR Party Young Socialists (LPYS) gave their wholehearted backing to the anti-Fowler day in South Wales. We took over one hundred names of students and young workers.

"They reckon if you're a socialist then you're a loony and you eat babies for breakfast, but I don't care, I want to get rid of Thatcher and her lot" joked 15 year old Rhiannon when she came over to the LPYS recruitment stall.

"Is that really Terry Fields?" asked 11 year old

Terry Wells. "I support Liverpool". Thinking he meant the football teams I asked him whether he supported Liverpool or Everton for the cup. "No I don't mean football I mean what *Militant's* doing in Liverpool—it's great."

The turnout from the local unions was very good. Workers disregarded the pathetic red scares of the local press who said this was just a *Militant* march.

By Maxine Smillie  
(Cardiff Central LPYS)

## LEFT and RIGHT

### Hedging their bets

THE MULTINATIONAL Pearson's company publishes the *Financial Times* and Penguin books, owns Royal Doulton and Madame Tussauds and has a big stake in the *Economist*, Goldcrest Films, Ladybird books, Chessington Zoo and other big enterprises.

They increased their profits from £99.4 million to £109.3 million last year. In gratitude they gave £15,000 to the Tory Party from whom all their blessings flow.

But they seem to think Thatcher's blessings are drying up. They also gave £5,000 each to the Liberal Party and the SDP. Sorry, Neil, nothing for Labour, despite all your hard work.

### Birthday treat

MAMIDAH BOLKIAH'S eighth birthday party was ruined by a bomb scare in top people's hotel Claridges so the police ferried Mamidah and her 200 guests to safety via a silver Rolls Royce and a luxury coach.

To compensate for the early finish to the bash her father the Sultan of Brunei (annual oil income around £2.7 billion) presented each child with a camera and a £10 note! Sounds just like your childhood memories, doesn't it.

Perhaps the Sultan should hold Mamidah's ninth birthday at the Dorchester Hotel which he has bought for a mere £48 million, or his recently built palace in Brunei, a mere snip at £302 million.

Leeds Labour Party Young Socialists  
Mass youth rally "Fight the Tories, fight  
Tory laws, give youth a future"

Speakers:

Derek Hatton (Deputy Leader, Liverpool  
City Council)  
Linda Douglas (Labour Party NEC, elect)

Leeds Town Hall, Sunday 25 May, 7.00pm  
Doors open 6.15pm.  
Admission 30p



# Close down all atom plants

LIKE THE original radioactive cloud from Chernobyl anxiety and gloom about the nuclear power industry has descended on Britain and Europe.

Opinion polls in Britain now record a majority opposed to the continued use of nuclear power.

But the Tory government, with the big business nuclear lobby behind it, is still firmly committed to nuclear energy. Thatcher appointed nuclear zealot Lord Marshall to head the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB), and the government is intent on increasing the proportion of nuclear generated electricity from its present 17 per cent to 25 per cent by 1990.

Labour has a golden opportunity to tap the anti-nuclear feeling, and to prove that it is the only party that places the well being of ordinary people first. Last year's party conference passed by 3.9 million votes to 2.4 million a resolution for the phasing out of nuclear power. It only failed by a whisker to reach the magical two-thirds majority, which should guarantee inclusion in Labour's manifesto. But it undoubtedly represents the mood of the majority of party members and Labour voters.

What is restraining the party leaders from campaigning on it? They seem eager to jump on every other popular issue—lead-free petrol (which *Militant* supports) etc. But the Party environment spokesman John Cunningham, whose constituency includes the Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant, is adamant. "Civil nuclear power has a legitimate role in any national energy policy," he told the Commons.

He would only commit Labour to ordering no further nuclear power stations "in the present circumstances of energy self-sufficiency, the strength of

the British coal industry and grave public concern about the nuclear industry." He charges Labour's anti-nuclear wing with threatening workers' jobs in the industry. But should Labour drop its commitment to scrap Trident missiles, even though workers in Barrow depend on it?

The only conclusion to come to is that John Cunningham has no faith in the Party's nuclear policy agreed by conference. On the basis of a non-nuclear socialist energy policy all displaced workers would be guaranteed local, alternative work, with present wages and conditions assured. New jobs would be created in the development of renewable energy sources and energy-saving programmes.

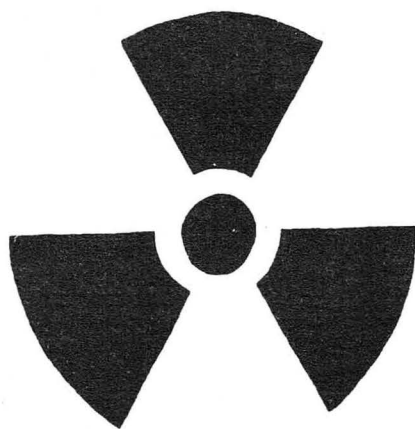
## Inquiry

Labour must be committed to phasing out nuclear power, including Sellafield; the scrapping of the Thorp and Sizewell new plants; a trade union inquiry into the safest method of nuclear waste disposal, which would still arise from the decommissioning of nuclear plants.

An integrated socialist energy policy, based upon the public ownership of the entire industry, could allow for the necessary investment into all forms of energy. Capitalism has thrown all its eggs into the nuclear basket. Renewable energy sources—wind, solar, etc.—have been ignored.

All the indications are that the Labour leadership is looking to reverse the nuclear power motion at this year's conference. After Chernobyl this will be some task. Party members must ensure that Labour's policy is retained intact, and Cunningham must be held to account.

By Jeremy Birch



## Disaster in Britain?

IT COULD never happen here, the Tories tell us after Chernobyl. Energy Secretary Peter Walker maintained that there would have been no disaster, had Russia followed the procedures in the West.

It has now been revealed that control mechanisms for the Chernobyl reactor were built in France and Germany.

Britain's ageing Magnox reactors, like Chernobyl, lack secondary containment, which could after an explosion hold in escaping radiation. The chief inspector of nuclear installations has announced that Magnox reactors "probably would not be licensed today".

Since 1971 there have been 151 significant nuclear safety incidents at nuclear power plants in 14 countries.

But what about Britain's safety procedures? The nuclear installations inspectorate has complained of under-staffing and inability to give a "desired amount of attention to industrial safety." BBC Radio 4 revealed that emergency evacuation plans for villagers around Hinkley Point reactor, are 20 years old, and include assembly points at buildings

no longer existing!

Plans for the new Sizewell B pressurised water reactor (Three Mile Island was a PWR reactor) state that anyone injured or contaminated would be taken to Ipswich hospital. But doctors there maintain they could only cater for 4 or 5 victims at a time. Yet official figures from Chernobyl record 299 still in hospital with radiation sickness and nine dead.

## London

Sizewell is 84 miles from London, the same distance as Kiev from Chernobyl. The Tory government brought back British students from Kiev after the accident, while fearful local residents are sending their children out of the city. What would the panic be like if a radioactive cloud settled over a city London's size?

The nuclear installations inspectorate calculated there would be 30,000 deaths from the release of one per cent of the core of a pressurised water reactor. That could be the proportion released from Chernobyl.

By Jeremy Birch



British students from Kiev evacuated after the disaster. London is the same distance from Sizewell as Kiev is from Chernobyl.

## A divided community

THE IMPRESSION is always given by the nuclear industry that those who work for it have confidence in the industry and the way that it is run. This interview, with two workers at Sellafield, shows that both workforce and community are divided.

"British Nuclear Fuels deal in fear. There is fear of radioactive poisoning or worse—a disaster. But there is also the fear of losing jobs. This area has lost the iron mines, the coal mines, and the steel mills. Unemployment is 15 per cent, and if the plant was closed down then it would rise to 50 per cent.

"It is a terrible choice—a job today or our children tomorrow. BNFL do everything to keep control such as giving money out to the local clubs. In effect it is like bribing the community.

"We hate what is happen-

ing but we have no alternative. We have nothing else to feed our kids. Many of the houses are tied cottages so if you lose your job you are also homeless.

"This place produces dangerous cancer producing chemicals, blown by the wind, which you can't see, taste or feel.

"Often we don't talk about the danger—just silence. You don't want to think about it. Also the fear for your job keeps you quiet. You never know who is listening. Sometimes you don't hear about a leak until you get home and hear it on the news.

"You get used to the alarms. The procedure is pathetic: on amber alert the procedure is to close the windows. Red alert means check your mask and get out the iodine pills. As far as we know there are no shelters or evacuation procedures.

"The workforce has a low morale. Some are pro,

because it's where the money comes from. It is a divided community. A few years ago the workforce passed a resolution of no confidence in the management. But the threat of the sack is used to keep control over the workers. They also work hard to weed out the activists in the unions. They want a pro-nuclear and an anti-strike union leadership. The workers remain cynical towards management and call the company newspaper the 'Ministry of Truth' paper.

"There must be an alternative to this poison plant that gives us safe and useful jobs. It is up to the Labour Party and the unions—Greenpeace isn't the answer. They took BNFL to court over the discharges into the Irish Sea. BNFL was fined £10,000 damages and Greenpeace had to pay out £60,000. We don't want a green alternative, we want a red one."

THE REPORTS that high levels of radiation in the environment after Chernobyl will produce an epidemic of cancer have caused widespread alarm.

These fears have been intensified following revelations that our present safety levels of radiation are grossly inadequate.

The current standards, based on recommendations by the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP) were derived exclusively from observations of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombs. The original studies have remained a classified secret by the US government. The ICRP have consistently refused to revise the standards to include recent studies linking radiation exposure to occupation even

though all levels of radiation pose some risks.

It is now well documented that the agreed 'safety levels' of radiation have been responsible for the abnormal increases of cancer amongst nuclear workers and in the general population around nuclear installations.

Recent evidence has shown that whereas high levels of radiation destroy cell structure, lower doses are also harmful, as they can cause mutations which can result in cancers and leukaemias. Small children and embryos in pregnant mothers are particularly vulnerable.

New evidence from abroad has now cast a question mark over the entire range of radiation levels. Japanese and American scientists, using computers, have been able to reconstruct the effect of Hiroshima. Us-

## Fighting Fund

New chart next week

THE PETITION against the witch-hunt is proving to be an excellent way of raising money. Supporters have been going door to door selling the paper and asking for donations with the petitions and collecting tins.

On the streets and at work they should be used to explain why the witch-hunt must be defeated and why we need cash to help us in that fight. Even the newest supporters are showing what can be achieved. In Llanelli, a YS member raised £6 in one day by using the petition. Don't forget to ask for a donation and always use your collecting tin. Supporters in Wirral collected £45.84 last week just from

using the petitions and rattling tins. In Bedford £18.09 was collected in the tins and in Central Liverpool sellers raised £19.05.

With two weeks already gone, we need a massive injection of the readies to get us on target for this quarter.

THANKS THIS WEEK TO:  
ASTMS Conference £283; Anonymous, North Wales £100; Mrs Maclean, OAP, Uxbridge £5; Sammy Lee, Kirkby AUEW, £5, Chris Stonehouse, Birkenhead £100, D Doyle, Dyfed £5; C McElhane, Glasgow £2; P Tyson, ASTMS £20; APEX Expenses, Glasgow £12.60; Vauxhalls, Luton, £1.65.



THIS YEAR marks the 50th anniversary of the Spanish revolution. To commemorate the heroic struggle of the Spanish workers we have produced a special poster. Send us £1 including postage and package; orders of 10 or more at 50p each.



# Faced with unemployment catastrophe...

# Fife fights for a future

FIFE, one of the most industrialised parts of the East of Scotland, has been ravaged under the Tories. Since 1979 those who claim supplementary benefit have increased by 16.3 per cent. There are 21,144 on the dole. Things would be much worse without the jobs provided by Rosyth Naval Dockyard and the pits. Rosyth, with 6,500 workers is the biggest single employer in Scotland. The pits employ 3,000.

Both are under immediate threat. The Tories intend to privatise the dockyard's management by 1987 which will mean massive redundancies. All five pits in Fife could face closure in the near future. The impact of this would be catastrophic.

But the working class of Fife will not take it lying down. Fife has militant working class traditions. The early Communist Party has a mass base here. In 1926 during the general strike, the workers of Methil formed their own militia. In

Cowdenbeath the workers declared their intention to seize the local arsenal, arm themselves and pronounce the achievement of socialism. Throughout the 1920s and early 1930s the small mining community of Lumphinnans was nicknamed "Little Moscow". Here the Communist Party ran the village according to the soviet model with a workers' court.

These traditions die hard. Central Fife had Willie Gallagher as its Communist MP until 1950. The fighting heritage of the Fife working class is being taken up by the supporters of the *Militant*. Armed with a Marxist programme, the Fife labour movement can repulse the Tory attacks on their community and become, once more, a vanguard in the fight for socialism.

In their own words the workers of Fife describe how they are fighting back.

## Rosyth workers prepare to combat privatisation

**Jock Penman, EETPU Convenor.**  
"From the start the men have been 100 per cent behind a campaign to stop privatisation.

"The Tories have told us that by April 1987 Rosyth Dockyard will be under commercial management. They've tried to con us into believing that it's not such a bad thing. We aren't fooled. Privatisation of the management will mean job losses; they are already talking about 500 going in 1987; wages will be cut and conditions will deteriorate.

"The lessons of the miners' strike and the printworkers' struggle have taught us just what this government is all about. We realised that our unions had to be fighting organisations if the workers at Rosyth were to defend themselves.

"When it comes down to it, the workers at Rosyth are like workers anywhere. If we're threatened then we will fight. All that is needed is leadership. We haven't received leadership from national level and some of the local convenors don't know which way to go.

"But there is a new layer of young stewards coming up, many of whom support the ideas of the 'Rosyth Dockyard Broad Left'. It is this new layer of fighters who will lead a real struggle against Tory privatisation".

**John Roberts, AUEW.**

"The Tories want the dockyard to compete with private shiprepair. In other words 'get the ships out as fast and as cheap as you can'. This is crazy as far as Rosyth is concerned, because only quality counts when you're refitting warships. We can't compete on a commercial basis with private ship-repair. Eventually a private management would sell off large parts of Rosyth as unviable.

"This would result in full-scale redundancies. To understand what

this would mean to Fife you have to realise the nature of the area. Over 6,000 men work at Rosyth, the vast majority from Fife. You can walk into any pub in Dunfermline and about half of the punters there will work in the dockyard.

"If full-scale redundancies happen, (there is already talk of 500 going as soon as private management take over), then it will be a disaster area around here.

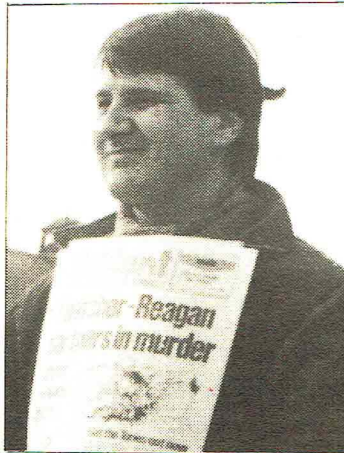
"I've seen it happen elsewhere in Fife. With the decline of the pits, a town like Cowdenbeath has massive unemployment. People walk about the streets during the day and the town is deserted at night. There just isn't the money for people to spend on a night out. The same would happen in Dunfermline. Shops and pubs would close, unemployment would explode, the community would die.

"We can fight this thing though, if we remain determined. The government say privatisation is in its last stages but in the end they can't get away with their plans if the workers refuse to co-operate with them. If the men stand behind the fight, then there is no way the Tories will privatise Rosyth."

**Tom Robertson, EETPU shop steward.**

"We can fight this thing. We have to. The ideas which came from national level, such as petitioning Rosyth's managing director, sending postcards to Thatcher and writing to the Queen Mother haven't exactly enthused the men I represent.

"What we need is an organised fight and a fighting leadership, with every union facing the same way. There's no problem in rallying the men to the fight. The problems only begin when the old right wing on the convenors' committee start quibbling; then things start to go wrong and splits start to appear.



Bruce Wallace.

**Feature by  
Bruce Wallace  
and Steve Arnott  
Photos by Harvey Duke**

**Some of the right wing should have 'we're doomed' tattooed on their foreheads".**

**Davey Payne, 21, EETPU shop steward.**

"I left school and went straight into the yard; it was the only job I applied for. Now I find I could be on the dole if the yard's privatised and there's little chance of finding another job.

"This isn't just a workers versus management dispute; it's a fight between the working class and the ruling class. If the Tories get away with privatising Rosyth then they can get away with anything.

"The only way to stop this is for the unions in the yard to campaign for an all-out fight, mobilising the Fife labour movement for a day's stoppage as a start."

**Alex Semple, GMBATU, shop steward.**

"I started in Chatham Dockyard in 1965. Chatham was shut in 1982. My family and I moved up to Fife so I could work at Rosyth. I've moved 500 miles to keep my job.

"If Rosyth is privatised and there are redundancies, I'll have nowhere to go. There's no way that I'm giving up this job without a bloody hard fight".



Pauline Fowler.

**Militant Public Meeting**

**Fight for Fife  
Defend the  
dockyard**

**Save the pits**

**Wee Jimmie's Lounge**

**High Street,**

**Cowdenbeath**

**7.30,**

**Wednesday 28 May**

**Broad Left  
Organising Committee**

**Fight  
privatisation**

**12 July**

**Digbeth Civic Hall,**

**Birmingham**

**Invited speakers:**

**Arthur Scargill**

**Tony Benn**

**See page 15 for details**

## Dole, poverty and misery

**UNEMPLOYMENT IN Fife has tripled under the Tories. In many of the working-class estates that were built in the 'hopeful' sixties, life on the dole is the norm and poverty is a harsh reality. *Militant* reporters interviewed a few people at random who are part of That-**

**cher's new 'Giro' generation. What their comments revealed is that there is a 'third nation' forced to live on the edges of society in Tory Britain. A 'third nation' who, when armed and inspired with a socialist programme, will become an irresistible force to change society.**

**Colin Anderson, Glenrothes, age 23, unemployed for three years:**

"The worst thing about being on the dole is having no sense of purpose in life at all—no direction and no light at the end of the tunnel.

After three years you count time in terms of your next dole cheque.

"£55.10 a fortnight is pitifully inadequate. You just can't live on it. The first week the State keeps me—the second week my parents keep me. If they didn't exist to sub me an odd tenner now and again, I would end up shoplifting in order to eat. Crime, that would be the answer.

"They tell us that that there's a much greater accent on leisure activities these days—the problem is that you need cash to get into most of them. If you walk into the local snooker club it's full of small businessmen, not local punters on the dole.

"Every fortnight you go down to the pub and get blitzed. It's a natural thing to do. You get two days a fortnight to see the people you want to see and do the things you want to do. Two days a fortnight, then once you've bought some food and paid a bill maybe, the money's gone.

"There are a lot of dead junkies about. A lot of people have just

given up. But it's monetarism that causes unemployment, people should realise that. People should get up off their arse and fight for a solution".

**Linda Mackay, Macedonia, Glenrothes, unemployed, single-parent with two under-fives. Receives £37.50 a week in benefit.**

"The worse experience I ever had on the dole was last Christmas. This was just before me and the hubby split-up. He packed his job in, not that it was much money anyway. According to the dole that meant that we had to survive on £15 a week in the run-up to Xmas. I could only spend £7 on each of the bairns. I had to go hungry sometimes so that they could eat properly.

"The other thing is trying to buy shoes, or clothes. It's just cost me £20 to put shoes on the two weans—that's half a dole cheque.

"I don't receive the full single parent's allowance because my marriage has just broken-up, but you're not considered by the dole to be a single parent until you've been split up a year. It's ridiculous.

"My £37.50 doesn't last. £18 goes straight away paying off a massive electricity bill. These houses are expensive to heat. They





Rosyth Naval Dockyard—privatisation could mean disaster for workers.



Miner John Shaw outside the Seafield colliery.

have underfloor heating. The thing is I needed the heating on all during the winter. One of my kids has bronchitis and the other has bronchial asthma.

"In this estate over 60 per cent of the houses are on rent and rates rebates of one degree or another. The majority of people in this street are on the dole. You could list the people with jobs on one hand. There are three young couples just around here starting out in life and none of them have jobs.

"Sometimes I think you're better off on the dole than being in a low-paid job. At least you can claim for a few things off the dole. My mum and dad are worse off than what they would be on the dole because my mum has a low-paid part-time job. She gets £33 a week.

"Thatcher and the Tories and the rich bastards that are behind them are the real cause of unemployment. If *Militant* means releasing working-class women like me from all this, then I'm a *Militant*!"

Sharon Thomson, Kirkcaldy, 20, single parent with two-year old.

"I remember when Jamie was only about six months. We stayed in this rotten flat in Perth. That winter was hellish. I couldn't put the coal fire on because smoke kept on coming in the room and I couldn't afford a chimney-sweep. I wrote to the Social and asked if they could pay for it. They said aye, but I would have to pay for it first, then they would send me the money. The point was I didn't have the money to lay out in the first place. We ended up going through all winter with one bar of the electric fire to heat the house.

"Our clothes were always getting

wet and they wouldn't dry properly. I couldn't even afford to go to the laundrette. Me and the bairn used to huddle together under the blankets in one room to try and keep warm. The bairn was ill all winter. In fact he's never really recovered from it. His chest is really prone to infection. I always remember that because that's when I realised that there was something wrong with this system. I hate Thatcher. I hate her."

Pauline Fowler, 16, unemployed six months, Dunfermline.

"I've tried finding work. I sent loads of applications away but only got one interview and didn't get the job. Things were tough from the start. I was living with my mum at first. She was on Social Security and I got £36 from the dole. £20 went to my mum so I had £16 to last a fortnight.

"This usually lasted three to four days, a week if I was lucky. All my mates and I could do was walk around the town. Sometimes we could afford to buy a cup of coffee in a cafe, but we could go days without a cent to spend. After a while I didn't bother getting up in the morning; there wasn't any reason to.

"I know loads of people in Dunfermline on the dole. They get their Giro and buy some dope. They get stoned for a few days then wait for their next Giro so they can score some more. It's a vicious circle.

"I had to leave home because of the friction caused by me and my mother both being on the social without anything to do or money to spend. I've got a room in a flat now, its OK. I get bed and breakfast for £90 a fortnight; the bu'roo gives me £136 so I'm better

off than at home, but because the Tories have changed the law I've got the choice of getting out of here in four weeks or going on YTS.

"So its YTS or back with my mum. YTS is a dead-end. Most of my friends have done two years of YTS and they're on the dole now. The Tories give you the choice, two years cheap labour or you're on the street!"

"I'm pissed off! Disillusioned! Most of all I'm angry! The system offers me nothing. I've no faith in Kinnoack to solve my problems although I do believe there is a way out. Socialism is the answer although how it will come about I don't know".

Alister Black, 16, school student, Dunfermline.

"My old man's a miner and going through a year's strike with him politicised me. The same's happening to my friends. Look around Fife.

"The schools in Fife used to be a training ground for the supply of apprentices to the dockyard and the pits. You don't hear about this anymore.

"The careers advisors only talk about YTS, never about real jobs. When we hear this there's always a murmur goes round the classroom.

"We're resigned that there's not much of a future after school for many of us, but we're really angry that Thatcher's placed us in such a position that we have to worry about what we're going to do after school. Everybody who has got a job that I know is in a dead-end, low-paid one.

"Thatcher's stocking up tremendous bitterness. She never was very popular in my school but now she'd be hard put to find a friend".

## Miners struggle for their jobs

Sean Lea, sacked miner, Seafield.

"I'm married with a kid and was on strike for 13 months, then was sacked for committing a breach of the peace on the very last day of the strike.

"So I've been out of work for nearly 27 months. Things have been really tough. I feel really bitter about the way I've been victimised for committing a paltry offence.

"I'm waiting on an industrial tribunal. The NCB have already refused to reinstate men who have won their tribunal, but I'll take my chance; I don't have any other alternative.

"Myself and the other sacked men collect donations at the pit gates every Friday which helps us to keep going. Even now we are harassed by the police for collecting too near the main gate.

"I wasn't interested in the union or politics before the strike, but my experience has opened my eyes, particularly the nature of the police in attacking the miners. Despite undergoing over two years of hardship, I know what we did was right. We fought to save our jobs and defend our union.

"At least I have a chance of getting my job back; without a fight I might have been down the road anyway. I'll stick it out for as long as it takes to get my job back".

John Shaw, SCEBTA pit delegate, Seafield Colliery.

"Since the strike the NCB have been reducing the workforce at a steady rate. Before the strike, Seafield and Frances collieries employed 1,700-1,800 men and were crucial for the well-being of the local economy. Now Frances is closed on a care-and-maintenance basis and Seafield's workforce has been reduced to about 790.

"I don't believe the NCB want to close Seafield, but they want to reduce the workforce to at least 500 men. In Fife as a whole, the NCB aim to retain only Seafield and Solsgirth pits, both with reduced workforces.

"This would be a disaster for Fife, already one of the blackest unemployment spots in the country. The heart would be ripped out in many a Fife community. Take Ballyingry; it has got unemployment of over 22 per cent. A large part of its workforce depends on the pits; any more redundancies and Ballyingry will die as an economic community.

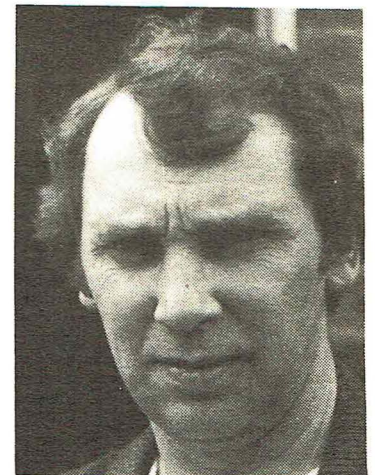
"The threat is generalised. Everywhere is affected. Just look around Kirkcaldy. Even pubs and bookies are shutting and who's ever heard of a bookie going bust?"

"Kirkcaldy High Street is full of empty shops which are up for let... nobody wants to rent them; there just isn't any business.

"Many people who don't have any direct connection with the pits can see the cold hand of unemployment and depression threatening them.

"Of course this government and this management don't give a damn for either this community or for the future of our industry. Not surprisingly the men's heads are down at the moment, and a lot of men are wanting out of the pit. I'm staying on to carry on the fight; it may take time but the tide must turn eventually.

"Thatcher has stoked immense bitterness in Fife; the scars of the strike will never heal here. The Tories have left Fife to rot but someday the punters here will get even."



Ross Latham, 35, miner, NACODS, Castlehill pit delegate.

"I've worked in the pits for 14 years. Now all five pits in Fife are threatened with closure, 3,000 men could lose their jobs. If the pits close and the dockyard is privatised, villages like Saline, Oakley and Blairhall would become ghost villages; the centre of Dunfermline would become a wasteland.

"I've lived in Fife all my life, I never believed things could be potentially as bad as this. The Tories have gone out of their way to destroy our industry. They seem determined to throw Fife back to the 1930s, in fact even worse than those years because at least the pits stayed open then.

"Its hard to explain how the miners feel just now. There isn't a miner who hasn't a real detestation of the Tories and what they've done to Fife.

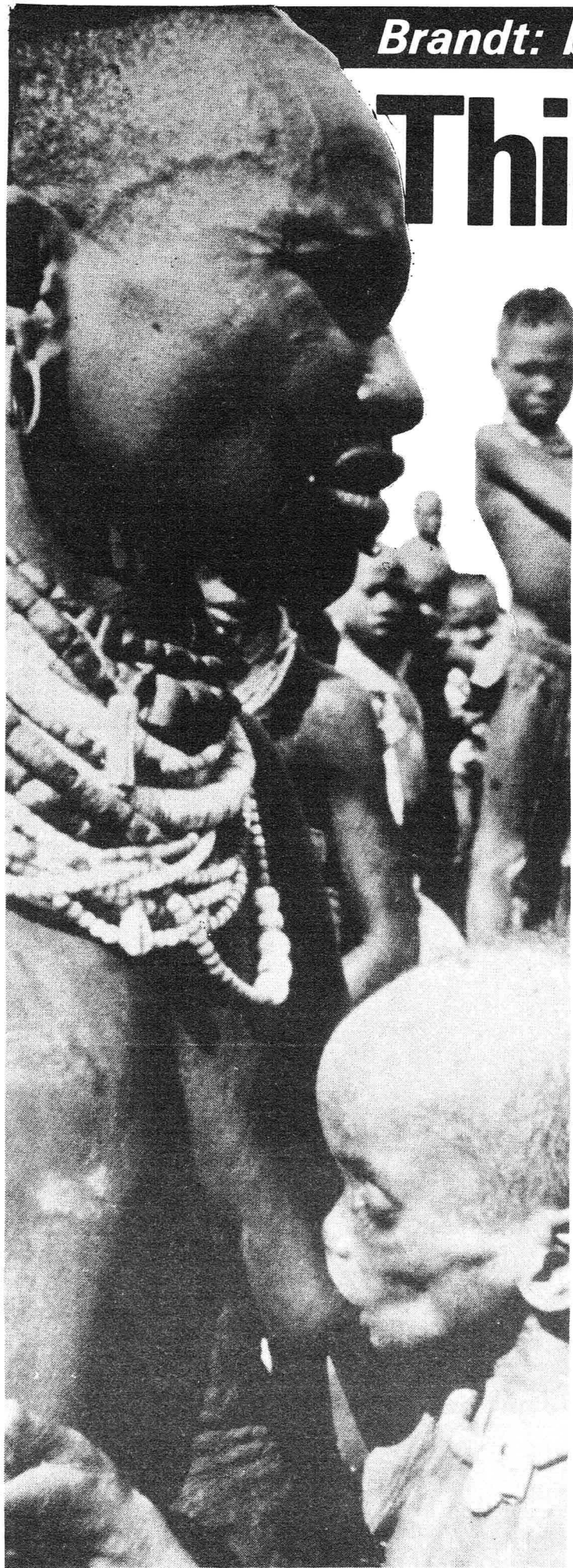
"Some of the older men are resigned to the situation, but the young miners are gritting their teeth and are determined to fight on.

"I hope the Tories are kicked out soon. We need a Labour government but one that is committed to a socialist energy policy that will sensibly use the nation's resources and will finally bring the pits under workers' control."



Brandt: book review

# Third world sinking in quicksand



## Armaments and hunger

**THE REVOLUTION** in the Philippines, the fall of the house of Duvalier in Haiti; mutiny among the impoverished conscript forces in Egypt; crisis brewing in Pakistan; upheavals in the Sudan—the peoples of the colonial world are rebelling, fired by the inhuman conditions they have to endure.

In his new book, *World Armaments and World Hunger*, Willy Brandt, chairman of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, which reported in 1980 and 1983, again details the plight of the majority of mankind and provides the most recent facts and figures.

By Jeremy Birch

Internationally \$1,000 billion will be spent this year on arms—twenty times the total of annual development aid.

Every minute \$2 million dollars are spent on arms, and every minute 30 children under the age of six die from lack of food, lack of clean water or lack of medical care.

For the cost of one nuclear submarine the education budgets of 23 third world countries, involving 160 million children, could be funded.

Brandt confirms that the standard of life in the Third World already dire, is worsening. As the world's population rockets, the absolute number of illiterates will increase to 900 million by the year 2000.

Or with health and the eradication of disease: due to lack of funds, killers like cholera and malaria, brought under control in the 1960s, are now spreading more widely. The World Health Organisation's "health for all" pledge — that by the year 2000 everyone should enjoy basic medical care and hygienic living conditions — seems further away than ever. To realise it, \$50 billion would be needed each year. That is more than the total official development assistance.

What can be done to protect the 50 per cent of the Third World population who are without fresh drinking water? Who will finance an adequate inoculation programme, when only 10 per cent of Third World children are immunised against six major childhood diseases?

In the wake of the horrific Ethiopian famine, Brandt explains that throughout the Third World there are 450-500 million undernourished or suffering chronic hunger. Food production per head has actually declined over the last 20 years in the poverty belt of Sub-Saharan Africa. Potentially fertile Zambia now imports six times as much grain as in the first days of independence.

The book does not adequately point the finger of guilt at feudal land distribution, with a few big landlords often not bothering to till productive land, nor at the Western-dominated world market, compelling agricultural concentration on cash-crop production for export, to earn foreign exchange to repay debts and to finance imports of machinery and equipment.

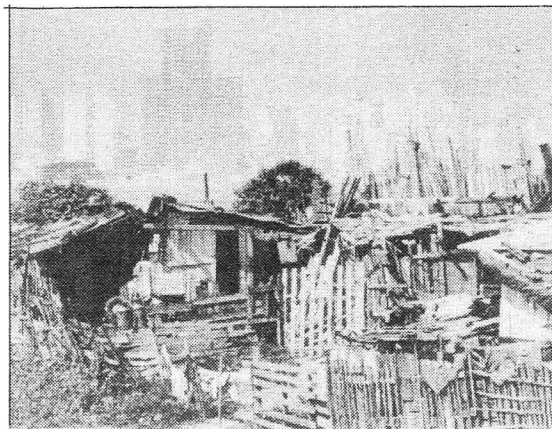
But Brandt recognises that "the world is now producing and has at its disposal enough food to feed the whole of humanity. The food problem of such countries arises primarily from the fact that their people are too poor to buy what they need".

However, the idea that "an improvement in income—which means providing remunerative jobs" could ever be attained without transforming ownership of the economy is pure utopia.

The developing world is sinking fast in quicksand. The harder it works to get out, the further down it goes. Western manipulation of the terms of trade means that Central America has to export twice as much as in 1979 to purchase the same amount of goods on the world market. The virtual collapse of commodity prices over the last two years has plunged some countries beneath the surface.

The present-day agony of the Third World under the stranglehold of the multinational corporations strikingly confirms Marx's analysis of over 100 years ago:

"Hand in hand with this centralisation, or this expropriation of many capitalists by few, develop, on an ever-extending scale... the entanglement of all peoples in the net of the world market, and with this, the international character of the capitalist regime. Along with the constantly diminishing number



By the year 2000 half the world's population will live in cities. 17 of the 20 biggest cities will be in the Third World. The biggest will be Mexico City (26.6 million) and Sao Paulo (24 million).

of the magnates of capital... grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class..." (*Capital*, Vol 1, pages 714-715)

Combined Third World debts now probably top \$1,000 billion. One year's interest payments now exceeds the total debt of a decade ago. And the annual cost of debt servicing is three times the value of annual development aid.

In 1984, Latin America recorded a negative net transfer of \$55 billion. There is now a net export of capital from debtor countries to the industrialised world.

At the same time the ability of these countries to increase export earnings to service the debt is severely restricted. With economic slowdown in the developed world, 60 per cent of world trade is transacted now under "non-free conditions".

These countries are forced to go, cap in hand, to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for financial help, debt rescheduling, etc. The terms for assistance are austere — cut subsidies, cut spending, devalue.

The social cost is severe. Brandt quotes a Brazilian bishop's view that "more and more people have less and less". Wages have sunk below their 1970 level, and millions of Brazilians are under-nourished.

## Obscene wealth

Argentinian living standards have fallen 30-40 per cent since 1975, and in Mexico real wages dropped 30 per cent in the two years following the country's 1982 debt crisis. In Peru the Central Bank president reports: "Our *per capita* income has dropped to its 1965 level".

But the obscene waste of productive resources on means of destruction, exposed by Brandt, is not restricted to the superpowers. Unable, in the main, to afford even the trappings of parliamentary democracy, the various capitalist military dictatorships in the Third World account for 20 per cent of world arms spending in their attempts to protect themselves from the wrath of the masses.

Fully 25 per cent of their accumulated debts is due to arms imports.

Brandt's depiction of the ills besetting the underdeveloped world are clear enough. But his prescription for cure is the same moralistic appeal for "greater global solidarity" issued by the Brandt Commission. This cannot be much more than faith healing when "political capabilities and an understanding and international responsibility seem to be stagnating. There are

clear signs of retrogressive movement in many areas".

Brandt wants an international system of progressive taxation to aid the poorest, increased development aid, extra IMF and World Bank resources, and a levy to be imposed on the arms trade, like a world-wide indirect tax.

All this — when in fear of hyperinflation every economy, from Reagan in the US to Papandreu in Greece, is cutting back state spending.

Just as international cooperation is buried amidst crisis-intensified competition, Brandt pleads for agreements on commodity price stabilisation, fairer prices for producer nations, lower tariffs and an international debt conference.

It all sounds so eminently reasonable, if the harsh realities of world capitalist economics are shut out. But why did the Cancun (Mexico) summit called to debate the first Brandt Commission proposals achieve little or nothing?

Brandt also describes what he calls the "international development associations scandal". This soft-loan arm of the World Bank requested a \$16 billion replenishment for 1985-87 to continue lending to the Third World. A \$12 billion compromise was agreed on—until the US refused to pay up. The main European subscribers followed suit, and a \$9 billion final settlement was agreed.

That means, in real terms, "there are now considerably less resources than was the case in recent years". And this despite the Brandt Commission and its pious talk of "cooperation", "interdependency", "creative partnership".

The present collapse of Third World society is taking place during a relative **upturn** in the advanced capitalist countries—bought at the expense of Third World earnings. Now the capitalist West is heading for another, deeper depression. The effects on the Third World will be unimaginable. The multinationals, that account for 33 per cent of world production and 40 per cent of world trade, extract their highest profits out of the developing masses. Third World "self-fulfillment" will never be on their list of priorities.

The struggle to transform society in the industrialised world, the receipt of genuine aid and assistance by one socialist state from another, can alone ensure that the planet's resources are fully utilised for the benefit of the mass of mankind. Economic chaos, hunger, want and poverty can then be abolished, and for millions a human existence allowed for the first time.



# Indian workers struggle for unity

ON 26 FEBRUARY more than 12 million workers all over India took part in a one-day *bandh* against price rises. Central and State government employees came out in support of this *bandh*, which was organised by the opposition parties.

All Rajiv Gandhi's bragging about a "new era" in India has been shown to be empty. Soon after the election victory of his Congress (I) party, he chattered that 200 years of "glory" had begun. But the honeymoon has been ended within fifteen months!

Today every layer of Indian society is frustrated. The success of the 26 February *bandh* has forced the major trade union leaders to come together and take up the problems which are facing the working class and society in general.

Now the ten major trade unions—including CITU, AITUC and HMS—are pledged to fight jointly against "communal, regional, religious, caste and other external and internal destabilising forces".

It was also decided to observe 16 June as Anti-Apartheid Day, to show solidarity to the heroic black workers of South Africa. Activists can build on this decision to link the struggles of the Indian and South African workers together.

## Confusion

The ruling party, Congress(I), and other capitalist parties try to confuse the working class with slogans of "secularism" and more than anything "socialism".

But the workers and other oppressed classes have learned from their own experience, from the 'school of hard knocks', that these people are their enemies.

These parties, which represent the ruling class, are mainly responsible for the barbaric conditions in India today. It is their incapacity to develop society—to solve

## From a correspondent in India

basic problems like illiteracy, massive unemployment, untouchability, landlessness, atrocities against women—which has brought the country to the brink of disaster.

The festering economic problems have helped to inflame the communal and national divisions that are threatening to tear India apart.

Convenors of the Ten trade union alliance have said that "it is imperative that the organised working class should use their might at this critical hour to combat all divisive forces and preserve communal harmony and bring a sense of oneness in the country".

These are fine words, but what matters to workers is what to do in practice. Many of the federations in the Alliance have separate unions at factory level. How will this convince workers that their leaders must now be taken seriously?

The Indian working class is second to none in sacrifice and militancy. But they have inherited divisions into different trade union federations, linked to different political parties (from left to right-wing reactionary parties).

Unity of the working class will not come about because trade union bureaucrats call for it. It will only emerge as the working class goes through the experience of common struggles, sharing defeats and victories shoulder to shoulder.

Over the past period there have been colossal



Thousands of workers demonstrating in Delhi against price rises

movements of the working class, which have hardly been mentioned in the press outside the states where they took place: the strike by 125,000 public sector industrial workers in Bangalore; the world's biggest strike of 250,000 Bombay textile workers; strikes by 600,000 state employees in Andhra Pradesh, and a similar number in Bihar; the strike by 300,000 port and dock workers, and many others.

## Died in jail

In recent months, 300,000 teachers in Tamil Nadu went on strike for a month; 60,000 were arrested and several died in jail. There was a one-day *bandh* in their support.

In Kanpur, 80,000 state employees went on strike for a month. There was a one-day general strike of 700,000 coal workers all over India.

Real unity will be built by consolidating such struggles at factory, city, state and national level. The vital factor is national leadership in bringing this about.

A platform for unity already exists in the National Campaign Committee (NCC) which led an all-India *bandh* of 12 million workers in 1982. But the NCC functioned as a self-appointed bureaucratic clique. It included not only the leaders of the trade union federations HMS, CITU and AITUC, but also parasites and gangsters from the right-wing communal parties exploiting the workers for their own political gain.

A vital task for trade union activists and leaders in the next period will be to break with these anti-working class elements, and lay the foundations for a mass, united trade union movement controlled by the

workers themselves. Such a task can only be undertaken on the basis of a class understanding and a clear programme of action.

There can be no solution to India's problems and no national unity on a capitalist basis. It is the duty of the working class to make sure that all the nationalities can live with security and dignity, by abolishing the barbaric capitalist system and carrying through the socialist

transformation of society.

Such a movement alone could unite all the oppressed nationalities of the sub-continent on a fraternal basis, with guaranteed rights of self-determination for all.

Trade union activists should take up all the burning questions that face the working class and the masses, in order to lay the foundations for united struggle. They should fight for:

- ★ Trade union unity—one union in one factory;
- ★ For a living wage of 1,000 rupees minimum and a 40-hour week;
- ★ Jobs and homes for all;
- ★ An end to all forms of discrimination;
- ★ Nationalisation of all major enterprises, under joint management of the workers, the trade union movement and the government;
- ★ A workers and peasants' government, elected through democratic councils of all the oppressed and toiling masses;
- ★ A democratic socialist federation of the Indian sub-continent.

## Norway in turmoil

ON 9 May the Conservative Coalition government of Norway fell.

The Labour Party fought the 1985 election promising increased spending on health and social services, ambitious public works projects and other reforms. With this programme it gained (together with its Socialist Left ally) five seats, ending up just two short of an absolute majority.

Now party leader Gro Harlem Bruntland has abandoned the programme immediately on taking office. "...Austerity is an inadequate term for the vast economic restructuring that must take place..." she said.

This is the inevitable result of accepting the limits of capitalism. Without socialist policies, the Labour leaders end up doing the bosses' dirty work—a fact that British workers should take note of.

There is no doubt about the size of the economic crisis in Norway. The recent collapse in the price of oil has turned last year's trade surplus of £2.4bn into an expected trade deficit this year of around £2.8bn.

The bosses' classical

answer to crisis is to make the workers pay through wage restraint and cuts in living standards. The problem for the ruling class is the mood of the workers.

In April, oil workers went on strike for a 28 per cent pay increase. After 20 days the government intervened to enforce compulsory arbitration.

More seriously, 120,000 workers—10 per cent of the employed population—were locked out in the metallurgical industry, catering, hotels, building and textiles. The lockout ended with the employers conceding a cut in the working week from 40 hours to 37.5.

There is no doubt that the workers of Norway—together with the workers of Finland, Denmark and Sweden who have all recently engaged in massive battles with the bosses—will resist attempts to make them pay for the bosses' crisis. The famous Scandinavian living standards were won in struggle. The workers will fight to keep them.

By Mike Waddington

## Chernobyl: Bureaucracy to blame

THE EFFECTS of the Chernobyl catastrophe have been worsened by the bungling and indifference of the bureaucrats in charge.

The disaster itself was partly due to inadequate safety features in the power station design, and probably to poor standards of construction set by the Stalinist officialdom in their shortsighted race for growth.

The Chernobyl reactor was a boiling water type, with the radioactive core surrounded by graphite. A chemical explosion caused the initial release of a huge radioactive cloud.

There was no containment structure around the reactor to prevent a release of radiation into the atmosphere. This also meant that water could not be pumped in to prevent a meltdown of the uranium rods, because it would have resulted in further huge clouds of radioactive steam.

Moscow has now admitted that it was 36 hours before the population in the immediate vicinity were evacuated—when, as was later worked out, 20 times

more radiation was released than by the Hiroshima bomb in 1945.

It was nearly two weeks before warnings were given not to eat certain vegetables or drink milk contaminated with radioactive iodine, although this is the main danger to children.

Vital radiological equipment was only made available to doctors in the area two weeks after the disaster.

## Indictment

All this could eventually mean tens of thousands of deaths due to radiation poisoning and cancer.

The scale of the disaster and the callous reaction of the bureaucracy are an indictment of the Stalinist dictatorship.

On the basis of state ownership there is a plan for the development of energy resources, and this in itself is an important gain. But economic planning under Stalinism is dictated by the bureaucracy's own interests, by the twists and turns of the economic crisis and particularly the need for hard currency.



Warning of radioactivity, but the cows continue to graze

Russian industry is notoriously inefficient in the use of energy. A non-nuclear energy policy is entirely possible, based on the enormous reserves of oil and gas in Siberia.

But these sources have only been opened up recently, and then only for purposes of export to the West to pay for desperately-needed high technology—a further indictment of the progress of technology in the USSR.

The central Party bosses are now heaping the blame for the disaster on local bureaucrats in classical

Stalinist fashion, accusing them of bungling and incompetence. But as the death toll mounts, Chernobyl will expose the hypocrisy of the national and local rulers.

Despite the blanket of secrecy and repression, workers will draw political conclusions and begin to organise for a democratic socialist society where the working people themselves will control the economy in the interests of the vast majority.

By Pete Dickinson



# Royalty scandal concealed

Dear Comrades,  
For fans of the biggest soap-opera of all *Palace*, the latest episode contained one of the best story-lines for some time. Here's a quick résumé of the plot.  
Edward VIII wanted to marry twice-divorced Mrs Simpson, throwing the government into constitutional crisis. The king abdicated and, shunned by the

family, they went to live in France.  
However, reality shows an uglier face. No matter how they try to conceal the real reasons for the abdication, the fact was that Edward was a fascist and on very friendly terms with Hitler.  
Hitler described him as the ideal fascist monarch. He was also on friendly terms with Oswald Mosley, who

just happened to be his next-door neighbour in Paris.  
Before the Falklands war the Duke of Edinburgh visited Argentina and described the junta as "People we can do business with".  
Yours fraternally  
Phil Ashmore  
Derbyshire

# Tory party dis-united

Dear Comrades,  
According to a local Conservative candidate in the local elections in Coventry, he doesn't think very much of the party's leaders—even of Mrs Thatcher.  
He says in his election leaflet: "Before you vote—remember—you will not be voting for Thatcher, Kinnoch, Owen or Steel—you will be voting for a man of experience and integrity". So much for Conservative Unity!  
Yours fraternally  
Jane Nellist  
Coventry South East  
Labour Party

# Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.



Liverpool workers continue to demonstrate their support for the Labour council.

Photo: Militant

# Zimbabwe needs socialism

Dear Comrades,  
As a Zimbabwean youth I have found that the government ignores farmers' problems.  
Some farmers have no transport to take their products to marketing boards. If they are injured or ill they don't have clinics to go to. Shops are also missing. All this has made farmers live like wild dogs.



Mugabe, Prime Minister of Zimbabwe.

We can't say that the farmers don't want to work together in developing their areas, but that the government doesn't want to work together with the farmers, except when it practises favouritism in areas where the Ministers come from.

There is no 100 per cent freedom of speech in Zimbabwe, and reporters are sometimes not permitted to publish information because the ruling party is afraid it will be blamed.

This has brought into my mind that our government needs a good socialist to teach them what socialism means.

Yours fraternally  
J.D.W.  
Harare

# Workers reject Liverpool Echo

Dear Comrades,  
The recent result in the council elections here in Liverpool show that there is still massive support for the Labour Party in Liverpool.  
No matter what filth was thrown at us by the national media and especially the *Liverpool Echo* the people of Liverpool re-elected a council which was committed to its policy of house building and job creation.

Yours fraternally  
Stuart Healey  
Mossley Hill Labour  
Party Young Socialists

Dear Comrades,  
The Liverpool Labour councillors have not only been attacked by the Tory government but by the 'independent' *Echo*.

I have the 'honour' of a personal letter from the 'unbiased' editor, informing me that any political letters I send in will be cast to the waste paper basket until, as he says, 'I learn to understand the workings of a newspaper'.

On 8 June 1983 the *Echo's* Comment read: "We, the *Liverpool Echo* recommend the electorate of Liverpool to give Mrs Thatcher a second term of office". When I informed the editor of this 'unbiased' statement that is when he took umbrage and imposed his ban.

So much for his claim to be the "Voice of Merseyside" as the people of Liverpool returned not one Tory MP.  
Yours fraternally  
Joe Kinsella  
Garston Labour Party

# Shinwell's message for Kinnock

Dear Comrades,  
I am writing this letter having just watched the tribute to the late Emmanuel Shinwell.  
It was a typical tribute, glossing over many of Shinwell's faults and concentrating on the individual rather than the party.  
However, the parting message that viewers were

left with was Manny speaking at an Annual conference warning the leaders of the Labour Party not to concentrate on constitutional matters, ie. expulsions, but on eradicating poverty, slums and unemployment.  
To paraphrase Manny, when he first got involved in the labour movement they talked more about ridding

society of poverty than Karl Marx.  
As tonight's results in Liverpool and the rest of the country show Marxism does not frighten the working class.  
Yours fraternally  
Michelle O'Neill  
Tyne and Wear

# Tories' 'selective' democracy

Dear Comrades,  
An election leaflet came through my door today, from the local Tory candidate.  
Under the heading of democracy, he claimed that the Tories were "Fighting hardest for democracy"—the right to elect parents as school governors, the right for council tenants to buy their own homes and the right to vote before going on

strike.  
He goes on to say that the Tories have helped to stop the "mad spending" of Labour councils by rate-capping and abolition of South Yorkshire County Council.  
In abolishing this and other county councils, they have taken the right to vote away from millions of people. In introducing rate-capping they have taken

from the democratically elected local authorities the right to determine spending.  
When the Tories talk about democracy, they actually mean that they will use democracy when it suits them. When the vote doesn't go their way, that's another matter!  
Yours fraternally  
Paul Clarke  
Doncaster North Labour  
Party Young Socialists

# Classified ads

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

For a national minimum wage. New sticker out soon. Order now for low pay demo in Manchester and low pay rallies. Cost £1 per 100 + 50p p&p from fighting fund department, 3-13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB.

*Militant* pamphlet on the General Strike—articles by Trotsky, Grant and Taaffe. Special anniversary offer. Single copies £1 post free. 5 for £4. From World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.

*Divide and Rule* special offer. £1.50 post free. 4 copies £5 post free. From World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.

Annual Report of the Zimbabwe Trade Union Defence Campaign is available now. Price 25p (plus 20p p&p). From ZTUDC, 28 Martello Street, London E8 3PE.

Address Books 60p, Bookmarks 40p, Plastic sleeves 20p, Sew on badge 40p, plus post to *Militant*, 8 Woodside Court, Woodside Rd, Portswood, Southampton.

Socialist publisher. Cheap, professional publishing service. Author-financed booklets (poetry, political pamphlets, etc) to a high quality. Coventry 23128.

Perspectives for the United States of America by Rob O'Neil and Tom Williams. £1 each or 10 for £8 available from LM Publications, 3-13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.

## Militant Meetings

Havant: "What we stand for" meeting. Thursday 5 June, 7.30pm. Focus 230 Community Centre, Dunsbury Way, Leigh Park, Havant.

Bristol: "What we stand for". Monks Park School, Horfield, Bristol, Thursday 29 May, 7.30pm.

Newcastle-under-Lyme: "Fight low pay". Tuesday, 29 May, 7.30pm. Newcastle-under-Lyme, Guildhall. Speakers: Judy Griffiths (Stafford Labour Party); Krista Cowman (Newcastle Labour Party).

Dulwich: "What we stand for". Wednesday 28 May, 7.30pm, Dulwich Bathing, East Dulwich Road.

800th Issue Rally. Friday 30 May 7pm. Speaker Ted Grant. Trades and Labour Club, Beverley Road, Hull. Music—Videos—Bar.

COHSE conference: 24 June, Winter Gardens, Blackpool.

Barking: Tuesday 27 May, 8pm, Fishing Smack, Barking. Speaker: Rob Sewell.

Hull: Trades and Labour Club, 30 May. Speaker: E Grant, 7.30pm.

Bristol East *Militant* Marxist discussion groups (held fortnightly). Wed 28 May. "What road now for the Nicaraguan revolution?". Start 7.30. For details of venue etc ring Bristol 650318.

Sittingbourne Marxist Discussion Group. 27 May and every second Tuesday after that at 29 Waterloo Rd, Sittingbourne. For further information contact: 0795 72632.

Halifax *Militant* Readers Meeting. 'Fight Low Pay'. Tues 27 May. 7.30 AEU Club, St James St (near bus station). Speakers from shop workers and textiles.

Sheffield, Chapeltown *Militant* public meeting. Newton Hall, Chapeltown. Tues 27 May. Speaker Brian Ingham.

Daventry: "No to witch-hunts, defeat the Tories". Tuesday 27 May, 7.30pm. Ashby Road, Communist Centre, Daventry, Northamptonshire. Speakers include: Tony Cross and Bill Lawrence.

# Marxist Weekend Schools

**NORTHERN Leeds 7-8 June 1986**  
Courses on Russian Revolution, Popular Frontism, Marxism and the trade unions, The theory of Marxism, Ireland. Speakers include: Lynn Walsh, Brian Beckingham, Phil Frampton. Film: To die in Madrid (Spain 1936), International rally, disco, bar crêche. Cost £5 (£3 unwaged) weekend or £2.50 (£1.50) for one day.

**MIDLANDS/SOUTH WEST Birmingham 14-15 June 1986**  
Courses on: Marxism and the trade unions, Theory of Marxism, Russian Revolution, Colonial Revolution and Imperialism, Women and the struggle for socialism, Ireland. Speakers include: Ted Grant and Jeremy Birch. Film: To Die in Madrid (Spain 1936), rally, disco, bar, crêche. Cost £6 (£4 unwaged), weekend, £3 (£2 unwaged) one day.

Address .....

Course ..... Need Crêche? (Ages) .....

Booking fee enclosed ..... (Cheque to MWES)

Northern return to: MWES, c/o 63 Lincoln Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF2 0EP.

Midlands/South West return to: MWES, c/o T Cross, 12c Samuel Vale House, St Nicholas Street, Coventry CV1 4LS

# 'Explaining' Liverpool

Dear Comrades,  
It is reported in the media that a special report is being produced for Neil Kinnock's office on the local election results in Liverpool. This will be used by the party bureaucrats as an expensive means of trying to play down another victory for that socialist council.  
I suggest that the flunkies who fawn on behalf of the right wing leadership examine the causes of why Leicester City Council lost three seats to the Tories and Liberals. Here was a council which was originally part of

the Anti-Ratecapping Campaign and one that had quickly fallen by the wayside. There was no real fight, no real mass campaign and to cap it all a 50 per cent rate rise for this year.  
No wonder there was a 5-10 per cent swing against Labour! Is this the dented shield of local authority moderation that the party leadership wants? I hope not!  
Don Finlay  
Leicester East  
Labour Party



# Broad Left gains again in CPSA

JOHN MACREADIE is now seen by the majority of activists as the favourite candidate for General Secretary.

To translate that support into the votes necessary to win is the paramount task of all Broad Left members and *Militant* supporters.

To lose this election would be to condemn CPSA members to another five years of low wages. John can win. We must ensure that he does.

"IT HAS been my dubious privilege for six of the last seven conferences to open conference with a depressing list of CPSA's (Civil and Public Services Association) problems and setbacks in the Civil Service area."

This was the opening statement of conference chair and CPSA president Kate Losinska. She then attempted to say that the past year had been one of "... significant progress for members in the area where it matters most—the pocket and the purse." This was greeted with so much laughter that she had to depart from her prepared text to reply.

In reality, as opposed to the fevered imagination of Mrs Losinska, who has been a fervent 'red-baiter' for the past 30 years, and who soon departs from CPSA with an OBE for her efforts, the past year has been one of falling living standards, low pay and worsening conditions of service. More industrial action has erupted this year than in any other year in recent memory.

The Monday of conference was dominated by the debates on pay and the NEC's New Technology deal, the "New Pay and Grading Proposals For Clerical and Data Processing Members".

The Broad Left Emergency Motion 1 on pay, successfully moved by *Militant* supporter Dave Spagnol, censured the NEC for its lack of a pay campaign which resulted in "... a pathetic 6 per cent offer".

The motion was opposed by the BL 84 group, a new right wing, Communist-backed split-off from the Broad Left. Presumably the new right wing were quite happy with the old right wing's leadership of the 1986 pay campaign.

The NEC had already signed the New Technology deal on the Friday prior to conference. This was a deliberate snub to the sovereignty of the annual conference which traditionally must accept or reject such deals.

The rank hypocrisy of Alistair Graham was evident from the very beginning of the debate. As he referred to the narrow vote in favour of the deal, (for 23,162, against 20,932, with 3,661 abstentions), he said that "a majority is a majority".

He was interrupted by the secretary of the Home Office passport branch who reminded conference that despite his branch voting in favour of strike action he had been prevented from doing so by Alistair Graham, who had ordered a re-ballot. "A majority is only a majority if this man wants it..." he said to loud applause.

In reality Graham would have signed the deal even if the members had voted to reject it. He had said as much

to the NEC.

Prior to conference he had started, through the press, a campaign of lies against CPSA branches who had recorded massive no votes. He provided no evidence to back his smears of "ballot-rigging".

The conference motion EM17, moved by Steve Dunk of Inland Revenue HQ, recognised the hurried nature of the proposals, the lack of time for proper consultations and the fact that the Data Processors, who will receive a cut in pay as a result of these proposals, had voted 2-1 against. The motion instructed the NEC to renegotiate the deal and come back to a Special Conference of the union for a final decision.

## Data deal

The opposition of the BL 84, hand in hand with the old right wing, was not about the content of the deal but concentrated on the constitutional aspects. They argued that the members had decided and conference must now accept the deal.

They ignored the fact that the motion listed the seven main defects of the deal and instructed the NEC to go back and rectify them.

They also ignored the lack of information to members on the deal, the confusion around the ballot timetable and the way the whole deal had been, as one delegate said: "... steamrollered".

The motion was narrowly defeated. The stance of the Broad Left will be vindicated by events over the next few years. This disastrous deal opens the door to the introduction of new technology into the civil service with no safeguards on jobs, health and safety or basic pay scales.

The CPSA's sister union, the Society of Civil and Public Servants rejected the deal at its conference. The Data Processing grades will be in revolt about their cut in basic pay and the bitter lessons to be learned over the next two or three years will be laid at the feet of the old right wing and their allies in the BL 84 group.

The Broad Left received other setbacks at the hands of the right wing and BL 84 group, which must be properly analysed. Motions relaxing the overtime ban were passed.

This reflects the rightward movement of BL 84, ably supported by the old right wing, but also the confusion of past years when the NEC did nothing to campaign on either overtime or the employment of casual staff.

NEC motion 197, relaxing the ban on casuals, was also passed. Again this reflected BL 84's political degeneration, but also the practical problems experienced by activists faced with CPSA members wanting paid special leave, maternity and



John Macreadie.



Doreen Purvis.

**MILITANT SUPPORTERS** did very well in the CPSA national elections. Doreen Purvis has been elected CPSA vice-president and Kevin Roddy is now back on the NEC.

Broad Left members Eddie Spence and Phil Ashill also go on to the NEC.

As a result of the split in the left, old right winger

Marion Chambers won the presidency. Broad Left candidate Kevin Roddy came second with 17,326 votes.

Communist Party and BL 84 member Ray Alderson, was pushed into third place. But in the process split the 32,029 votes cast for him and Roddy against Chambers' 20,360. "Democratic Moderate" candidate Pat

Womersley received only 7,399 votes.

Broad Left member and *Militant* supporter Chris Baugh was the first runner-up in the NEC elections and may be "called-up" if one of the ageing right wingers cannot stand the pace.

The Broad Left vote was up on 1985 while the '84 group vote was down.



Newcastle Central and other delegates greet Doreen Purvis' election as vice-president.



Alistair Nicholson.

paternity leave and given no alternative by management except the employment of casuals.

Conference will come back in 1987 after a year of "New Realism" with a realisation that these sort of relaxations only give the employer more power.

The defeat of motion 398, asking for action against staff inspections (staff cutting exercises by management) was also a setback but again one which CPSA will have to come back to—ignoring management attacks will hardly protect the union.

## Old right quiet

Having already struck a few blows for the old right wing BL84 moved into action at the main conference (Wednesday to Friday) to suffer a series of defeats. As the old right wing 'moderates' have no forces to speak of at the conference BL 84 have become the new right wing at the conference in opposition to the ideas of the *Militant* and the Broad



Chris Baugh, Frank Bonner and Steve Dunk (left to right).

Left.

They supported many of the old right wing's attempts to weaken the union's democratic structure by reducing the fighting fund, reducing the size of annual conference, reducing the size of the NEC, reducing the frequency of elections and more. They were defeated on every one.

*Militant* supporter Martin Jones successfully moved a resolution demanding that senior full-time officials' salaries should correspond with the wages of the members they represent. The old right wing and BL 84 opposed the move.

A motion to re-open negotiations on a merger with the SCPS was passed with *Militant* supporters, as always, in favour of a democratic merger.

Conference decided, almost unanimously, to ballot members on the setting up of a political fund as a first move to Labour Party affiliation. Only the manoeuvres of BL84 on the Standing Orders Committee, aided by the old right wing,

prevented both issues being balloted upon together.

On the Tuesday of conference, buoyed up with the euphoria of three temporary victories, the BL 84 bulletin declared: "The message from yesterday to members is that their interests and votes have been restored to paramountcy (sic) in this union... John Macreadie's policies have now been rejected by both."

## New right down

By Friday they were singing a different tune. "How can this conference be totally representative of the members if it continues to carry *Militant* policies..." Their daily bulletins were hysterical and adolescent. This was also seen on the floor of conference with drunken BL 84 ex-NEC members coming off the platform in an attempt to physically intimidate delegates.

Graham wants all *Militant* supporters expelled from the Labour Party. To that end he intends to give them a list

## Political debate on increase

ONE OF the notable developments of the 1986 conference was the increase in fringe meetings.

The Sunday Broad Left rally attracted about 350-400 to hear John Macreadie, Eddie Spence (senior officer candidates), Tyrone Simpson (South African speaker), Mick Barwood (BLOC treasurer) and Terry Fields MP.

On Monday, the editor of *Militant*, Peter Taaffe, spoke at the annual *Militant* readers' meeting. 360 attended and £2,400 was collected for the fighting fund.

Tuesday night saw a "debate" between all of the senior officer candidates at the request of John Macreadie.

Because of the lack of confidence some candidates had in their ability to handle a live debate, questions came from the floor, through the "independent" chair on slips of paper. At least 1,600 attended.

## Abuse

John Macreadie and Eddie Spence outlined their policies on wages, jobs, incomes policies and union structure and finance. Geoff Lewtas (BL 84 candidate) indulged in personal abuse of *Militant* supporters. His stable-mate, Chris Kirk (candidate for general treasurer), also indulged in abuse against "Trots" and said that, as a non-member of the Labour Party she was against affiliation.

Old right wing candidates, unable to make any promises on policy, said almost nothing.

On Wednesday Tony Benn, Eddie Spence, John Macreadie and a representative of Jarrow '86, John Osbourne, addressed a meeting of 2,000 in the Brighton Conference Centre on Labour Party affiliation.

of all *Militant* supporters in CPSA.

He wants *Militant* journalists out of conference and the NEC to set up an inquiry into *Militant*. As one journalist said to Graham, "having failed to get rid of the *Militant* you want the Labour Party to do your dirty work for you."

CPSA members will have none of this. An attempted witch-hunt will fail, despite the support it will almost certainly get from BL 84.

The CPSA Broad Left, still growing in support, would be able to defeat such a witch-hunt, which would nevertheless divert the resources of union into a divisive internal battle.

CPSA Broad Left defeated every attempt to weaken CPSA's democracy and in some significant areas has succeeded in extending it. With four NEC members and a general secretary campaign the scene is set for significant steps forward if all of the chances available are seized.

By Bill Boyle



# Industrial Reports

## Warwickshire super-pit strategy

THE COAL Board's decision to sink a new 'super pit' in the Warwickshire coalfield has raised important questions for the labour and trade union movement both locally and nationally.

Most local opposition has come from Tory and Alliance-based groups around Kenilworth on a narrow and parochial environmentalist basis.

Socialists must take environmental questions seriously. But this debate involves a wide range of difficult issues.

The central issues are the Tories' attempts to smash the strength of the NUM; the threat of privatisation; and closures of existing pits. A south Warwickshire 'super-pit' without adequate safeguards achieved by the unions fits in well with such plans.

Given the stance of the NCB and Tory government on closing so-called 'uneconomic' pits, without regard for the wider economic and social considerations, and the fall in oil prices, there is an enormous threat to jobs in the south Midlands coalfields.

It is estimated that the proposed new 'super pit' would be able to produce three million tonnes of coal per year with just 1,000 workers, or under. It could produce profits of over £62m per year at 1984 prices (£1,192 per miner).

Such an operation would be a very attractive proposition for privatisation. It also ties in with the Board's general restructuring of the industry and increasingly 'American' style of management.

Its establishment on a greenfield site would undoubtedly pose dangers for the current terms and conditions negotiated between the NCB and NUM.

The Board would seize the opportunity to push agreements along the lines of those being signed by the EETPU leadership (eg. no strike clause, three year pay deals, etc.).

The easy way to achieve their ends would be to recognise the scab UDM. The Board has already removed the more militant Kent pits from the south Midlands Area.

The Leicestershire coalfield has stayed loyal to the NUM, however, and with members drifting back

By Bill Lawrence

to the NUM, such moves should be defeated. As socialists we must support the development of the mining industry, including the development of the Warwickshire coalfield.

The NUM's demand that all mineable reserves should be extracted from existing pits must be pursued. Especially given the dangers involved in the nuclear programme, so frighteningly exposed in the Chernobyl accident.

The south Warwickshire 'super pit' should be welcomed, on the condition that it does not undermine the necessary investment in existing pits, particularly nearby Keresley colliery.

Given the true economic costs of pit closures revealed in research during the miners strike, the social costs, and the central role coal must have in a sane energy policy, Keresley, along with the other so-called 'uneconomic' pits, cannot be allowed to close.

- ★ No closure of existing pits with mineable reserves
- ★ Full and adequate investment in existing pits as identified by the NUM
- ★ No job losses or redundancies
- ★ The feasibility of achieving additional resources for Keresley colliery taking into account geology and shift capacity
- ★ NUM to have exclusive negotiating rights
- ★ New technology agreement including manpower levels, working time and health and safety
- ★ The pit to remain in public ownership under workers' control and management
- ★ Proper care for the environment with monitoring of all aspects jointly by the county Labour Party, trade unions and residents
- ★ Transport of coal by rail
- ★ The next Labour government to be committed to socialist policies, including a national plan for all industries and a coherent, integrated energy policy.

# Question mark over teachers' 'victory'



Photo: John Smith (IFL)

THE AGREEMENT reached at the teacher's Burnham negotiating committee on 9 May has been presented by the teacher unions, and the NUT in particular, as a triumph.

By Bob Sulatycki

(West London NUT, personal capacity)

Whilst there might be some short term relief in attaining a 5.5 per cent increase so unexpectedly, the agreement in no way represents a victory.

It seriously undermines all the efforts that the teachers have made over the past 18 months to improve their conditions of service.

Participation in the Wood panel talks represents an about-face in the position of the NUT who have consistently and correctly maintained that pay matters should be resolved in Burnham, and conditions of service issues at the CLEA/ST (Council of Local Education Authorities and School Teachers).

This should have been particularly the case given the NUT majority in CLEA/ST. Now, however, the NUT will actively participate in a body set up to subvert the traditional negotiating bodies for teachers.

The Wood panel talks have been set up in order to secure a selling-off of working conditions for temporary pay increases ie. a productivity deal which the NUT has stood out against for over a year and a half.

The idea of the NUT maintaining a presence in the Wood talks as a "watching brief" seems to have now been forgotten.

Worse still, the NUT has instructed its membership to return to "peace and calm" ie. to restore all the voluntary duties withdrawn during the action.

At this crucial time, when the Wood panel is meeting, and when the contractual duties of teachers are being defined, especially when custom and practice will be the key factor in determining what are and what are not expected of teachers, this represents a real set-back.

Moreover, the advice, especially on the crucial issue of cover, is unclear. Despite being advised that no-cover is non-contractual, the union is informing its membership that immediate no-cover should only be used as sanction with selected difficult authorities.

Despite this advice, secondary schools must continue with immediate no-cover in order to secure this as a permanent conditions of service gain. We should be under no illusions however, now that

the NUT has withdrawn official backing for this measure, the way will be open for local authorities to victimise those members taking this action.

Finally, the union has not clarified its position on the new GCSE exams. There is now a widespread suspicion that given the lack of clear advice from the union leadership their stand on this question is about to be watered down.

In every respect, the Burnham deal sells teachers short. Even in sheer financial terms, 5.5 per cent added to last year's 6.9 per cent falls 0.2 per cent short of inflation for the past two years.

### Productivity deal?

It will be argued that this is "on account" and "an interim settlement" — but it is now clear that the employers side did not write this into their side of the agreement.

The Wood panel will report in September. It is obvious that the intention will be a productivity deal designed to increase teachers' work loads.

Mass pressure must be exerted in schools, covered by continuing with no-cover action, and in the union to ensure that the NUT does not become a party to this impending sell-out.

## Leyland disputes in Brum

BRITISH LEYLAND car workers are fighting back against a management campaign of intimidation and victimisation. This month workers struck at BL plants in Solihull and Longbridge.

Unfortunately, in many cases, workers are finding little or no support from their own leadership.

600 workers at the East works of Rover Solihull staged a one day stoppage. At the same time as they received written warnings in their pay packets, the convenor Joe Harris was quoted in the press as saying that the strike jeopardised the chances of a management buy-out of Land Rover. Not very frightening to Rover workers, given the record of their management.

In Longbridge a strike of forklift truck drivers on the Rover car line stopped pro-



duction for three shifts. The action came after an announcement that 20 material handlers were to be downgraded. This would have meant a wage cut of £9.86 a week.

Workers received the downgrading letters 10 minutes before the end of their shift. They were then asked to work overtime. When they refused, the company drafted in 40 foremen.

The following morning a spontaneous mass meeting took place. They decided to stop work until the end of the shift in protest.

In the past the Longbridge bosses have depended on the works committee to get strikers back to work. The convenor has even rung up shop stewards asking them to ensure that workers continued working.

In spite of the lack of support from their leaders, this unified action has led to renewed confidence amongst the workforce. One worker explained "Every time a gaffer comes near my section he is met with a rendering of 'United we stand, divided we fall when our backs are up against the wall.'"

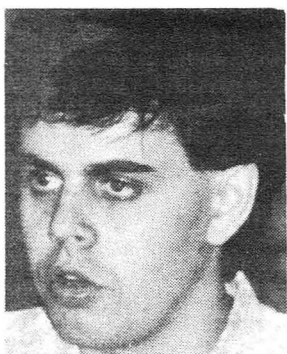
By Bill Mullins

## Militant miner's near miss

THE NARROW defeat of Militant supporter Joe Owens in the elections for NUM pit delegate at Bilston Glen, Scotland shows the tremendous progress of Marxist ideas in the NUM, particularly in an area with a long tradition of Communist Party influence.

Over 600 votes were cast in the election and Joe was narrowly defeated by 13 votes.

It is an especially excellent result considering that Joe Owen is only 21 and has only been in Bilston Glen for a



year after being transferred from Polkemmet colliery in West Lothian. The fact that he is not face-trained, and his opponent has over 20 years in the pit, makes Joe's result all the more remarkable.

After the recent comments of Eric Clarke about Militant supporters being outdated and having reactionary ideas, he should take note of this result.



## Union conference round-up

EETPU

## Sparks fly from printers

Views from  
inside and  
outside  
EETPU  
conference

THE ELECTRICIANS and plumbers union (EETPU) industrial conferences lived up to the EETPU's reputation for right wing, American business-style unionism.

Activists agree that it is increasingly difficult to get a hearing for anything remotely critical of the bureaucratic machine leadership, which rules with an iron fist, often subjecting delegates to vicious abuse.

In the power section conference full-time officials viciously attacked delegates demanding a £200 per week wage—at best denouncing them as unrealistic.

Outside the conference they not only called the police out against Fleet Street printers lobbying, but even a delegation of their own members—contracting electricians from Liverpool—got similar treatment. Though leading lights did eventually come out to meet them.

These tactics are increasingly alienating rank and file activists, however. Many delegates expressed disgust at some of the behaviour of the leadership and full-time officials.

*Militant* has also been passed a letter from a senior shop steward, supported by his shop stewards committee in the television repair industry condemning the leadership's behaviour over News International.

This anger will undoubtedly grow and can be channelled into an organised left wing opposition.

By an EETPU member

ON SUNDAY 11 May around 250 printers sacked by the News International Group left London to travel over 300 miles to the Yorkshire resort of Scarborough to lobby the industrial conferences of the EETPU.

We arrived at Scarborough at about 7am after seven hours travelling. The police blocked all entrances and would not let any of us lobby or speak to delegates as they entered.

So we picketed about a mile from the hall, together with local *Militant* supporters and other trade union supporters.

We managed to speak to many delegates in their cars and others on foot came over to show their solidarity.

It was sad to see so-called trade unionists totally ignoring us. But many of the delegates took leaflets and we managed to distribute copies of the *London SOGAT Post*.

By 10am most of the delegates had gone in and most of the printers went off to leaflet roads in Scar-

By Graham Doyle

borough and give out hundreds of leaflets.

After nearly 11 hours in Scarborough we left for London. All the way back from Scarborough to Leeds we were escorted by a van load of riot police, no doubt wanting the pound of flesh which they hadn't got at Scarborough because there had been no trouble. We got back to London at midnight.

The mood of the printers is now getting angrier. Many are upset at the behaviour of the leadership and the current silence of the TUC and the Labour Party leadership.

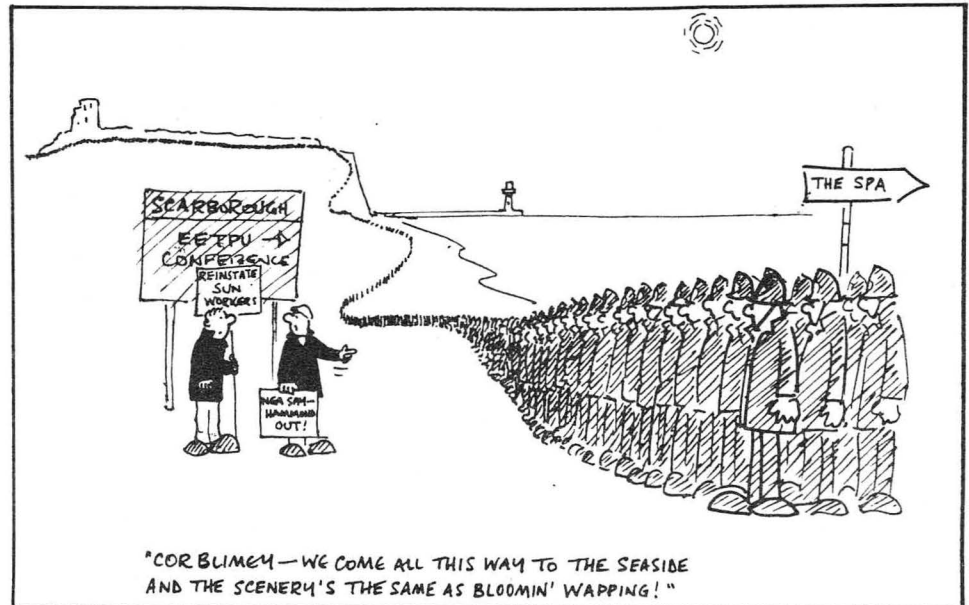
Paul Wilkinson and Danny Austen two SOGAT '82 members told me: "the only way to win this dispute and stop Murdoch and the other

Tony Aitman, one of the 12 Liverpool Labour Party members threatened with expulsion. £275 was collected for the Broad Left.

Broad Left supporting branches flooded the union headquarters with requests for a special conference on restructuring of the union, in opposition to the right wing's plans. The executive were forced to respond, and removed the subject from the agenda.

emergency composite, submitted by over 30 of the largest branches, calling for a one day national strike in support of the Leeds members who are resisting imposed reorganisation and the widespread use of casuals.

The decision to comply with the Tory Trade Union Act 1984, which means that executive council elections will be by secret ballot at branch level rather than conference, on the other hand, reflected the pressure of the leadership to sit and wait for



press barons from sacking us is to shut down the whole of Fleet Street and the general trade and get everyone down to Wapping and show Murdoch we don't mean to be beaten. It's no use relying on the leadership because they are going to sell us out".

In the pay debate the right wing's motion proposing departmental pay was heavily defeated. Branches must call for a special conference to discuss pay, restructuring in valuation, and computerisation.

Over £100 was collected for the *Militant* fighting fund and 95 papers sold.

By Steve Whittle, Central London Collection branch, personal capacity.

a Labour government.

But the executive have been defeated on a number of issues in the Telecom and Post sectional conferences and the main conference.

The best example came in the Post conference when delegates rejected the executive arguments for continuing the Premium Datapost service during industrial action because, as many delegates pointed out, it would involve crossing picket lines.

By Brian Beckingham

## SCPS

MAJOR breakthroughs were made by the SCPS Broad Left in what will come to be recognised as a major turning point in the history of the Society of Civil and Public Servants. In an unheard of development the recommendations of the executive council were overturned by conference around a dozen times.

Every activist in the union recognises that the present executive has played a positive role on many issues in the movement—both within the Civil Service and beyond.

Unfortunately the obsession with secrecy and distrust of the membership that is the hallmark of the 'Communist' Party (CP) and their fellow travellers has held back the development of the Society for far too long.

This 'secret left' suffered a series of setbacks. The conference voted to set up a political fund ballot, to permit election addresses for executive council elections and to elect the senior lay officials in the same way as the rest of the executive—ie. individual workplace ballots rather than elections by the executive only from among

the executive.

One of the most important decisions taken was to call on the TUC 'to devise a public services strategy to extend public ownership and the resourcing of the public sector' and to 'seek the transfer back into public ownership of those assets and public services which have been privatised by the present Government'.

The continuing talks on mergers with the Civil Service Union were given the green light although activists will be keen to make sure that any regional structure which is introduced will extend rather than curtail internal democracy within the union.

Unfortunately, with strong Communist Party lobbying, conference voted down a motion which would have made members of any overt racist or fascist organisations ineligible for membership of the union.

Former President John Pennington should be mentioned for one of the best speeches of conference.

After only two years of existence the Broad Left is now firmly established among the activists. The BL fringe meeting attracted 70 delegates and around 200 copies of *Broad Opinion* (the BL journal) were sold.

ing companies."

This and a number of defeats for the executive show that the ideas of the Broad Left can find fertile ground in the union. The election of left winger Sue Lister to the executive and Jim McKechnie to the Standing Orders Committee were also significant advances.

Conference passed motions censuring the delegations to the Labour Party

and TUC conference for voting against union policy on the miners' strike. It was emphasised that we are in favour of reinstating sacked miners and a review of the cases of miners jailed during the strike.

The left was defeated on calls for public control of the banking and insurance companies, but the debate showed that if the arguments were explained properly by the leadership and campaigned on they would easily be accepted.

President Doug Hoyle informed us that merger talks are being held with Tass. That could produce the largest white collar private sector union in the world. Perhaps then we could have a conference of over two and a half days and time for some real debate.

£276.70 was collected for the *Militant* fighting fund. By Bryan Pottinger, Edinburgh General ASTMS.

## IRSF

DESPITE THE hopes of the right wing leadership of tax union, the IRSF, following the defeat of Broad Left candidates in executive elections, the union's conference proved the Broad Left is not in decline.

Over 200 attended the Broad Left meeting to hear

## UCW

INDUSTRIAL ACTION by Post and Telecom members of the Union of Communication Workers during the year in Cardiff, Northampton, Liverpool, Mount Pleasant and currently Leeds, testifies to a changed mood which has been partially reflected at the conference.

On Thursday conference will almost certainly carry an



Photo: Dale Cunningham

## ASTMS

THE CONFERENCE of white-collar union ASTMS passed a motion from its GEC Coventry branch calling for, "The next Labour government to re-nationalise British Telecom and to take into public ownership the major telecom manufactur-

BLOC  
BROAD LEFT ORGANISING COMMITTEE

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For details of your Broad Left write to the Broad Left Organising Committee, PO Box 464, London E5 8PT.

DESPITE TORRENTIAL rain, over 3,000 people turned out for the march and demonstration in Keighley, Yorkshire, to support the Silentnight strikers. Steve Davison (right) president of Keighley Trades Council which organised the march, told the rally: "We have made history here in Keighley. It is the largest rally this town has seen for decades, if ever." FTAT general secretary, Ben Rubner, called on the Co-op movement to exert pressure on the Co-op directors to black Silentnight products and local branch secretary Terry Bennett called for a boycott of all shops selling Silentnight products.



# Militant

★SOGAT★NGA★AUEW★NUJ★  
 EACH SATURDAY EVENING THERE WILL BE A MAJOR DEMONSTRATION AT WAPPING IN SUPPORT OF THE PRINTWORKERS DISMISSED BY RUPERT MURDOCH.  
 MARCHES BEGIN AT 8-30 PM AT TOWER HILL

# Oppose expulsions

**BREL**  
 Save rail jobs

THE ANNOUNCEMENT of over 7,000 British Rail Engineering Ltd jobs to go at Doncaster, Wolverton, Eastleigh and Glasgow is another blow to railworkers.

Under the Tories 30,000 rail jobs have disappeared. BREL employed 35,000 in 1981. If the new redundancies go through it will be down to less than 18,000.

British Rail would like to sell off BREL's manufacturing arm to their friends in big business, as they have done with Sealink, National Carriers and the hotels. But they would leave the important but unprofitable maintenance sector to BREL.

### More losses

These are not the only threatened job losses, however. More workers will go with the Post Office's decision to move their traffic from rail to road, and as a result of single-manning.

But just at the time when the maximum unity is needed, our senior assistant general secretary, Charlie Turnock, is pushing for the expulsion of socialists from the Labour Party. He should spend his time demanding on Labour's NEC that the party leadership give the maximum public support for the battle to save BREL jobs, and that they commit a future Labour government to restore all Tory cuts to the rail industry.

But of course we cannot wait until then. A massive campaign must start now to prepare for industrial action in defence of jobs. We must learn the lessons of past disputes and cement the unity of every grade up and down the country. If we do not stand and fight, there will be no-one working on the railways when the Tories are through.

By Andy Viner



Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley face angry protesters as they arrive for Wednesday's NEC meeting.

LABOUR'S NATIONAL Executive meeting on 21 May held to 'try' the Liverpool 11 is its tenth meeting in only seven months. The agendas for all of them were devoted to the drive to expel socialists from the Party.

The fact that only five of these were scheduled meetings shows that no issue has commanded such attention from the leaders of the labour movement. It adds a sinister meaning to Neil Kinnock's 1985 party conference speech, now published as a pamphlet entitled: *It can be done, it must be done*. No-one should be in any doubt what 'it' referred to.

A 'star chamber' inquiry has

been held into the party in Liverpool, where anyone with a grudge against leading local party members was invited to give 'evidence' behind closed doors. Even a High Court judge found the proceedings so unjust that now none of the hearsay allegations can be used.

Seven NEC members had the courage to walk out in protest at this travesty making an NEC meeting iniquitous. So the right wing reduced the quorum to get their purge through more easily.

### Misuse of time

What a criminal misuse of the time and energy of Labour's leading body. When thousands of workers' jobs are being destroyed by the Tories, when ordinary families are looking

for a credible alternative, Labour's NEC is consumed with launching internal warfare.

It makes a mockery of Neil Kinnock's own acceptance speech as party leader three years ago, when he said Labour needed "not unity four weeks before the next general election...not unity before the local election next year—but unity here and now and from henceforth".

Now the rights of the party rank and file are being trampled on. Even David Blunkett has complained that policy is being changed without any reference to the NEC or its committees. This when the NEC is holding more meetings than ever!

Democratically decided policies are being dropped with alarming rapidity. The right are

intent on ditching all the radical ideas adopted by conference. But they are in for a shock if they believe that the removal of a band of socialists will return the party to the days when the leaders decided everything. It was the experience of the last Labour government that pushed the ranks to the left, and to demand more accountability.

A new Labour government is more vital than ever. It is a cynical abuse of the natural desire for unity behind the leader, for the right to push through a witch-hunt in the name of victory. The NEC should organise a real expulsion campaign—to expel the Tories from office and return a socialist Labour government.

By Mike Waddington

## Support Morris strikers' picket

STRIKING FURNITURE workers at Glasgow firm Morris celebrate a year on strike with a mass picket at 4pm, Friday 30 May at Morris, Milton Street, Glasgow.

The 35 FTAT members were sacked when they went on strike for a reduction in their working week to 39-hours in line with a national agreement.

Shop stewards' convener Brian McKee told *Militant*: "We have had tremendous support in the last year. We have won backing from the STUC and Labour party as well as our own union. We are appealing for the whole labour and trade union movement to support the mass picket."

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