Militant

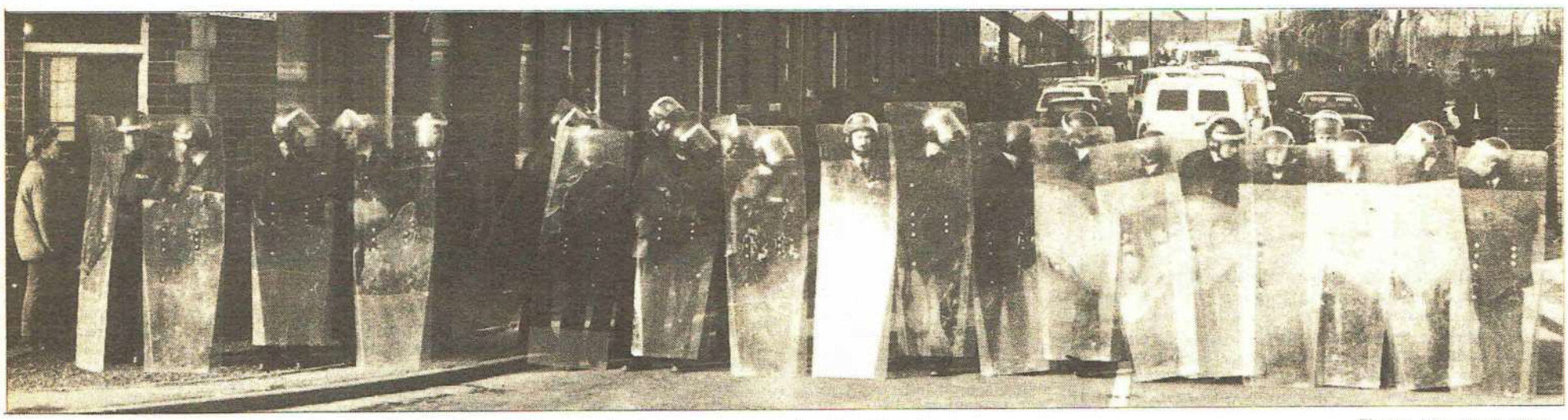
The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

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25p

Liverpool under attack Pages 8 – 9

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Riot police confront a mass picket at Houghton Main colliery, 1 February. The Tories now want to humiliate the miners. Photo: John Harris (IFL)

Thatcher wants miners smashed

Drive back Tory offensive

THE MINERS' strike is at a critical stage. Ninety per cent of all those miners who went on strike last March are still standing firm. The government and Coal Board have clearly failed to achieve the massive surge back to work they hoped for.

By Brian Ingham

The 130,000 strikers have shown heroic determination in the face of unending propaganda, bribes and threats. They are adamant that there will be no signing of documents agreeing to the closure of pits.

The onus is now on NACODS. Their fate will be that of the NUM. The NUM must call on members of NACODS, to join in industrial action to save their jobs. Their agreement with the NCB is a sham. The demand that the NUM agree in advance to pit closures proves that the "independent review procedure" offered to NACODS was no more than a sop to prevent a strike. Unless the mienrs stop them. Thatcher and MacGregor will close pits whatever any "independent" body says.

"We have to stand up and be counted to protect our agreement," declared Peter MacNestry, national secretary of NACODS; "Mrs Thatcher tramples on weakness." He said that the union could call a strike ballot unless the NCB withdraws its demand on the NUM. Now is the time to hold the ballot.

Support for miners

Miners should never underestimate the support for their fight from the movement's rank and file. The TUC has failed to face up to its responsibilities. The NUM must appeal over their heads to the ranks.

In addition to mobilising the maximum support for the 11 February Day of Action called by the Yorkshire and Humberside and South East regions of the TUC, there must be visits to every workplace, conferences of shop stewards in the areas and a national conference of the executives of left trade unions, to call, prepare and organise a one-day general strike.

When the NUM names the day, three weeks or so in advance, it will be a signal for activists to mobilise for the greatest day of industrial action for a generation.

Following a successful one-day general strike, the NUM could then step up the appeal to the power stations, oil terminals and transport depots. Their jobs are linked to those of the miners. If a clear call came from the NUM, backed up by leafleting and factory gate meetings, they would be persuaded to block supplies to the power stations and force the government to back down.

Continued on back page

A record fighting fund

***MILITANT'S* FIGHTING Fund raised the record sum of £45,244 in the last quarter from the pockets of many thousands of workers. A push in the last four weeks raised over £30,000 and a record £15,377 in the last week alone.**

***Militant* supporters have proved once again how good they are at collecting cash. For the year a massive total of £158,702 was raised for the fighting fund. What other paper could boast such an achievement? But it is even greater when £153,054 of the Building Fund is added in making a total of £311,756 raised by *Militant* supporters in 1984.**

Benn warns Thatcher

"I SHOULD like to place on record my tribute to the 130,000 miners and their families who have endured appalling hardship in the past, almost, 12 months in order to defend their industry, their jobs, and their communities. I feel great pride for them."

Tony Benn MP spoke for thousands of Labour activists in Monday's debate in Parliament on the coal industry dispute. "Any government", he warned, "who try to convert the 'enemy within' to the 'enemy underground' by driving men back to work through hardship will destroy the industry and its prospects".

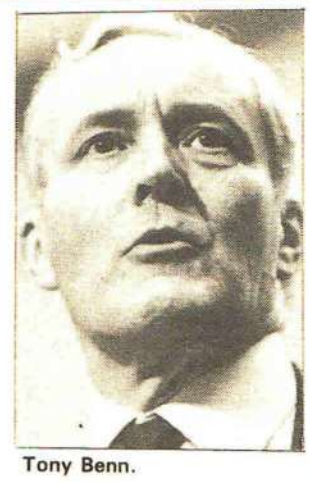
He went on to destroy the NCB's arguments for closing "uneconomic" pits—"If a pit is denied investment, it can be turned into what is called an 'uneconomic' pit, just as, if the roof of a home or a burst pipe is not mended, or if broken windows are not replaced, that home will be turned into a slum".

He alleged that the government was deliberately starving pits of investment in order to feed money into high productivity pits with a view to selling them off. "This government would sell off the royal family if they could make a quick profit".

In real terms, he argued, coal is far cheaper to produce than either oil or nuclear power—"we should be converting from nuclear power and oil to coal, and providing free fuel to pensioners who die in their hundreds from hypothermia during the winter. These old people cannot afford to keep warm in winter. But the miners who dig that coal could keep their jobs, save the country money and save the lives of the old."

"The government" he declared, "rely on cold and hunger to try to drive the miners back, but I do not believe they will succeed. The other way to end the strike quickly is to follow the lead of the NUR, ASLEF and the National Union of Seamen and provide industrial support and further political action.

"Ministers should study their history. After the 1926 general strike, the Tory government were swept from office in the following general election."



Tony Benn.

Tilbury picket

A MASS picket of Tilbury power station has been called for Monday 11 February commencing at 6 am and linked to the SERTUC day of action calling for the blacking of scab oil.

A campaign is being conducted by the TGWU shop stewards at West Thurrock for other power stations to step up solidarity action. A letter is being distributed to power workers throughout the country calling on them to abide by the TUC guidelines.

By John McKay

Militant

THE MINERS' strike has brought to the surface all the finest qualities of the working class. Immense sacrifices have been made, enormous suffering endured, not for any short-term financial reward, but to save the jobs of the next generation and the future of communities.

They have refused to be intimidated by police truncheons, bribed by back-to-work bonuses or daunted by the lies of the Tory press. There is no way that the government and the Coal Board are going to trample the miners into the dirt. The strikers and their families have given too much already to let that happen.

It is a monstrous slander on the miners for the capitalist media, echoed by a section of the "left" on the movement's fringes, to allege that they have been crushed, and that the labour movement is now in the position it was in 1927.

At that time the miners had been starved back to work, after the betrayal of the TUC leaders led to the collapse of the general strike in 1926. The whole movement had suffered a massive defeat from which it took years to recover.

Today, inspired by the miners' fighting spirit, workers are taking on their bosses across a wide front. In the first eleven months of 1984, 30% more days were lost in strikes than in 1983, **excluding the miners' strike**. The CBI has revealed that the number of pay claims backed by industrial action rose by 50% in the past two years.

An employers' magazine *Works Management* has conducted a survey of managers in manufacturing industry which showed that three quarters of those questioned believed that a resurgence of shopfloor militancy in industry is likely: "A few organisations have already seen a return to unrealistically high wage demands, more shopfloor disputes (though most trivial) and attempts to re-establish restrictive practices which should have been obliterated."

Furthermore this militancy is paying off. According to the CBI, pay settlements in manufacturing industry averaged increases of 6.15% in the second half of 1984 compared to 5.65% in the same half of 1983.

Works Management correctly concludes that with "some easing of the recession, workers see the chance of better pay rises and less reason to co-operate with moves to improve efficiency".

It would be impossible to deny that the recession brought about serious defeats for sections of the trade union movement, especially in redundancies and victimisations. It is true that the Tories have been able to bring in draconian new laws to try and cripple trade union organisation and strength.

But this is not 1927. The trade union movement is still immensely powerful; its basic structure remains intact and workers are not only still fighting, but are achieving victories. Most of the provisions of the Tory employment laws remain unused. The bosses and their capitalist commentators still bewail the power of the unions to prevent the wage cuts which they would dearly like to see. The economy is wracked by crisis.

The fundamental problem is not the weakness of the workers' organisations, but the incapacity of the majority of those who lead them. The role of the right wing leaders in the TUC in the miners' strike has been as perfidious as in 1926. Lord Chapple actually recommended MacGregor's appointment as NCB chairman. They have consistently stood aside and refused to lift a finger to mobilise the solidarity action which would have brought victory to the miners.

A whole generation of union leaders found comfortable jobs in the post-war boom years. Negotiations with the management could, with the threat of strike action behind them, force concessions. They earned good salaries and lived a better life than those they represented. Now, however, the bosses are prepared to put the boot in, take merciless action against the workers and brush aside the trade union leaders. As a result we have seen the emergence of a new generation of class fighters, steeled in the fire of battle.

They are in the process of forging a new and totally different form of union leadership, which will spearhead the fightback, firstly on the industrial front, where battle is already engaged, but increasingly also in the political field, as union activists realise that their fight is not just with their management but the whole rotten economic system.

To bemoan the "defeats" of the movement, at the very time that 130,000 miners are in the heat of the biggest industrial battle of our time is not merely to misunderstand the reality of the situation. It amounts to a stab in the back to those fighting. Such predictions of gloom and doom, if taken seriously, would become self-fulfilling prophecies; their effect is to demoralise those in struggle.

The miners will not be affected however. Their fight goes on, and will continue to be an inspiration for the rest of the class. If the TUC will not move to organise support, it is time for the NUM leaders to appeal directly to the rank and file of the movement. They should never underestimate the strength of support for the miners' titanic struggle.

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Give Tories a taste of dole

THATCHER SAYS she is "disappointed" at the record unemployment figures announced last week. Aren't they high enough for her?

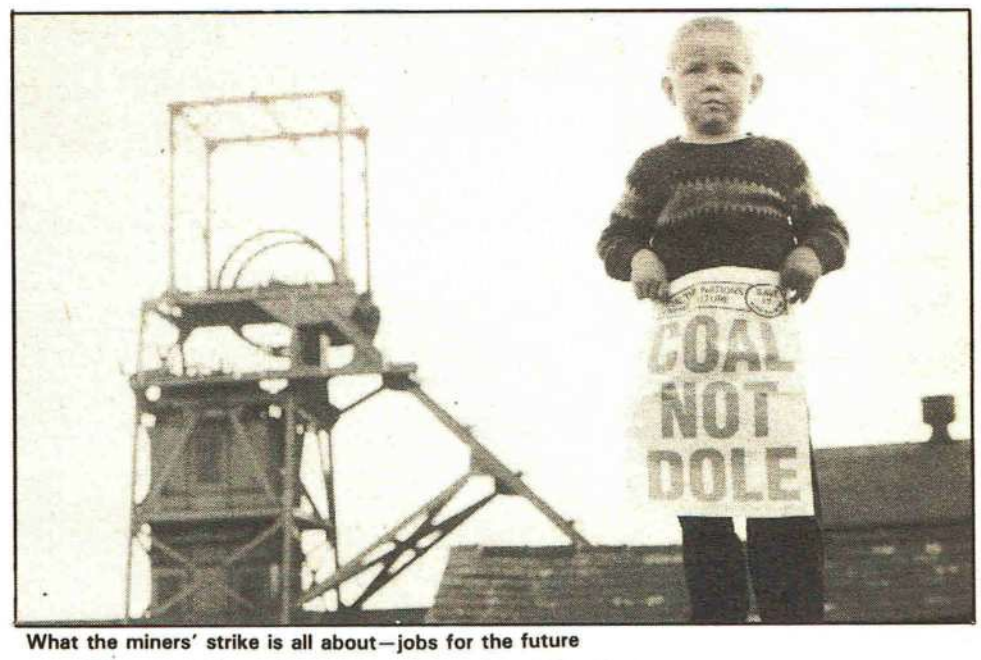
The real figure is a lot closer to five million than the official 3,360,000. The Tories have had the figures doctored by excluding hundreds of thousands of people who don't sign on such as YTS workers and housewives.

Tory MPs who have never done a day's work in their lives should have a taste of life on the dole. They should experience the total frustration of continually applying for new jobs which surface from time to time knowing that you are competing with hundreds of others desperate for work.

They should have to face the indignity and humiliation of being constantly skint. They should have to do mental arithmetic to see if they dare switch on the light or heaters and all the rest of it.

Lawson claims the economy is "right on course". Ten men like him would not make an idiot. With millions living below the poverty line the economy cannot be "right on course".

My region, the North East of England, has an unemployment rate of 19.8%. My town, Sunderland, has a rate of 28%, but some of the working class areas have more than 60% male unemployment. The worst hit are the youth, most of whom have never had a proper job even on breadline wages.



What the miners' strike is all about—jobs for the future

Thatcher says the pound is getting "stronger"—to me and millions like me the pound is getting "stranger": we don't see too many.

You'd think, given the current situation, Labour MPs would be savouring this opportunity to hammer the Tories and campaign for socialist policies to end unemployment.

Instead, even whilst in opposition, leading Parliamentary Labour Party spokesmen have warned: 'There are no easy answers to unemployment"! What an admission of political bankruptcy! It may appear to Roy Hattersley, supping wine in London clubs, that unemployment cannot be solved overnight, but here are a few ideas: retirement at 55 on decent pensions: a 35-hour week without loss of pay; more frequent and longer holidays, except for MPs; sabbatical years for working people to rest and study; ban on overtime except for continuous processes etc.

I don't want MPs crying crocodile tears for me as a "victim" of unemployment, as they write their speeches in the House of Commons bar or in the taxi on the way back from a hard morning in the City. I want MPs to truly represent their class, working in the House and in the constituency on workers' wages.

I want a Labour Party which is serious about gaining power on a socialist programme which will give all of us, working or not, a free and secure future. I want a future for my little daughter who has nothing to look forward to.

The "hearts and minds" of the population, so beloved by Labour's fat-cat reformists, will never be won by their tried and failed policies of yesteryear. They should forget about pandering to the middle-class voters who change their ideas as often as a man changes his shirt, and work to win support from the working class.

By Bob Stothard
(Houghton and Washington Labour Party)

Southwark unions step up influence in Labour Party

TRADE UNIONISTS in the London Borough of Southwark have decided to increase their involvement in their local Labour Parties.

The campaign is being coordinated by a committee involving the trade union delegates from the three constituency Labour Parties in the borough: Dulwich, Bermondsey and Peckham.

Committee secretary Brian Kelly, a Labour councillor and POEU member said: "We felt our voice was not being heard effectively in the Labour Party. We were also concerned about the lack of activity of trade union delegates at ward and GMC meetings.

"We felt that the increased 'gentrification' of some sections of the party had alienated working class people from getting involved. To redress the balance, the trade unions needed to organise themselves in all sections of the party locally."

The first meeting of the Southwark Labour Party Trade Union Committee took place in November last year. Four meetings later membership has grown to 45 trade union Labour Party delegates. Constituency delegates from the following unions are represented—NUPE, TGWU, UCATT, NUR, GMBATU, EETPU, SOGAT 82, POEU, ASTMS, AUEW, AUEW-TASS, and ASLEF.

An executive committee including two members from each constituency was formed, and a youth organiser, LPYS and AUEW-TASS member Chetan Patel, appointed. Brian is confident that by the end of the year all Labour Party affiliated unions will be involved in the committee.

It will encourage the setting up of workplace party branches, not only in town hall unions but private industry and public concerns such as London Transport. "Our major campaigns this year are against ratecapping, as we are a hit-list authority, and on the political levy issue," Brian said, "We hope to encourage an influx of young workers into the party by campaigning on issues affecting young people in the borough—unemployment, drug abuse, YTS and the plight of school leavers." The committee is working to make the London regional LPYS conference, to be held in Peckham on the 23/24 February, a major success. A social for young workers has also been organised to encourage them to become politically active.

The committee has met a ready response from trade unions in the borough, and Labour Party and trade union officials have given their encouragement.

By Paul Traynor
(Peckham CLP, personal capacity)

Liverpool backing for Bond

AT LAST week's meeting of Liverpool Council a resolution from the Liberals and Tories calling for the sacking of Sam Bond, the council's principal race relations advisor, was decisively defeated.

Sack threat

The Liberals had promised that if they won control of the council they would sack anyone from any post they considered 'political'. Although he had been invited to the council meeting, Steve French, spokesman for the Black Caucus, did not turn up to argue why Sam Bond should not continue in his post.

In the absence of a speaker from the Black Caucus, the chairman of the council allowed a resident of Liverpool 8 from the public gallery to address the council. She was a young, unemployed single parent, who said she fully supported the council in its struggle to combat racism. She welcomed the establishment of the Race Relations Unit and wished Sam Bond every success: "Sam Bond has been given a job, let him have a chance to get on with the job and let us get on and fight the Tories."

By Josie Aitman

Molesworth show of strength

THE MILITARY operation to remove 150 peace campaigners from the RAF station at Molesworth is a warning to the labour movement and any who try to stand in the way of Thatcher.

In a massive show of strength, out of all proportion to the task, 1500 soldiers, airmen and Ministry of Defence police in 400 vehicles with helmets and riot shields, invaded the camp, on which 20 tons of wheat for Ethiopia have been grown. Buses, tents, caravans and windmills were removed. All that was left was the half-built chapel. The MOD is checking with the Church to find out whether it is a geniuine place of worship before clearing that away!

The operation was ordered personally by Heseltine and there can be no doubt that it was a conscious move to demonstrate the lengths to which this government is prepared to go to crush any opposition. Next time Tory leaders condemn the military regime in Poland, remember Molesworth.

By a *Militant* reporter

NCB lie about Scots fire

THE CLOSURE threat to the Frances and Seafield pits in Scotland is a deliberate attempt by the National Coal Board to intimidate miners back to work.

The Frances pit—linked underground to Seafield colliery in Kirkcaldy, Fife—has always had a history of combustion: the strike did not 'cause' the fire.

John Shaw of the Dysart Central Strike Committee which covers both pits, told *Militant* that the NUM have responded to every NCB request on safety throughout the strike and had supplied men to fight the fire.

On 30 January they received a letter from the NCB requesting coal clearance in a bid to fight the current fire. To prepare the coal face for a shearer to move coal would take an estimated 14 days. Yet on Sunday 3 February when the NUM area official went with the names of men for shearing, the pit's production manager refused to meet him.

Three hours later came the announcement of closure of Frances pit and of one face at Seafield, with the loss of up to 2,000 jobs if both pits are closed—only four days after the request for manpower.

The NUM only know of the closure plan through news reports—they have had no official notification from the NCB.

The NCB are closing the pit for 'economic' reasons, saying it would cost too much to reopen. Yet the face at Frances was only opened three years ago, has £4.5 million's worth of equipment and as John said: "There's millions of tons of coal down there".

John said they would fight against the closure in line with the NUM's battle nationally to campaign against pit closures on 'economic' grounds, and would be calling for a public enquiry into who is to blame for the situation. Nor would the men return to work at the two pits until the 47 strikers sacked during the dispute were reinstated.

In this area of Scotland the strike has been firm. Only about 150 have returned to work out of over 7,000. Indeed, the men at Frances pit celebrate the anniversary of the strike next week, as they came out on a local dispute four weeks before the national strike began.

By Bob Wade

Pickets out in force



Miners' mass picket at Houghton Main, Yorkshire, 1 February. Photo: John Harris (IFL)

AROUND 2,000 pickets gathered at Cortonwood last week on the day of the NUM/NCB 'talks about talks', waiting for the handful of scabs coming out of the pit.

After the vehicle carrying the scabs had come out, the pickets didn't immediately disperse. The police then put a line of men in full riot gear and charged up the road behind a police Range Rover to try and disperse the pickets by force.

On 1 February at about 11 am approximately 2,000 pickets gathered at the entrance to Houghton Main colliery. Because the pickets were too close to the entrance police used the same tactics as at Cortonwood and a number of pickets and about 17 policemen received hospital treatment. It is believed that up to five arrests were made.

The police at no time attempted to use reasonable force, they just grabbed hold of anybody who was anywhere near them. The *Panorama* team were at Houghton Main but as predicted the bits they showed on television didn't give the true story.

By Simon Duerden

Coventry jailing

THE TWO best known figures on the Coventry Colliery strike committee have been jailed.

Colin Ward, the strike committee chairman and Nev Bell, its leading spokesman, along with two active pickets, Bill Jackson and Dennis Evans were jailed for six weeks for "affray".

Colin's brother Les an ex-miner, was also jailed for six months for assault on a police officer. The NCB has seized the opportunity to add the four miners to the long list of sacked strikers.

The men will also have suspended sentences over their heads for the next six and a half months, leaving them open to futher police harassment.

The judgement is seen by striking miners as a political victimisation of workers who have become leading militants during the miners' strike. The charges were made after a party at Colin Ward's house which, strikers told *Militant*, was attacked by the police, egged on by a scab who lived next door.

It is not the first time that Colin's house suffered the attentions of the police; their latest visit was an unsuccessful attempt to prove he'd been fiddling his gas meter as reported recently in *Militant*.

Militant supporters are now raising the demand for reinstatement of the sacked men in workplaces, trade union branches and Labour Party branches. The whole labour movement owes the victimised miners its support.

By Tony Cross
(Coventry North West CLP)

Press conceal black-outs

THERE WERE power cuts all over Britain in the late afternoon of Wednesday 23 January when demand for electricity reached 48 Gigawatts (GW), the highest level since the strike began.

There were no organised 'rota' power cuts of the kind introduced during the winter of 1972/74: the kind that get publicity. But there were a large number of local blackouts, mostly unreported in the national press.

The CEGB claims it has not used local blackouts to cope. This may well be true; the power cuts could be the result of stress on the transmission system. But this, too, is the result of the miners' strike, as previous issues of *Militant* have explained.

Meanwhile *New Scientist* magazine reports that the CEGB have been adjusting the mains frequency in order to save coal consumption at peak hours.

This means that electric clocks alternately gain and lose around 15 seconds an hour throughout the day and night, while the input and retrieval of data on some computers is also being affected. Voltage has also been reduced.

Factories have been switching off the production lines at short notice in return for cheaper tariffs. In addition there has been "energy saving" by most industrial concerns in Swansea, Cardiff, Newport and other South Wales towns, Doncaster and at the various Ford sites already reported in *Militant*. We have since learned that overtime was banned by management at GEC at Higher Openshaw throughout January so that production would stop at 4pm even though order books were full. In addition, GEC had a power cut during the coldest weather—just to make sure!

● The cost of extra oil burn is now reaching the £60 million a week mark. Solidarity action is vital to black all deliveries and use of light oil as well as heavy oil and coal. Good news from Agecroft; despite the fact that the Agecroft pit and power station are run effectively as one complex, and coal supplies have continued during the strike, the TGWU workers at the power station have now blacked all new supplies of oil and gas. The coal burners, once stopped, cannot be lit without lighting oil.

We have reports that the giant Fiddlers Ferry power station in the North West is now off the grid. It has not been able to satisfy demand for some weeks now, owing to exhaustion of coal stocks and the poor quality of what coal was left. Since then one generating set has been taken completely out of commission because of damage due to the burning of too much oil.

By Vivian Seal

Resolute in Barnsley

ONLY SIX hundred miners out of a total workforce of 16,000 in the Barnsley area are working.

They are mostly in pits between Barnsley and Huddersfield where one or two pits account for the majority of working miners. Ten pits still have less than 10 miners going in.

It is also believed that scabs are taken in and out of more than one pit each day to give the impression of a far bigger return to work.

At **Dodworth** the pit lodge voted 86% in favour of the strike at the start and now only 2% of the men are estimated to be working. Only four of those are face workers; three of the four have been on trial for absenteeism and one is not from a mining community or from a mining background.

At **South Kirkby** there are approximately 20 people scabbing, only half of these are believed to be NUM members. A now famous scab at **Woolley** who's had a long history of absenteeism is now regularly roused by the police in the morning to take him into work, standing there in his pyjamas arguing with the police that he doesn't want to go in early.

By Phil Jones
(South Kirkby NUM)
and 'Bub'
(Dodworth NUM)

Spirit at 'The Prince'

IN THE middle of what is being termed a 'flood back to work', over a hundred pickets are turning up everyday at the Prince of Wales colliery near Pontefract.

The police are at a loss to understand the spirit of the miners who turn up every day to have a 'push' whenever the scabs go in.

Last week a change in starting times saw the police change their tactics. Pickets were all herded to one side of the pit lane – exactly where we have wanted to stand since the scabbing began. For two days running the scab vans were delayed going in as police were pushed to the other side of the road. It had an effect. The number of scabs went down from 28 to 19 by the end of the week.

The police have now moved us back to our original position. Police attitudes changed. On the Monday one copper 'lost his rag' and lashed out like a lunatic. The next day thay went straight in for us.

To justify indiscriminate arrests, the police told the press we had been rampaging children etc. But arrests will never succeed in breaking our will. The pickets at 'the Prince' remain as resolute as ever.

By a North Yorkshire miner

Miner rejects award

STRIKING MINER John Garside of Easington Colliery, County Durham, who helped save a little girl from her blazing home snubbed a bravery award ceremony in protest at police behaviour during the miners' strike.

Mr Garside was one of two miners due to be presented with the Royal Humane Society Awards for the Protection of Life from Fire, at Peterlee Magistrates Court. Mr Garside went picketing instead, blaming the police and magistrates for being biased against the miners' case. (Reports Bob Stothard)

North Wales

STRIKERS IN North Wales urgently need cash donations, food and children's clothing. There are still 82 on strike at Point of Ayr, and they have 79 children to support. At Bersham 17 remain on strike.

The strikers are concerned that some people may think they're all back at work. Donations are drying up, though collections continue nearby. Please send donations to: Les Kelly, Secretary, Point of Ayr Strike Committee, 6 Tudor Avenue, Prestatyn, Clwyd.

Have you seen this man?

MISSING—respectable, elderly, professional gentleman. Former TV personality. Disappeared at a time of great stress. Suffers from medical condition making him aggressive, forgetful and prone to falling over in crowds. Anyone spotting an expensively dressed, portly man, with thin silver hair, wearing glasses and clutching a plastic bag out of habit, please notify the National Coal Board, Hobart House, Grosvenor Place, London SW1.

New striker

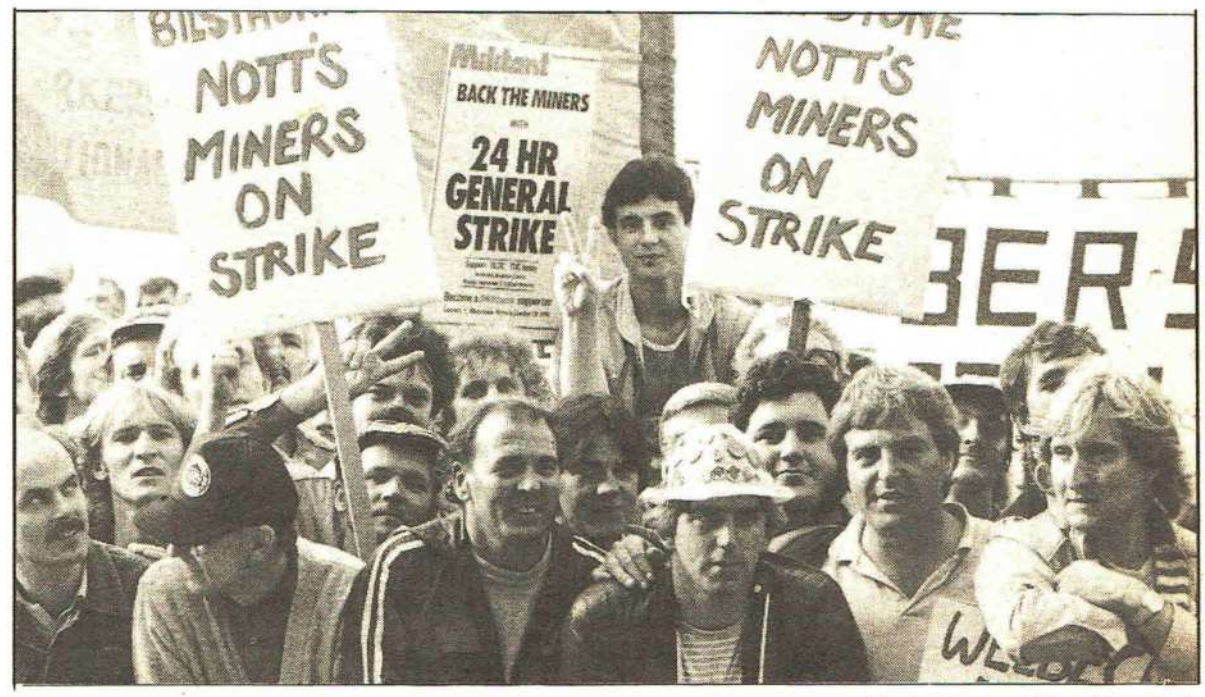
A YOUNG Notts miner has come out on strike at Gedling Colliery after finishing his apprenticeship. For the past 10 months Chris Blore, 20, has had to work under an indentured contract that does not allow him to take industrial action. He says he will now stay out on strike until the end.

No return to Spencerism

LAST WEEK'S *Militant* told the story of the breakaway "union" formed in the Nottinghamshire coalfield by George Spencer MP after the defeat of the 1926 general strike. For many years this "company union" did great damage to the interests of miners both in Notts and nationally.

Striking Notts miners are today fighting another threat to form a breakaway union, by some of the leaders of the working miners. We are launching a campaign to defeat the split, which would play into the hands of the Coal Board and the Tories.

By David Burns
(Treasurer, Bentinck Strike Committee, South Notts NUM)



Striking Notts miners lobbying the TUC in Brighton last September. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report III)

DIVIDE-AND-RULE tactics were employed by the government and the Coal Board from the beginning of the strike.

Pickets from Yorkshire entered the Notts coalfield to canvass the miners for support. The majority of Notts miners were calling for a national ballot, although a large number were refusing to cross picket lines and so were already on strike.

The result of the area ballot, which was called because the appeals for a national ballot went unanswered, dramatically changed the number of men on strike in Notts. It was the result of this ballot, which should never have taken place, and the twisting and turning of the area leadership, which left us divided in Notts. This situation can only be of benefit to the Coal Board, the Tory government and the ruling class.

Disaster

But the vast majority of the miners in Notts who have scabbed in this strike cannot be written off by the National Union in the hope of running a union for only 2,500 strikers. This would be a disaster, not only for those who have worked in the strike but also for strikers.

We all know the role which has been played by the likes of Roy Lynk and Colin Clarke, as well as several more reactionary branch officials who were elected mainly to replace strikers in branch elections held last time. Their treachery during the present strike has known no bounds. However if we say they must be disciplined under Rule 51, as I think most of the Notts strikers would like, we run the risk of martyring them personally and of creating fears of a witch-hunt amongst working rank and file miners. Roy Lynk has been trying to raise support for himself by making statements about witch-hunts and diciplinary actions.

The present plans of Lynk and Clarke are only the latest in their efforts to break the strike and the National Union itself in their own interests, not as they claim, to protect the interests of miners who have worked in the strike. The rule changes which were railroaded through branch meetings in Notts were explained to the men as a means to protect the area's autonomy. The people who drew them up meant not to protect the area's autonomy but to leave Notts without any responsibility to accept the decisions made at national level through the union's democratic processes.

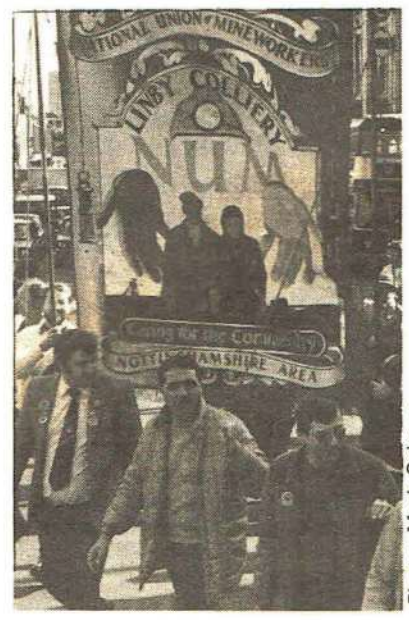


Photo: Mark Salmon

Linby miners march through Nottingham.

They knew when they pushed these rule changes through that the National Union of Mineworkers could not tolerate the Notts area being unaccountable to the National Union

The campaign launched by the Notts strikers on 24 January was seen as a way to recruit back working miners into the National Union after the expulsion of the area. With the postponment of the National Delegate Conference on 30 January, the opportunity should be taken to go ahead with the leafletting campaign in the hope of pulling the floor from under Roy Lynk's feet even though the area's expulsion hasn't taken place.

The backlash has already begun. Two South Notts collieries, Moorgreen and Linby, have voted against the rule changes in their branch meetings and 300 working miners at Moorgreen have returned forms attached to the leaflets showing their intention to stay in the National Union. There is now talk of Moorgreen holding a vote at a full branch meeting to keep the colliery in the National Union *en bloc*.

In the north of the county, petitions were already circulating amongst working miners showing their opposition to a breakaway union before we had even started our leafletting campaign. Although some of the leadership in Leicestershire and South Derbyshire may push through rule changes aligning themselves with Notts, the comparisons made with the Spencer Union of 1926 are not wholly accurate.

With the ground already unsteady underneath his feet, even Roy Lynk must realise that the future of a scab union in Notts cannot be a very long one. For the likes of Lynk and his cronies, an autonomous Notts Area is the only chance of holding onto power. Lynk himself has become General Secretary of the Notts NUM, a position he has always craved but has failed to achieve through the ballot box.

The whole of the Area Council and Executive has grown more and more out of touch with the area membership, more so than the previous left-controlled council and executive. Railroading legislation through branches is no longer taken for granted. The rank and file working miners now seem to distrust Lynk and his cronies as much as they distrust Scargill.

At Pye Hill No 1 colliery where one of Lynk's firmest allies, Colin Clarke, is branch delegate, there was uproar from the rank and file at the last branch meeting; the other three branch officials as well as the whole of the commitee threatened to resign.

At my own colliery, Bentinck, pressure from the rank and file working miners forced the scab branch leadership to appeal to area level for an area ballot over the rule changes and the expulsion. But obviously the area leadership, knowing what the result of the ballot would be, turned down all the appeals.

Bury hatchet

In view of what I believe is a genuine desire amongst most of the Notts working miners to remain inside the National Union, the Notts strikers must attempt to bury the hatchet. The desire for revenge must be diverted away from the rank and file working miners and aimed solely at the likes of Lynk and Clarke. If there is any sort of witch-hunt amongst the rank and file working miners it would undoubtedly drive them into the arms of the planned Spencer union.

Notts strikers who have suffered terrible hardships for the last 10 months may find it hard to look at the implications of a breakaway in an objective way. But they must realise the need to appeal to the working miners to campaign within the pits and fight against the present area leadership in the interests of the future strength of the National Union.

Gordon Bennet writes—

THIS YEAR marks the 40th anniversary of the ending of hostilities in Europe. Over the next few months we are likely to witness outbreaks of selective amnesia about the war as the Tories try to exploit it to their advantage.

One anniversary we should never forget is 27 January, 1945. It was on that day, at around 3 pm that Ukrainian units of the Red Army arrived at Auschwitz in Poland. They found 7,000 survivors out of the total of four million men, women and childrer who had been sent to the place that has become synonymous with genocide.

Despite the indescribable suffering of the prisoners, the Nazis were unable to break their spirits. Some of those who were caught trying to escape refused to beg for mercy before the SS guards executed them. They cried out 'Avenge our deaths.'

It was here that Dr Josef Mengele, the Nazi 'race scientist' who made the Frankenstein horror a reality on a mass scale, conducted his 'experiments' which left 400,000 people dead.

What price now the lives of the millions who died fighting a war which they believed would destroy fascism forever, in a week which saw the Austrian Defence Minister greet a Nazi war criminal like a returning hero, and fresh evidence that Mengele is alive and well in Paraguay?

When Thatcher attempts to cover herself in a pseudo-Churchillian aura around the VE day celebrations, consider the fact that only a year ago her own youth section produced documented evidence of fascist infiltration into the Conservative Party—about which she has done nothing.

No doubt over the next year we will hear hear various hypocrites calling for the release of Hitler's deputy, Rudolf Hess, from Spandau Prison on the grounds of reconciliation and forgiveness. There can be no forgiving these filth.

The next time you read an editorial defending the 'democratic rights' of fascists, remind yourself of the rights that their heroes allowed the four million people slaughtered in this one camp.

Above all else, through the sickening stench of hypocrisy, remember Auschwitz.

Wakefield meeting

A WAKEFIELD LPYS meeting attracted 40 people at Wakefield Labour Club on February 3, to hear Gary Ironmonger of Cornton-wood NUM and John Evans of Knottingley ASLEF. Rail solidarity was applauded and Gary reported that Llanwern steel works was shutting down between 4.30—7 pm to save power.

Miners' support round up

Labour picket

OVER 200 Labour Party members and trade unionists gathered at Allerton Bywater pit on 28 January in a show of solidarity. This was the third picket organised by Leeds District Labour Party. It had been rumoured that there would be a large number of 'new starters' that morning, but there were hardly any more going in than there had been previously, about 70 out a workforce of 1200. They were rushed in on two half-empty buses.

The Labour Party picket then moved onto Savile pit, where the police were taken by surprise at the increased number of pickets—the scabs were delayed for over an hour whilst picket reserves were moved in. The mood of the regular pickets was visibly boosted.

The next task of the local movement will be to build for the Yorkshire Regional TUC Day of Action on February 11, when all trade unionists will have the opportunity to show their support for the NUM in what will amount to a regional general strike, if organised properly by the Regional TUC.

£575 collected

THE ARMTHORPE miners wives support group in conjunction with Scunthorpe CLP organised a collection in Scunthorpe shopping precinct. A tremendous £575 was donated in cash, much more than many collectors had expected, and when the miners' wives toured the market at the end of the afternoon, local traders gave boxes full of food.

Most of the collectors were *Militant* supporters, and miners wives and party members acknowledged the consistent support of the LPYS who have been at the forefront of food and money collections since day one.

Altrincham

THE TRANQUILITY of the Tory stronghold of Altrincham, Trafford, was shattered on 2 February when 200 demonstrated in support of the NUM. Labour's shadow energy spokesman Stan Orme outlined the reasons for the strike and said that Thatcher was hell bent on beating the miners into submission.

A representative of the NUM spoke of their disappointment at the failure of the leaders of the Labour Party and the TUC to organise effective solidarity action.

Threat to striker

WAKEFIELD STRIKER David Jones, has received a letter advising him to return to work or "suffer the consequences". It came after he had had a letter supporting the strike printed in the *Wakefield Express*.

The threatening letter warned him that he would soon be in a minority and to watch his possessions. Mr Jones said: "It must be someone who knows me because references were made to my wife, who's working and me running a car.

(Reports Dave Warrall, Leeds Central CLP)

'Father and Son' film one-sided

JOHN CUNNINGHAM is a striking miner from Ellington Colliery, Ashington, Northumberland. His father, John Cunningham Senior was the Ellington Lodge Secretary who led the back-to-work movement. *World In Action* broadcast a programme 'Father and Son', centred on the Cunningham family, on Monday 28 January. John Cunningham junior, a *Militant* supporter, gives his assessment of the programme:

It did not give a balanced picure, which *World in Action* is meant to. In my opinion the programme set out with the intention of painting a picture of a community split down the middle—as my brother Patrick put it in the final stages of the film, a "civil war without guns". This is not the case. The strike has actually brought the community closer together. Families are more united than divided. This positive aspect never came across.

The programme also portrayed the strike as being lost, a picture of gloom and doom, despondency and demoralisation. There were a number of blatant lies. The narrator said: "Pickets watched helplessly as scab busses go in and coal comes out." To date very little coal has been brought to the surface, never mind moved from the pit yard.

When I was interviewed, hours of film were taken. I said a lot about the reasons why we were on strike. None of this was used in the final edition. They were more interested in such things as why I ignored my mother on the street, or why my father didn't tell me of his decision to return to work.

It said in the programme 800 men followed my father back to work. This is a lie. Only 100 more actually went in that week. The rest have gone back in dribs and drabs since then.

Wy wife was a bit upset, like when the papers had reports about me in. It was totally biased, there was not one shot with Brenda in. No mention of the tireless work done by the support group in relieving hardship in the community. It also appeared that she had no opinion on the strike or my father's return to work.

Most of the lads thought the programme was biased, a few thought it fair. After the programme the telephone never stopped ringing all night with people calling in support, miners from other areas and even long-lost friends. There were a couple of exceptions, the usual scabs.

On a lighter note, one scene showed me coming out of my house for picket duty. This was actually filmed at 5 pm in the evening, because the *World in Action* team couldn't get up early enough for the picket line.



Ellington miners voting to strike on 3 March last year. Photo: D Pearson

What you didn't read

WHEN IT comes to reporting the miners' strike, the Tory press only tells half the story—the half that denigrates the NUM.

Since the strike began last year, the Fleet Street dailies have been full of stories about 'pit-mob violence' etc, while the super scabs have been portrayed as heroes. The truth paints a different picture:

● Yorkshire scab Ken Foulstone received great publicity when he took the NUM to court to force a national ballot. He received full police protection during his strike breaking campaign.

What you didnt read on the front page: Mr Foulstone will be appearing in a Doncaster court this month charged with two burglaries allegedly committed in 1977.

The Mail

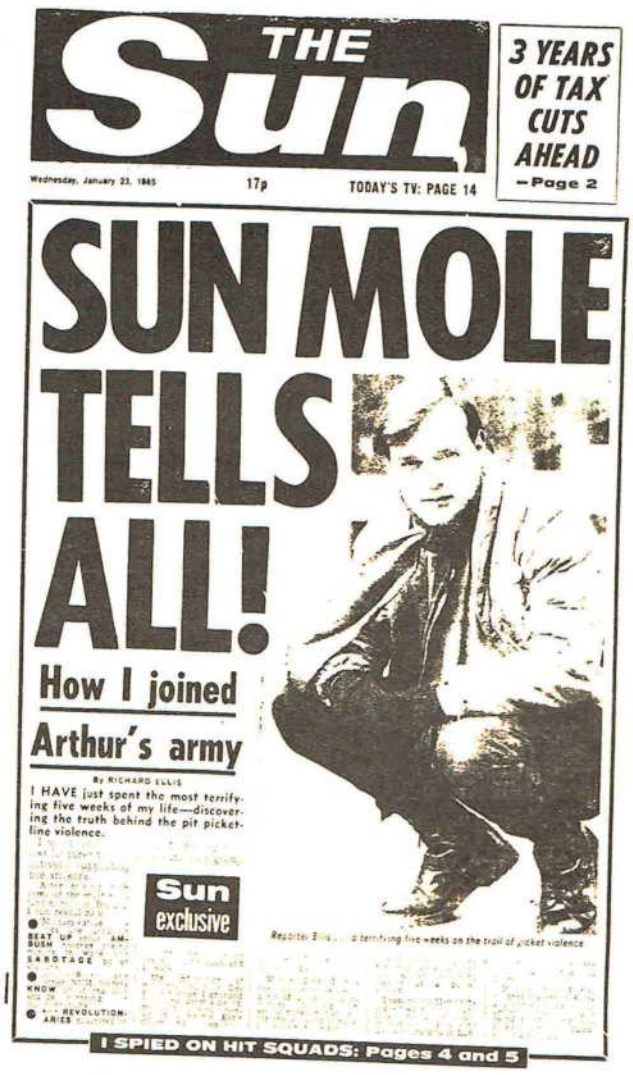
● Papers such as the *Mail on Sunday* gave massive coverage to Yorkshire scab Stuart Spencer when his house burnt down in November, allegedly the work of arsonists. The *Mail* (25 November) described him as a "Victim of hate" and said: "Mr Spencer... accused the NUM of orchestrating the attack against him."

What you didn't read on the front page: After a full and thorough investigation, the West Yorkshire police have found no connection between the crime and striking miners or their supporters.

● The press and television crews descended on the home of Durham scab Barry Newton after he claimed three masked men threw ammonia in his face. Pictures showing Mr Newton's burnt hands and face were soon broadcast across the country.

What you didn't read on the front page: Following the police forwarding his case to the Director of Public Prosections, Mr Newton has been summoned to appear at Houghton-le-Spring magistrates court on 7 February. No one else has been implicated in the case.

● The *Sun* on 30 November told the story of Brodsworth scab Willy Parker. It portrayed Mr Parker as an unsung hero who was going through a 'terrying ordeal' of violence from "thugs" and "bully boys", referring to striking miners.


THE Sun

Wednesday, January 23, 1985 17p TODAY'S TV: PAGE 14

3 YEARS OF TAX CUTS AHEAD —Page 2

SUN MOLE TELLS ALL!

How I joined Arthur's army

By RICHARD ELLIS

I HAVE just spent the most terrifying five weeks of my life—discovering the truth behind the pit picket-line violence.

Sun exclusive

I SPIED ON HIT SQUADS: Pages 4 and 5

An example of hysterical Sun-style journalism which avoids anything like the truth. *Sun* 'mole' Richard Ellis got striking miners' confidence by trickery then attacked them with abusive outpourings none of which were backed by facts.

What you didn't read on the front page: Shortly before the *Sun* article, Mr Parker made a threatening phone call to his branch delegate Kevin Hughes. Unfortunately for Mr Parker, Kevin Hughes taped the conversation. On it Mr Parker said: "I've gone and got myself a gun. If anybody touches any of my family, I'm going on the rampage—and I'll go to jail for it." When told that homes of striking miners had been attacked, in particular the branch secretary's, Mr Parker replies that if he had any trouble then "his (windows) are going through again—and I'll do it."

The tape was given to the police but they have done nothing about it—unlike in Staffordshire recently when striking miners' leader, 51 year old Eric Lippit, was remanded in custody at Shrewsbury prison after being charged with threatening to kill a scab.

★ Another story that didn't make the front page. Miner Pete Neelan, of Warsop Main colliery, Derbyshire had his garage and car burnt out. The word 'revenge' was scrawled on a tree. Newspaper and TV reporters descended on the scene. Their interest rapidly faded when Pete told them he is on strike. "Everyone seemed terribly disappointed," says Pete. The story sank almost without trace.

By Bob Wade



Picket of Didcot power station last year. Oil is now being used increasingly at this and other power stations, sometimes to 'sweeten' poor quality coal. Photo: John Harris (IFL III)

Picket scab oil transport

WITH THE increased oil-burn in power stations more oil tankers are on the road, many not suitable for carrying oil and potentially dangerous.

Oil distribution companies are using contractors who don't normally carry oil, leading to all sorts of problems. Even at this stage of the strike, effective picketting at oil-distribution depots could still cut down the amount of scab oil being delivered.

Any delay in the transportation of heavy or medium grade oil means that the oil cools and goes hard, becoming impossible to pump off. The haulier will be losing money while the tanker is off the road.

Miners should approach distribution shop stewards (in the TGWU Chemical, Oil and Rubber Group) to help with the picketing of contractors carrying scab oil. Oil refineries and depots are well organised, and even contract drivers are required to be members of the TGWU.

Regular card checks should be made at the distribution points and contract drivers reminded that their pay and conditions are inferior to those in the Chemical, Oil and Rubber section agreements.

All scab haulage firms should be blacked, and TGWU members should refuse to handle scab oil in line with the union's national policy and TUC guidelines.

By Bob Stothard
(TGWU)

Lorry deaths

THE TORIES have spared no effort to keep power stations going with oil and coal during the miners strike. Oil fired stations like Fawley have been working far above the usual capacity to save depleted supplies in the North. A union official claims that unsuitable vehicles are used to carry oil and coal from the Thames estuary to Didcot power station and may have contributed to two deaths in lorry accidents. The official, Ian Keys of the GMBATU thinks many of the tankers used are unroadworthy. He also says that coal lorries travelling south from Leicestershire have been involved in accidents by travelling on roads unsuited to heavy traffic. The press has been virtually silent about these incidents.

Tory social attitudes

THE OLD saying goes—there are lies, damn lies and statistics. This was certainly the case when the media recently highlighted the findings of last year's 'British Social Attitudes' report, produced by the Gower publishing company.

Typically they picked the bits that backed their reactionary propaganda, with the impression being that people were better off. A closer study of the report confirms what Marxists have been saying, that the protracted crisis of British society is having a profound effect on people's attitudes.

For example back in 1960 the report asked people if they were prepared to take collective action to defeat an 'unjust or harmful law'. Only 23% said yes. Yet in 1983 a staggering 77% said yes to the same question.

Last year's survey also asked if the law should be obeyed without exception, or would people follow their own consciences even if it meant breaking the law. The replies were evenly divided although in the 18-35 age group 63% were in favour of the 'law breaking' option.

The report found little confidence in the Tory government. This year 80% think prices will rise. 68% thought unemployment would increase. Only 19% of low income families thought they were better off than five years ago.

The report shows that people are increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and are more prepared to protest about it. Lets hope the Labour leadership reads this report and shakes off its illusion that somehow we are still in the 'good old days' of the 1960's.

By Pete Dickinson

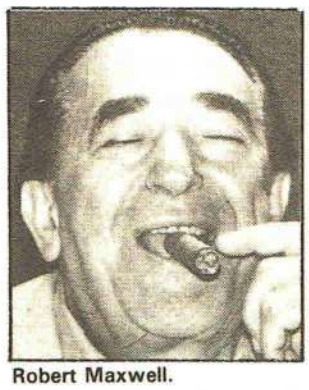
Mirror Readers' Meeting!

KIND MR MAXWELL in his wisdom has decided that people outside London should have a say as to what goes in his paper.

At each city the *Daily Mirror* has visited, there is an evening meeting. Sort of a '*Mirror* Readers' Meeting'—I hope Mr Maxwell has registered at Walworth Road.

Myself and comrade Potter decided to go down and see if we could sell a few papers (we did); about 200 people were there.

The editor started with a few remarks about what the *Daily Mirror* stands for: "Blah, blah, blah, make sure Labour government is elected, blah, blah, blah, sensible left, blah, blah, blah, no attacks on royal family, blah, blah, blah."



Robert Maxwell.

One young woman asked the editor why, if the *Mirror* is supposed to be a left-wing paper, they have to print pictures of women baring their breasts. The editor's reply was pathetic. He reckoned the majority of male readers wanted that, and to sell the paper and make a profit. Another bloke in the audience said 'have a show of hands of the men in the audience'. We did. The vast majority voted against the pin-up pictures.

Someone else asked why, if the *Mirror* wants a Labour government, does it print scandalous attacks on sections of the party, like the *Militant* tendency. The editor replied saying the *Militant* is 'alien to the Labour Party and all it stands for'. He also said we have our 'own paper, staff, finances, are undemocratic'. The questioner replied why then doesn't the *Mirror* attack groups of big businessmen like the Bilderburg Group? The editor then 'ummed' and 'ahed' and said we don't want to get into a big political debate.

I tried to point out that it was Mr Capitalist himself, Maxwell, who has his 'own paper, staff, finances, is totally undemocratic'.

The best laugh of the night came when an old bloke ranted and raved how he was on a steelworkers' picket line and a truck drove up with a load of "militants" in it with weapons. They jumped out and started fighting with the police and pickets, then they said: "We have to go picketing somewhere else", and drove off.

Then another truck drove up with more "militants" in it, but this time they had loads of their paper "the *Militant*" to sell.

At this point myself and comrade Potter were in physical pain resulting from an excessive reaction to these revelations. All in all it was a canny neet oot!

By Billy Wake

Why FE students must organise



Liverpool FE students demonstrate on a NUS day of action. Through linking with the labour movement they won concessions: free travel, crèche facilities and three sabatical officers to safeguard FE students's interests. Photo: Militant

FURTHER Education is already the poorest sector in education. Yet today FE students face a series of unprecedented attacks from the Tory government.

Recent proposals presented by Lord 'UB 40' Young, to conscript 16 and 17 year olds onto YTS are a clear attempt to empty the colleges of part time students. 25% of FE colleges are to be taken out of the control of local authorities, and placed under the Manpower Services Commission.

Rate-capping

Further attacks are taking place on students in the FE Sector. One of the possible effects of rate-capping as the Inner London Education Authority have warned, will be to stop discretionary awards for FE students.

Similarly it could mean the closure of FE colleges, as Sheffield City Council have already indicated.

At a time when a united campaign is needed to fight these attacks the so-called 'Democratic Left' leadership of NOLS are occupied with attacks on Further Education Labour Students, whose members have been in the forefront of campaigns in FE colleges.

This has culminated in the Democratic Left leadership calling for the expulsion of myself from the Labour Party. Meanwhile, FELS member Lesleigh Woodburn who was elected onto the Student Union's FE National Committee (FENC) has been subjected to moves to remove her from the position.

FELS was born out of the campaign against the cuts in council spending organised by Liverpool City Council last year. FE students played a major role, recognising that if the council was defeated, then colleges would face closures.

As a result of a campaign to link FE students with the local labour movement important reforms were won.

The campaigns and victory of Liverpool FE students inspired FE students around the country who were dissatisfied with the lip service paid to them by the 'Democratic Left' leadership of NUS. Indeed constitutional barriers have been put in the way of FE students participating in NOLS.

Only 10% of FE students receive a grant. The vast majority have to study part time, and drop subjects to accommodate the 'under 21 hour rule', in order to claim supplementary benefit.

The NOLS constitution excludes part time students who come into this category.

At the same time there is no such thing as individual membership of NOLS; you have to be a member of a Labour Club. Over 90% of the FE colleges affiliated to NUS do not have Labour Clubs, even after three years of a Labour leadership of NUS.

By having individual membership FELS will offer an organisation in which part time students can immediately get involved in campaigning activity and assist in the building of NOLS.

Support for FELS has rapidly grown, showing the need for such an organisation. However, the main reason for the growth in FELS is not just because it has a different constitution to NOLS. FELS recognises that the only way major reforms can be achieved is by winning the full backing of the labour and trade union movement, to force concessions from the Tories.

'Pluralism'

In contrast the NOLS leadership have advocated a policy of 'pluralism' which has led leading figures, such as Neil Stewart (when he was President of NUS) to explain: "It actually serves in our interest to have a Tory on NUS executive". Their campaign has concentrated on letter writing, lobbying the House of Lords etc. Yet the past six years of Tory rule shows Thatcher does not listen to logical arguments against Tory policies, no matter how eloquently put.

It is these political differences and the growth in support for FELS that has inititated the attacks against FELS members.

The best response to these attacks is to build FELS. Every Labour Party member at FE college should join FELS to show that FE students will not stand idly by but will join with those who are fighting for an effective campaign to be waged against the Tories.

By Louise James
(FELS Organising Secretary)

What FELS stands for

FELS IS committed to fighting for these demands by linking the campaign with the labour and trade union movement.

Labour FE students should send resolutions to Lesleigh Woodburn on FENC demanding that FENC mobilises FE students for the March on Parliament on 28 February.

Lesleigh Woodburn is open for invitations to speak at Student Union meetings.

Resolutions should be sent to FENC at NUS headquarters, 461 Holloway Road, London N7 and copies sent to Lesleigh Woodburn, c/o FELS address.

- ★ £30 a week minimum grant.
- ★ Free travel, free meals for FE students and YTS trainees.
- ★ Student Unions to have control of funds and their own affairs.
- ★ Full union rights and rates of pay for YTS trainees.
- ★ No to YTS conscription.
- ★ No to college closures or any form of cut through rate-capping.
- ★ No to MSC control of 25% of FE colleges.

JOIN FELS—for further details, speakers, leaflets, write to the following address; 24 Higgins House, Whitmore Road, London N1.

★ Leaflets available for March on Parliament 28 February—£400 for 1,000 (inclusive of p+p)—write to FELS address.

Debate of ideas: 'Marxism v Reformism'

***MILITANT* reported last week how National Women's Committee member Margaret Creear received a warning letter from Labour Party National Agent David Hughes after debating Marxist ideas.**

The meeting itself was a great success. Held in Preston under the title of 'Marxism v Reformism', Margaret Creear debated with Colin Sutherland.

According to the reformists the only way Labour could be elected was if 'popular' policies were put forward, such as co-operatives, import controls, workers' control and "self management" by "persuading" company managers to give workers more say in running industry.

This was answered by a worker from British Aerospace who explained how the Lucas plan hadn't worked because the management simply turned around and said no to the workers' plans. Without taking all the power out of the hands of capitalism, all talk of "workers' control" and "alternative production" was just academic.

At one stage a right-winger got up and told us that the British Parliamentary system was "the best we had". He was immediately answered by a comrade, who described the House of Lords as "a second-rate muppet show".

Comrade Sutherland had asked in a pamphlet he wrote (*Trotskyists in the Labour Party*): "Is life in Britain so bad that I am determined to help organise the overthrow of the state by revolutionary means?" Comrades who had some experience of low-pay, unemployment, bringing up a family, etc soon dealt with this one.

Margaret Creear explained the need to take over the 200 biggest companies—or else how could Labour pay for its socialist programme of decent wages, shorter hours, investment in industry?

During the meeting the letter Margaret Creear had received that morning from David Hughes was read out. This was answered by 53 local Labour Party members and trade unionists signing a petition protesting at the letter.

By Phil Forrester



Margaret Creear.

YTURC campaign gets rolling

THE CAMPAIGN to fight the Tories' plans to conscript youth onto YTS schemes is under way.

If the Tory legislation goes ahead, youth will be forced to go onto cheap labour Youth Training Schemes, otherwise their benefits will be cut. For thousands of youth under 18 it will end their right to stay on the dole while they look for real jobs, and the chance to study part time to improve qualifications.

Tony Cox, secretary of the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign, said: "The Tories will make youth a timebomb if these proposals become law."

YTURC launched the campaign against the Tories' proposals last week with a national petition, launched at Parliament. Among the first signatories were **Paul Weller**, members of Style Council, **Brian Hibbitt** of the Flying Pickets, as well as Labour MPs.

Other celebrities giving support to publicise the campaign are **Lynval Golding** (ex-member of the Specials and Fun Boy Three) in Coventry, and cartoonist **Steve Bell**, who will join a YTURC press conference in Brighton on 7 February.

With the build up to a national demonstration on February 28, the campaign moves into the regions:

★ In **Liverpool** the City Council's newsletter is carrying details of the campaign and petitions have been sent to all council workplaces. A week before the demonstration representatives of YTURC will meet the Manpower Services Commission to put the case for YTS trainees.

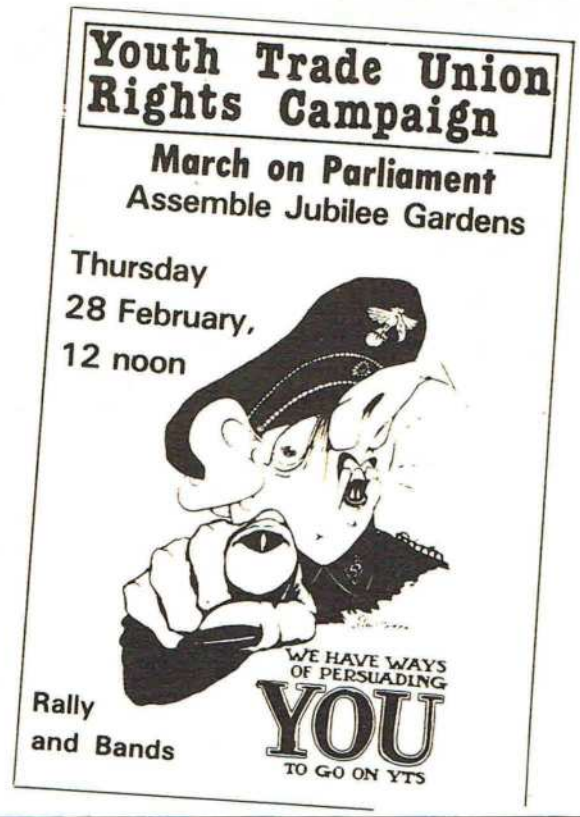
★ In the East Midlands a demonstration will be held in **Derby** on 23 February, while Job Centres will be picketed in **Leicester** and **Milton Mowbray**. A debate has also been arranged with the Tories in Leicester for 21 February.

★ In **Glasgow** petitions and fund raising are well under way—£50 was raised for YTURC in one afternoon.

★ In the **West Midlands** a press conference has been called to publicise the campaign.

★ In **Havant** the local LPYS have organised a rally and concert in support of YTURC.

YTURC leaflets available from the Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.





Shipbuilding on Tyneside. As redundancies mount up so apprenticeships disappear. Last year the Austin Pickersgill yard only took on 20 apprentices. *Photo: Militant*

Apprenticeships slashed as dole queue lengthens

THE LAST five years under Thatcher in the North East have resulted in the decimation of apprenticeships as ship yards, pits, and heavy engineering have all suffered under government policies.

Quality lower

As more and more factories close or shed part of their workforce, fewer and fewer apprentices have been employed. Factories are using YTS in the role of apprentices, resulting in the reduction of the length of an apprenticeship from an average of 3-4 years (originally seven years, then five years) to one year, with the resultant loss of quality of apprenticies and poorer wages.

This arrangement allows management a pool of cheap, relatively poorly trained workers who are used to lower wages. In real terms it is the deskilling of trades.

Existing apprentices either rceceive their notice of redundancy before or more commonly on completion of their apprenticeships. Very few apprentices who are retained as a skilled-man, remain employed for very long, as they are the first to go in any redundancy.

It is the inability to gain necessary experience outside their apprenticeship which destroys any chance of ever working again in their chosen trade.

These problems are not being taken up sufficiently by the trade unions, reflected by the lack of active youth sections.

Often structures exist within a union for youth, such as the Junior Workers Committee in the AUEW, but these structures are rarely implemented, unlike trade unions on the continent; for example the Danish Metal Workers Unions has an active youth section.

It is up to the unions to fight with us to save the destruction of apprenticeships, for in the future there will be a demand for highly skilled technicians, as industry becomes more and more dependent on new technology and robots.

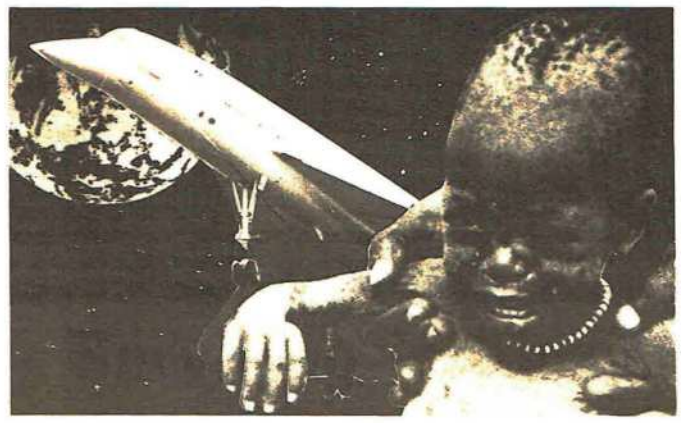
Reduce hours

These new developments are capable of drastically reducing the hours worked in a factory, releasing people from boring, repetitive and difficult jobs.

Failure to save apprenticeships will hinder any economic growth, and will also see the weakening of unions due to the total lack of new membership.

By Paul Rowan
(Washington LPYS & ROF Birtley)

Could war defences end African drought?



Science & Socialism

FAMINE COULD strike again in Ethiopia and other African countries, over the next few years. The famine in Ethiopia, the second great famine in 15 years, is directly caused by crop failure due to the shortening of the rainy season.

Rainy season

Over the last 20 years August, at the end of the rainy season, has become drier. This means that less water is held in the soil through the dry season and crops don't mature. In addition, rain in the early season is sometimes unreliable and seeds can't germinate.

As the drought persists a cycle of receeding vegetation and soil erosion occurs. This means that more of the rain, which often comes in heavy spells, runs off and is lost. In Ethiopia, if the growing season drops below 90 days, widespread crop-failure occurs; in 1983 it ws only 70 days.

The fragile agricultural economies of many African countries, at the bottom rung of world trade with little exchange for investment in agriculture, are unable to cope with these climatic variations. Yet not far away in the vast infertile salt marshlands of Mesopotamia, billions

Water trench

of dollars are being spent by Iraq on water defences in the war against Iran.

The Iraqis built a 30km water-filled trench, defending the town of Basra, behind which they have put their heavy artillery. Iraq's aim is possibly to facilitate an invasion of the oil rich Khuzistan region (eastern Iran) by diverting the Karun river which forms a national defence between this region and Iraq. Ironically the up-shot of these schemes is that the salt-encrusted marshlands could be flushed out by the increase flow of fresh water, helped by the building of short canals and made fertile again.

Iraq's military efforts have inadvertantly gone a long way to reclaiming a huge area of othewise uncultivatable land.

Vast resourses spent in war, perpetuating the interests of ruling cliques in these states may have had in this case an unusual by-product. For millions of people in Africa, resources provided on an equivalent scale for peaceful purposes would mean the difference between living and dying.

By Ben Eastop

Sunderland —like third world

THE BOROUGH of Sunderland in Tyne and Wear was recently described on the BBC World Service as having the worst prospects of any city in Western Europe.

Based on traditional North East heavy industries—shipbuilding, engineering and mining—the borough already has 103,188 unemployed (Sept 1984).

Inevitably 1985 is going to be a year of massive upheaval for the working class of Sunderland and they are showing their preparedness to fight. Miners at Wearmouth in the heart of the borough and in Eppleton, Hetton and Herrington (which is on the closure list) have shown eleven months of determination to defend their jobs and community.

Shipyard stewards on the Wear and the Tyne have joined together to fight closures. NUPE and the District Labour Party are calling a conference of trade unions to launch a Campaign Against the Cuts. At Washington Child Benefit offices there has been a shift workers' strike lasting 8 months.

This is a fitting setting for the Regional Conference of the Labour Party Young Socialists on February 9 and 10 in Sunderland North Labour Club. Youth bear the brunt of all these attacks—the miners' strike is about preserving the future. The Tory plan for YTS conscription through withdrawal of benefits will have a devastating effect where school leavers have little prospect of work.

We are starting with a demonstration in support of the miners through Sunderland on the Saturday morning (assemble 10 am at Mowbray Park) but which will also bring together all these other campaigns; the same fight on different fronts. All trade unions, Labour Parties and other organisations are welcome on the march which will start 1985 the way we intend to go on—with workers' solidarity and unity.

By Fred Gent
(LPYS Regional Chairman)

LIVERPOO ATT

'We'll beat them again'

—Interview Derek Hatton

LAST JULY Liverpool Labour Council won a major victory securing major concessions from the Tory government.

The Fleet Street press barons greeted that victory with universal disgust. They directed their anger against Patrick Jenkin blaming him for a government "sell-out" to Marxist Liverpool.

In order to maintain what little credibility he had, Jenkin denied he had made any concessions. For him to have admitted he had taken a hammering from Liverpool would obviously have been foolish.

Militant asked DEREK HATTON, (right) Deputy Leader of Liverpool City Council, about that victory and the new financial crisis facing Liverpool council.



What was achieved last year?

Following the campaign we conducted we secured sufficient cash off the Tories to meet all our policy objectives and election pledges. The settlement we achieved meant:

1. No rent rise.
2. Continued house building—1,211 this year (1,057 last year).
3. No redundancies.
4. 1000 jobs made permanent.
5. Vacancies filled.
6. No cuts in services.

It did mean a 17% rate rise but every penny of that was used to improve services and not to compensate for Tory cuts. Only the month before that settlement in June 1984 Jenkin and the Tories suggested that we should: –

1. Increase rents by £1.60.
2. Scrap house building.
3. Sack 1,000 workers taken on.
4. Smash the DLO (Direct Labour Organisation) and sack 1,000 workers.
5. Make 400 'voluntary' redundancies.
6. Not fill any vacancies.
7. Raise rates by 37%.

Q. What do you say to those who say it was a defeat and nothing was achieved?

A. We succeeded in meeting all our objectives. To those who say it was a defeat—quite frankly if the movement had achieved similar "defeats" over the past five years then Thatcher and the Tories would be on the floor.

To those who say we never achieved anything—tell that to the hundreds of families rehoused in new houses or the thousands of workers employed by the council (and private sector—particularly building workers) who would now be unemployed.

Q. What is the current position regarding the council's finances?

A. We now face a financial crisis worse than last year. To balance the books would require 6,000 redundancies or a 220% rate rise.

This is because of:

1. Ten years of Tory/Liberal cuts have decimated council services.
2. The government target for spending is totally unrealistic.
3. The government imposes penalties for spending on essential services.
4. A totally inadequate rate support grant.
5. The government reneging on agreements last July. When Jenkin toured the city's housing blackspots he said: "I have never seen housing the conditions the like of those I have seen here today." Yet our resources for housing have been cut by 34%.

This year we have been set an arbitrary spending target by the Tories of £220 million. We need to spend £270 million just to defend existing jobs and services. We would then lose all government grants—that is why the options are 220% rate rise or 6,000 jobs.

So long as the Tories are in power it will always be like that—a battle every year over inadequate resources—until we remove the Tories. We have consistently made this point in all our material.

Q. What are you going to do?

A. We have no choice but to mount a similar campaign to that of last year when we went to the ranks of the labour and trade union movement, community groups and unemployed to explain the real issues of jobs, services and houses.

This resulted in a 20,000 demonstration in November 1983, a 50,000 demonstration and strike on 29 March 1984 and magnificent election results in May 1984 with seven gains and 40,000 more votes for Labour than in 1982.

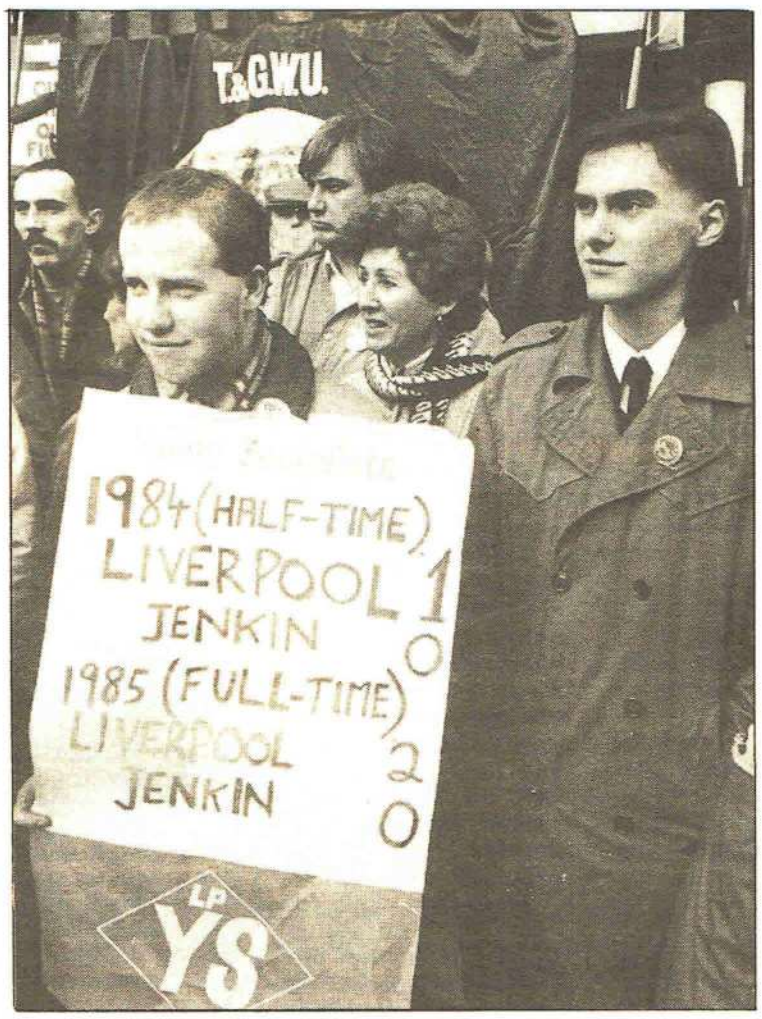
We are now holding a whole series of meetings with council workers, workers in the private sector and the public in order to discuss the budget crisis with them and what our response should be. Our task is to again raise the political consciousness of workers in Liverpool as we did last year as a result of the council's campaign and the political leadership offered.

The Tories have already told us of their intention to hammer the working class of Liverpool—they penalise us for providing clothing and footwear for children and accommodation for the homeless—they are determined to see 6,000 council workers sacked, housebuilding decimated, the DLO destroyed and massive rent rises imposed.

We are equally determined to ensured to ensure that those services are defended and we will be joining with the other councils who also face massive cuts. We are confident that such a united campaign with those councils and with the NUM will inflict a bloody nose on the Tories and ensure no sackings or massive rate rises.



Cartoon: Courtesy, Liverpool City Council.



Lobby of the council meeting, 31 January, in support of the council's stand against Tory financial attacks. Photo: J Smith (IFL)

Inheritance

YEARS OF TORY/LIBERAL DECLINE

★ 60,000 unemployed

★ 34,000 redundancies since 1979.

★ 4,500 council jobs lost since 1975

★ 50% youth unemployment—90% in some parts of the city;

★ Appalling unemployment amongst building workers.

★ 1983 Liberal/Tory budget provided for cut of another 1,000 council jobs.

★ 1983 Liberal/Tory budget provided for no filling of vacancies.

★ 1983 Liberal/Tory budget provided for workers in Direct Labour to be laid off

★ Liberal/Tory budget provided for privatisation plans for many areas of the Council, more job losses and wage cuts.

★ Massive increases in council house rents—up 120% 1979-83.

★ Highest rents in Britain outside London.

★ 22,000 people on waiting list for council homes.

★ 15,000 houses seriously decayed or derelict.

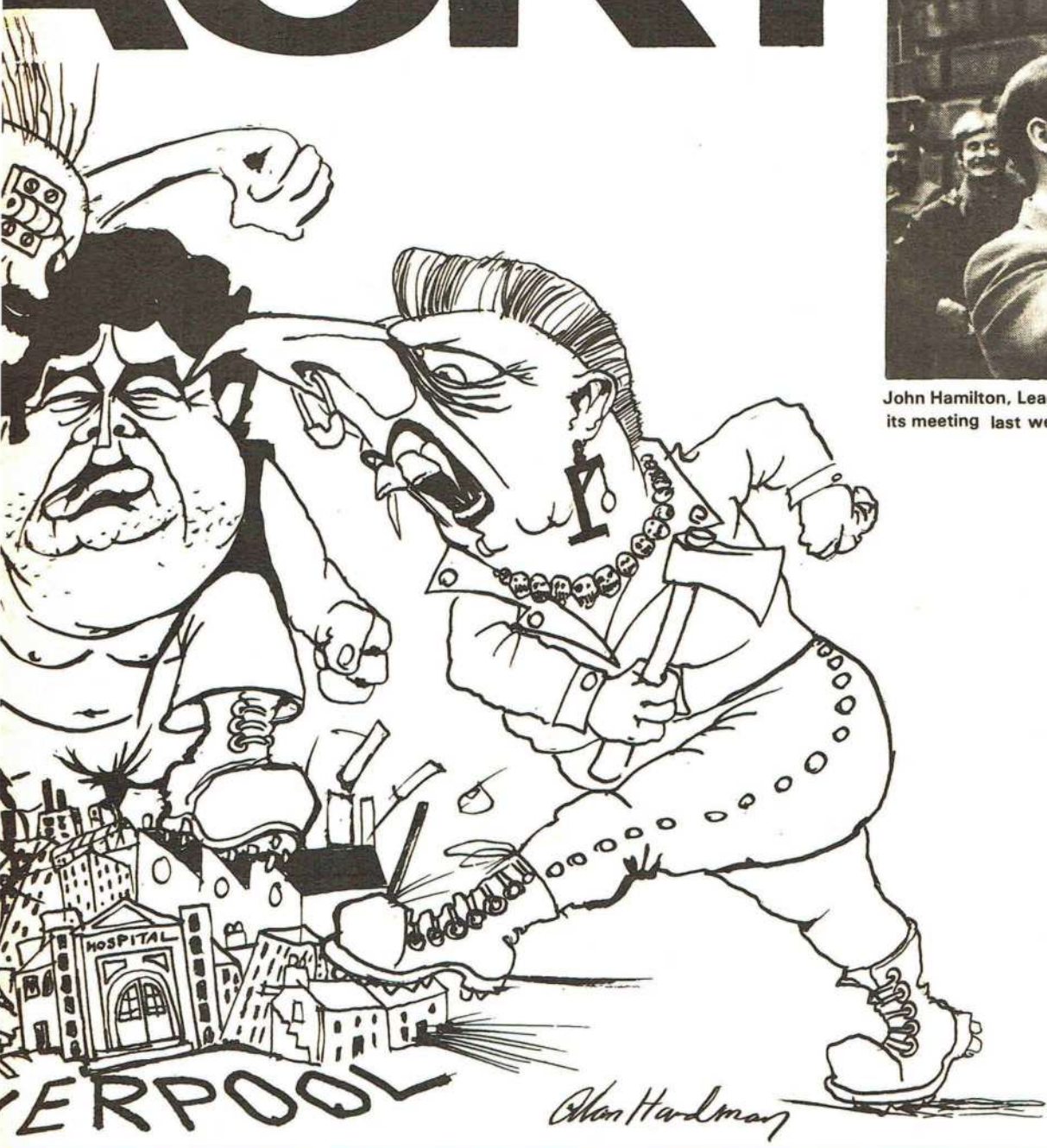
★ No council houses built for general needs from 1979-83.

★ Cancellation of the tenement rehousing programme in 1979 by previous Liberal-led administration.

★ 100% of rate rises since 1979 used to compensate for Tory cuts in grants; none used to improve services.

★ Courses for FE students to be cut.

OL UNDER ACK!





John Hamilton, Leader of the Council, addresses a 500-strong lobby come to support the council at its meeting last week. Photo: Dave Sinclair

Achievement

LABOUR'S 20 MONTHS OF ACHIEVEMENT.

★ Created 1000 jobs

★ Stopped 1000 job losses inherited from previous Liberal/Tory council.

★ Boosted employment in the private sector

—17,000 jobs will have been created by 1988 as a result of the council's building programmes for houses, sports facilities etc.

★ Ended the threat of privatisation

★ Taken on 136 apprentices

★ 100 16-year olds to be employed on YTS—but with wages topped up to £52 a week, guaranteed job at the end of the scheme and proper training facilities.

★ Introduction of £100 a week minimum wage & a 35 hour week for council workers planned to be implemented from 1st April 1985.

★ Trade unions now have nomination rights for jobs

★ Trade unions now have representatives at interviews to ensure no discrimination by management

★ No rent rises

★ No rate rises to compensate for government cuts—every penny of last year's rise spent on improving services.

★ £36 decoration allowances to all council tenants—Tories and DHSS have stopped any further payments

★ 1,057 new houses started in 1983/84.

★ 1,211 new houses to be started in 1984/85.

★ 5 new nursery classes built; 1 currently being built

★ 6 new classes to be built in 1985/86

★ Re-organisation of secondary education to ensure every child has the right to the best available education.

★ 3 sabbatical officers for Further Education sector elected by FE students and paid for by the council

★ Free meals for unemployed students & YTS

★ Travel allowances for students & unemployed

Building homes people want

PEOPLE IN Liverpool suffer some of the worst housing in Europe. It was the commitment by the local Labour Party to change that which more than anything else led me to stand for the council in May 1983.

By Peter Ferguson
(Deputy Chairman, Housing and Building Committee, Liverpool City Council)

As a child I remembered living in an inner-city flat above the sweet shop—no hot water, no bath, the kitchen three floors from the living room, toilet out in the yard and plenty of mice and rats. We moved to Kirkby when I was 10, but what shocked me coming back to live in the city twenty years later was finding that if anything, people were worse off. In the Liberals' last years in office they built no family houses whatsoever, despite 24,000 people being on the waiting list and many families forced to live apart.

When Labour regained control in May 1983 we put forward a programme of new building. We identified the areas of worst deprivation and concentrated efforts to change the whole environment. Our Urban Regeneration Strategy (URS) aims to build new houses, parks, sports centres and improve street lighting.

We are building houses—no flats. They are 'traditional' houses with (heaven forbid) front and back doors, semi-detached with a place to park the car at the side—in short a place where anybody would like to live.

Semi-detatched houses, no flats

After 20 months in office the policies have come to fruition. 1,057 houses were built in 1983/84 and 1,211 have been built or are on stream for 1984/85.

With only 30,000 homes for rent likely to be built in England and Wales in 1985—over 2,000 of these will be built in Liverpool (ie one in 15). If these figures alone are not a spur to action to other local authorities I do not know what will be. As well as new building in the public sector we are also engaged in an active programme in the private sector where we fund housing co-operatives, environmental work and improvement grants.

Since May 1983, the City Council has placed 136 contracts valued at £110 million with 40 local construction companies. This expenditure has a three-fold effect:'

1) It meets the basic needs for better housing and public services.

2) Jobs are preserved and created in the construction industry.

3) The local economy is given a further stimulous as the people employed spend their additional income.

The £110 million worth of city council contracts will be carried out over a three year period from May 1983 to May 1986. They should generate enough work in the public sector to keep 9,760 people fully employed for one year, or 3,250 employed for the three years. In the private sector, the capital work generated should be enough to keep 6,720 people fully employed for one year, or 2,240 people fully employed for three years.

These figures do not include the knock-on effect of factories, wood yards etc who have to produce the goods for the building programme.

★ One in fifteen of all houses built for rent in England and Wales this year will be built in Liverpool.

The current URS programme has three more years to run and will not solve by any means all the problems of our city, but with a programme of 4,000 houses by 1985/86, and 4,000 in 1986/87, we will be well on the way

We were only able to carry through the URS this year after the campaign and victory against the Tories last year. We face a greater battle this year.

Patrick Jenkin visited the city last year and exclaimed that: "I have never seen housing conditions the likes of those I have seen here to-day". But that was only crocodile tears. This year he has cut our housing investment programme by 34% to just £31 million. We will not accept cuts like these.

And this year we will be fighting alongside other local authorities. With a unified approach with many local authorities and the support of the local authority unions nationally (who face tens of thousands of redundancies) we can deal this vicious Tory government not just a bloody nose but a fatal blow.

Brazil, USA, Mexico

Brazil's moderate takes over



Vast rural areas of Brazil are extremely poor. All the wealth goes to multinationals and a small Brazilian elite.

21 YEARS OF military rule formally ended on 15 January, as Tancredo Neves was elected President of Brazil. The voting by an electoral college, despite heavy bias against working class areas, overwhelmingly endorsed Neves, the opposition canditate who has promised conciliation and reform.

By Colin Davison

Neves, the self–styled "left of centre reformist" will face serious problems on taking up office in March. His campaign promised a constituent assembly and open, direct elections in 1986 and 1988. In his victory speach Neves said... "I come to promote change, political change, economic change, social change."

The victory has raised expectations of reforms and of action against the military. Neves will be judged by deeds not rhetoric. The massive demonstrations for free elections last April were supported by over 2.5 million people in Sao Paulo and Rio. Industrial strife reached general strike proportions again in 1984 as wage agreements ran out.

Most prominent in these disputes were the metal workers and the engineering unions who bore the brunt of 3 years of recession.

Neves' propaganda, though, concentrated on generalities, promising only vague improvements. He will attempt very few reforms and will certainly steer clear of the military. The new President reportedly phoned the outgoing General Figueiredo thanked him for making the electoral college possible, while the General congratulated Neves.

The military have been forced to give up their public position of power. Strikes, demonstrations and food riots have provoked the ruling class to look towards some form of parliamentary democracy to safeguard the oligarchy, the military and capitalism itself. Armed forces' leaders in 1964 were in cahoots with big business to overthrow the government. Many officers had positions as directors in multinationals such as Volkswagen. Now the fear of revolution has stimulated a timid version of the "Argentinian solution"

Gross inequalities of wealth and income exist in Brazil. The military can put a communication satellite into orbit but over 40 million are illiterate. The ruling class fear an explosion.



Death in Sao Paulo. Crime has reached horrifying levels as more people chase fewer and fewer jobs.

Military's hopes

The electoral college was designed to, if possible, deliver a president who would be in the military's pocket. Their candidate was Maluf of the PDS. Many went over to Neves of the broad democratic front (PMDB) as opposition grew even greater. But the transition to a civilian president still gives the military a key role. Neves retains powers that the military had.

Neves' campaign advisors included the heads of some of Brazil's biggest private companies such as the food retailer *Pao de Acucar*. Neves himself was a "president" even before this election, President of the *Banco de Brasil* in the '50s! He will raise taxes, co-operate with the IMF and try to force a Social Contract.

His admiration of the Spanish "Moncloa pact", Gonzales' vicious wages policy. has already pushed the unions into opposing him. Lula, a metal workers leader and president of the P.T. (The Workers Party) commented; "what we need is a pact to end hunger, unemployment and land problems". The strike last June of 40,000 steelworkers over wages shows the response Neves will get.

The President based himself on a "Broad alliance", so broad that it will snap eventually like an overstretched elastic band. For the early mass rallies Neves used radical language and red flags, nearer the election he turned to vague slogans and took away the flags. At one rally he was asked not to put his mouth so close to the microphone because people could not properly hear what he was saying... "That's what I want!" he is alleged to have replied.

The capitalist Neves will be pushed further to the right, and splits will appear even in the PDS as the military and the oligarchy become even more isolated from their previous supporters in the middle class.

There will be opposition to Neves eventually within the PMDB but this is likely to splinter in many directions with the more working class PMDB supporters looking towards Brizola's "Labour Party" or the Workers' Party. The Brazilian working class despite 21 years of military rule, when they lost many democratic rights are the most powerful group in Brazil. Their potential strength shone through last year when tens of millions forthrightly opposed the military.

Workers will be asking how to transform their society. Questions will be asked of the left groupings inside the PMDB. In particular the Brazilian Communist party have suffered for direct involvement with the Neves coalition although the President has said they will not play a role in any governmental decisions. Threatened with being bypassed in the unions, they have already taken to expulsions. Their General Secretary for some 40 years, Luis Carlos Prestes was removed from his position in May 1980 and subsequently thrown out of the party.



Tancredo Neves

He criticised the party for negotiating with the dictatorship and not fighting for a revolutionary government. The Brazilian CP look to change in two stages, first removing the anti-democratic aspects of Brazilian capitalism to go on to a Socialist structure some time later. But Brazil's ruling class have never provided any basic democracy in their history, as their regular use of the military shows. They have also been incapable of sorting out basic problems such as land ownership except by shooting peasants after land seizures.

The ruling class are corrupt. The former playground of rich North Americans 30 years ago will be an arena of massive class struggle. Neves with his impeccably moderate credentials will face crisis upon crisis.

"Free market" chaos

THERE IS a "boomlet" in Brazil's economy at present primarily based on developments in the US. The high dollar has increased the external debt to well over 100 billion dollars but it has paradoxically increased exports to the US as Brazil's goods have become far cheaper than their American equivalents.

As Reagan's boom dies away, exports to the US, one third of their total, will fall and servicing the debt will again increase its draining effect on the economy. At present every 1% rise in interest rates adds $700 million to the debt. More layoffs and closures will follow.

Reagan is already presurising Brazil into reducing its exports, while import controls are being applied in industries such as steel. Brazilian capitalism can no longer grow beyond the barriers imposed by international capital. A burgeoning population faces daily the contradictions created by the "free market economy". Crime has reached epidemic proportions, while even in the modern cities like Brasilia the contrast between rich and poor is open and disgusting.

Unemployment is probably nearly 65 per cent. In Sao Paulo state, with 60 percent of Brazil's industrial production nearly ¾ million industrial jobs have been lost in three years. The "favellas", the shanty towns, around Rio and Sao Paulo have a population near to three million.

Brazil needs economic growth of 10 per cent a year for some time to replace all the jobs lost in the last three years, let alone employ the 1.5 million who join the jobs market each year. The Brazilian miracle has ended and investment shows little sign of picking up. The cruzeiro doesn't buy what it used to. To buy a VW "Beetle" in 1985 now requires twice as many hours work as in the '70s.

Why Americans need a union

AS A waitress in an ununionised restaurant in Seattle I was very encouraged to read of the fight for union rights in the Maggie May pub in Bootle.

My employers. like most others. can get away with paying us one third below the legal minimun wage. I recently joined the Hotel and Restaurant Union and I am encouraging my fellow workers to recognise the advantage of a union shop.

At present we are subject to every management whim, and every opportunity is taken to divide us. For time off they rely on favourism. With a union shop we could get our legal rights to paid vacation, a proper overtime rate and safety standards enforced.

We live in a one room apartment, a modest life even when my husband is in work but frequent layoffs in construction mean we often have to live on my $150 a month. Our rent alone is double that. We have a "luxury" a rented TV but we had to forgo getting a vacuum cleaner at Christmas.

With no National Health and being unable to afford medical insurance (the lowest coverage equals my wage) we live in fear of accidents or illness. Many Americans are worse off than us. 8 million have no jobs and 35 million are below the poverty level.

But I am encouraged by the willingness of workers throughout the world to struggle. News of Britain's miners strike shows our class' strength. Workers like myself will see the need for unity and a political voice, a Labor Party.

By Lisa Rooke

New issue

Militant International Review

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Surviving in Mexico City

THE INTOLERABLE conditions in Mexico City—with the world's largest city population—briefly hit the headlines in November after the Pemex gas explosion.

Nearly a thousand workers were killed, 2,750 injured and half a million made homeless after 30 million gallons of liquified petroleum gas exploded at the Pemex site in the shanty town of San Juan Ixhuatepec. The disaster was only overshadowed by the horror of Bhopal a few weeks later. Below, a correspondent from Mexico City describes the scene of devastation and the condition of the workers.

"The scene of the explosion is terrible, it looks like a nuclear bomb has exploded. It is a poor and crowded area and thousands are homeless, living in churches, schools and hospitals.

"There are nearly 20 million people in this city. A thousand more are added every day—by the year 2000 it is estimated the population will be 35 million. There's no shortage of labour, and workers are very badly treated. I visited a toy factory on pay day and a manual worker showed me his pay slip. For a 40 hour week, he earns 5,000 pesos (that's about £25).

"But £25 is looked upon with gratitude. There's no social security system, so if you don't work, you don't eat. Yet there is massive unemployment. The unemployed resort to all different methods to survive, the obvious one is crime—all the people I live with have been held up with guns or knives.

"There are other more ingenious ways of making a living. This city has massive traffic jams—with 8 million car; it has more cars that some cities have people! The jams provide a market for the vast array of street vendors. Lines of people sell chewing gum, lottery tickets, toys, books. There are shoe shiners and newspaper sellers. Even fire eaters perform before the waiting cars.

"Of course the government encourages all these activities—the city just cannot support all these people."

Pakistan, Vietnam/Kampuchea, Sri Lanka

The General's elections

GENERAL ZIA is holding elections this month, the third elections to be announced since he seized power in Pakistan in 1979. The other two were "postponed" because the opposition Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) he had overthrown looked like winning.

By Amjad Javed
(PPP member)

This time, elections seem assured, though on a non-party basis, with no public meetings or canvassing allowed. Members of any of the defunct political parties will probably not be allowed to contest. Zia "doesn't know" when martial law will end, implying that if his followers are not selected, repression will continue.

It is only two months since Zia held his referendum on "Islamisation" which made him president for another five years, but the farcically small turn out totally failed to win him any social base.

Under 10% went to the poll even in the more affluent Punjab region. In Sind, scene of the 1983 mass movement (which Zia crushed with 826 deaths) the turnout was about 5%. In the North West Frontier province, most of the voters were refugees from Afghanistan, who have been helped for propaganda reasons.

Censorship increased

About 3,000 owners of printing presses and photocopying businesses were summoned to a Karachi police station ten days before voting and warned not to print or photocopy any material against the referendum and to tell martial law authorities if anyone asked them to do so.

Journalists were told not to print any statement by opposition parties especially the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) the opposition alliance. The media are already heavily censored.

Zia claimed this was a step towards democracy, but failing to vote, or canvassing against the referendum, could mean three years "rigorous imprisonment" and a £13,000 fine. All parties except some minor religious parties boycotted voting. 200 major Moslem leaders jointly launched the boycott, giving the judgement that Zia's Islamisation had nothing to do with the principles of the religion and objected to his extending his power for five years.

The referendum helped Zia through the arrest of some of the more determined opposition. It also led to the justification of the military's role in the constitution; it had the same reactionary aim as referendums in Turkey, Sri Lanka and Uruguay in recent years. But it also showed the pressure on Zia from all sides.



The 1979 elections promised by Zia were postponed and PPP leader Bhutto hanged.

Last August 5,000 turned out for the funeral of 3 PPP activists hanged on "subversion" charges and 10,000 for the funeral of revolutionary poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz. Industrial workers shouted slogans against the regime and waved red flags. Students have kept up a continual protest against the banning of student unions.

A year ago 350 military officers were arrested on charges of plotting to overthrow Zia.

The referendum didn't defuse the anger. On polling day more than 10,000 demonstrators under the banner of the MRD showed their feelings against the fake poll.

The PPP leadership in exile played a major role in the boycott, revealing how the election under martial law would be merely a selection. The programme was drawn up under the influence of supporters of *Struggle* a socialist journal, who arranged for a pamphlet to be distributed inside and outside Pakistan.

Unlike the political parties, Zia was allowed to campaign but his meetings were attended only by landlords and capitalists in all four provinces.

The capitalists had a policy of "vote and note" putting a rupee note in with every vote for Zia. But the buses and lorries to take ordinary voters to the polls were boycotted and the special holiday used to visit relatives.

The opposition, mainly led by capitalists and their representatives, have never seriously planned a mass movement to overthrow the regime. But the PPP and the MRD are now beginning to reflect the mood of the masses. Activists in the PPP and the unions must raise a clear programme for the overthrow of the regime.

Demands for the right of self determination, particularly important in Sind and Baluchistan, and for democracy (such as the punishment of the military officers responsible for dictatorship) must be linked to social issues.

The fight for a revolutionary assembly of workers and peasants with the power to nationalise the major monopolies under democratic control of the workers could have a tremendous effect. A campaign based round this, taking up the need for trade union freedom, nationalisation of the land to be distributed by workers and peasants committees, and action to stop discrimination against women and religious minorities could build a genuine socialist democratic movement.

Capitalism cannot guarantee democracy in Pakistan. Fight for socialism.

A regime for the rich

THE REGIME remains unpopular except with the rich who have been given every concession to raise profits, through tax changes etc. Zia had plans to put 90% of nationalised industry into private hands by 1988. Meanwhile out of a population of 85 million, 36 million live in absolute poverty, only 22% have access to clean water and only 0.3% of the GDP is spent on health.

Only puppet unions are allowed so while the multinationals are doubling their profits each year, living standards fall below those at independence in 1947. The regime has only been bolstered by US aid, supplied because of the situation in Afghanistan and Iran.

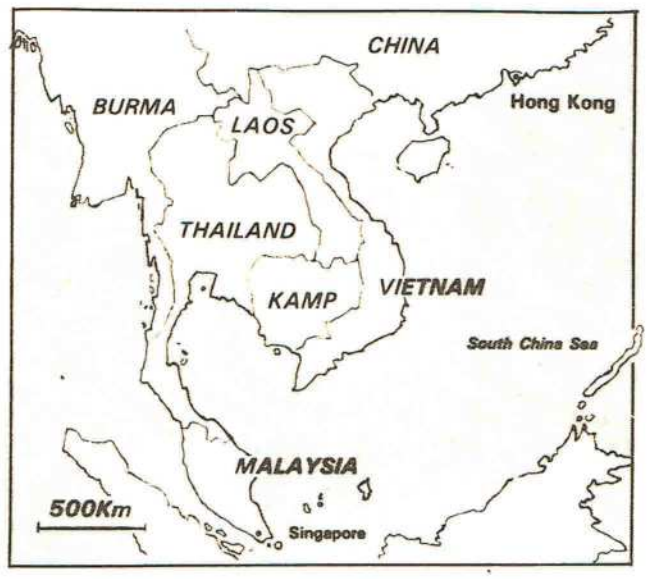
At war again in Indo-China

THE PEOPLE of Vietnam and Kampuchea have been thrown into another round of bloodshed. Over 100,000 refugees are reported to have fled from Kampuchea to Thailand after Vietnamese Army offensives. At the same time Chinese Army battallions have been moved to the border with Vietnam ready for action.

As part of their Vietnam War operations, US forces bombed Kampuchea mercilessly in the early 70s. The devastation they caused was the basic cause of the Khmer Rouge dictatorship of Pol Pot taking power a few years later. They abolished capitalism and landlordism as Vietnam had done before and installed a Stalinist bureaucracy. But this regime became hated as it murdered millions of opponents.

Pol Pot's four years were years of mass murders. The towns were branded as centres of western corruption and the population forced into the countryside where huge unnecessary irrigation works replaced subsistence agriculture. Famine joined hands with genocide to nearly destroy Kampuchea.

When Pol Pot's regime threatened Vietnam, the Hanoi bureaucracy invaded Kampuchea and installed a puppet government in the capital Pnomh Penh, not for any humane reasons but for national security against the Khmer Rouge. This new regime avoided the worse excesses of Pol Pot, but some opposition has continued. In another bizarre indictment of Stalinism, the Chinese forces unsuccessfully invaded Vietnam in 1979 in support of the Khmer Rouge, mainly because of the Moscow connections of Hanoi.




Vietnamese soldiers in Kampuchea. The USA and China are backing Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge guerillas.

Strategic battle

The anti-government guerilla movements which are active now in Kampuchea are a coalition of nationalist forces such as the KPNLF with the Khmer Rouge. An amazing document drawn up in support of the guerillas by the foreign ministry of capitalist Thailand says that if this coalition breaks down, support would go to the Khmer Rouge. This arrangement is backed by capitalist Asian states such as Singapore and by the USA who hope for a more sympathetic government in Pnomh Penh.

While the capitalist powers and Stalinist forces battle for their strategic aims, the whole desperately poor area, already ravaged by imperialism and ruthless wars suffers. The Vietnamese economy has been hard hit, which may put pressure on for a temporary easing of the war.

Vietnam, Kampuchea, Laos and China have all freed themselves from the dead weight of capitalism but the bureaucratic elites fighting for their own privileges in "their own" countries stand in the way of an integrated international socialist plan which could transform Indo-China.

The removal of the bureaucracy in a political revolution, leading to a free socialist federation is the only way to bring peace and plenty. It would also hasten the socialist revolution in the region's capitalist hell-holes like Thailand.

Sri Lanka protest

DAVE NELLIST MP has moved a motion in the House of Commons attacking the violation of democratic rights in Sri Lanka. The motion condemns the repressive measures by the Sri Lankan armed forces against Tamils and calls for the release of political prisoners.

It also calls on the British government to dispatch aid to the north of the island and to the 200,000 Sri Lankan fishermen whose fishing rights have been severly curtailed by a government-imposed military coastal 'exclusion zone'. Dave Nellist has the support of 70 Labour MPs and is calling on trade unions to back the call.

The Sri Lankan government have taken glossy adverts in the British press to extol the virtues of the Jayawardene government. The regime has firm links with the Tories. The working class must show their opposition to the actions of the armed forces.

LETTERS

Militant welcomes letters from readers. Send us your views, comments or criticism. Write to *Militant*, 3/13 Hepscott Road, London. E9 5HB

A case for recognition

Dear *Militant*,

The middle-class in this country exploit hundreds of young women every year, in order to pursue their own individual fulfilment.

Is this moral? Should the trade unions intervene? Having watched how my own nieces, denied work and any useful training because of the government's massive cutbacks in child care, have been forced into taking jobs as private nannies to middle-class 'liberated couples'. I think it's time to explode the myth of the so-called liberated women of today.

A few wealthy, middle-class women are able to be liberated at the expense and enormous cost to the other women, this is not what we fought for in trying to raise women's consciousness.

Since June 1981, 560,000 or more women's jobs have disappeared, 54% of those under 25.

With increased use of technology in the fields of banking, clerical and assembly line work, even more women will be thrown out of work and forced to seek work in the 'domestic field'. As in Victorian times, domestic labour will be cheap, couple this with the constant propaganda from Thatcher about the woman's place being in the home and the ruthless dismantling of the public sector, the result will be women being put back years politically.

It is not uncommon for nannies to work between 40 to 50 hours a week, for wages between £20 and £40 a week. They're often used as domestics, cooking, cleaning, running errands, as well as child minding. Few pay a stamp or tax, few get proper paid holidays, and even fewer have proper work contracts, sick pay is rare. What is perhaps more insulting, is the employers don't consider it to be real work.

I feel sure these girls, coming as most do, from working class homes, are fully aware of the role a trade union could take, and would hope to be taken seriously by the TUC. The trade union movement is the only movement with the necessary force to fight for decent conditions, decent pay and proper health and safety cover.

We must demand round the clock nurseries which will provide proper jobs and proper training for young people in child care. Workplace nurseries so that working mums can go out to work if they want.

What we really need to do most of all, is get Thatcher out and the Labour Party in, followed by a commitment to socialism. Then our children will be a pleasure, not a burden.

Yours fraternally
Mrs Ann Bennett
Roath



Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

Children know what's best for them—demonstration to defend work-place nurseries.

A warning to the 'leadership'

Dear Comrades,

As I sit writing this letter, my union (the NUM) and in particular, my president, Arthur Scargill, are taking a pounding from the Tory press (*Mirror* included) and others, including sections of the labour and trade union movement.

Whenever this strike ends (and having been out on strike for the last 11 months, there's no way back until the closure programme is removed and dismissed pickets are given their jobs back) the finger must be pointed and names named of traitors to the working class, who have made our people suffer a hardship that surpasses 1926.

We have been let down in this historic struggle by union leaders who go to conferences and give false promises, promises which they haven't done the work in the workplaces to put into action.

Exempted from criticism must be the NUR, ASLEF, T&G and NUS, who from day one of our action have stood four square and given true trade union support.

Too many "trendy lefties" have delivered nothing, at least we know what to expect from the Jimmy Reid and Hammond types.

Neil Kinnock along with other Labour MPs will shortly be seen sporting beards, this will be due to them being unable to look themselves in the mirror, for what they have done to the miners and their families.

To Terry Fields, Tony Benn, Dennis Skinner and the rest of the true Labour MPs, continue the fight for true socialism, the present is of struggle. the future is ours.

John Shaw
Seafield no 11 branch
SCEBTA, NUM
Kirkcaldy



Miners lobby the TUC to demand action from the 'leadership'. Photo: Militant

Dear Comrades,

Recently Coal Board spokesmen and Tory ministers have been crowing about the return to work, saying men are voting with their feet. This is absolute rubbish. Miners voted with their feet when they came out on strike. For ten months the Tories have said this vote didn't count. It seems voting with feet is only acceptable when strikers are returning to work.

Some of my friends have gone in—but not because they are against the strike. They have been solidly behind the strike and don't want to go back, but they are being driven back by desperate hardship.

They are getting black mould on the walls of their homes due to damp. Their children are getting ill. Some people have boils on their skin and are anaemic due to bad diet.

They feel terrible about letting their fellow miners down—it's making some men ill. Why should men who've fought long and hard be humiliated in this way? It makes my blood boil.

Kinnock, Willis and the other 'leaders' who refuse to lead are responsible. Just how long do they expect families to live in this hardship? They act as though their job is to force Scargill to make concessions instead of mobilising the mighty strength of the labour movement to bring the strike to a swift and victorious end.

Round here many people are saying they would never vote Labour again if it weren't for Dennis Skinner. There is still time for our 'leaders' to act. If they stand aside, more and more will conclude that a new leadership must be found.

Yours fraternally,
A Bolsover CLP member

Social fascism?

Dear Comrades,

I recently attended a public meeting on the miners' strike organised by the local Communist Party. No wonder the CP is finding it hard to recruit any new members.

During the meeting we questioned the speaker if he thought that a general strike should be called in support of the miners. His reply was that the working class would not respond to the call and it would be a nonsense to call for a strike. He also said that the NUM should not be looking to defeat the Tory government.

After the meeting, in discussion with Communist Party members they made it quite clear that they have no knowledge of the working class. One member described Trotsky as an anarchist, *Militant* supporters as middle class and the Labour Party as Social Fascists. They agreed to debate with us as we said we would like to put the Marxist point of view to them. However, they declined to debate publicly as they said this would be divisive. With arguments like theirs I do not blame them.

Yours fraternally
Kevin Dale
Devon

BBC bias

Dear *Militant*,

On the 24 January a BBC TV crew rolled up on the picket lines of Annesley pit, Notts and started filming pickets handing out the leaflets regarding the Notts Area split from the National Union of Mineworkers. All working miners were handed leaflets as they crossed the official picket line whether by foot or car. 99.9% of the leaflets were accepted with quite a healthy response.

Whilst the cameras were rolling only one man on a motor cycle refused a leaflet. The same night on BBC 2's *Newsnight* an edited version of the film was shown—no prizes for guessing which part was shown. Yes! You're right again, the little chappie on the motor cycle.

Fraternally
Brendan Devanney
Nottingham

Selection

Dear *Militant*,

Colin Barber's article (*Militant*, 18 January) entitled "Class bias kills kidney patients" drew, for me, interesting parallels between kidney patients and unborn or newly-born babies, in the arguments advanced for their selection or non-selection for treatment.

One of the examples you gave was of a paraplegic being turned down for kidney treatment, thus pronouncing a death sentence. The same "quality of life" reasons are given for some abortions and non-treatment of newly-born infants. Can you imagine the situation when a patient, newly-paralysed after an accident, is deemed to have a "poor quality of life" and a decision is made to terminate treatment on economic grounds.

The day may be nearer than we think. Don't forget it already happened in Hitler's Germany, where disabled people were denounced as "bread gobblers" and were the first to be gassed. Those responsible were charged with war crimes. Therefore we cannot afford to be selective in those whom we choose to defend.

Yours in peace,
Mrs AE Farmer
Essex

LEFT and RIGHT

Thatcher's not to blame

While the *Sun* goes from bad to worse, their column by John Vincent, 'Professor of Modern History', gets barmier by the day. He's now telling us (30 January) that mass unemployment is not really the government's fault. You see firstly, unlike Europe we don't have national service: "That adds nearly a million" to the dole figures. A million? That would mean a bigger call-up than in World War Two, and cost a darn sight more than the dole. Secondly, he says, there's the 'baby boom' of the 1960s, which has led to an extra 300,000 on the dole. Now let's see John explain the other two and half million away.

Inflation can be profitable

House prices and mortgages have rocketted under this government. Not everyone has suffered though. Take Mr and Mrs Thatcher. When they first bought their house in Chelsea, it cost them £28,000. They have just sold it to a French industrialist for £400,000.

Crunch!

Our North Yorkshire correspondent reported a jolly winter's tale from the picket lines at Woolley pit. Miners built a giant snowman, complete with policeman's helmet. They christened it 'Nesbitt', in honour of the local police ground commander. Mr Nesbitt didn't like his effigy, and demanded the helmet be removed. But no matter how hard he huffed and puffed, the pickets wouldn't remove it. So the officer jumped into his Land Rover and drove at the poor snowman full pelt. The miners, meanwhile, winced and turned away. They'd forgotten to tell him that their snowman had been built around an 18-inch thick concrete post. The vehicle's bumper and the commander's pride both needed repair.

Unholy alliance

Not everyone was upset by the recent Communist Party-inspired split in the Broad Left of the Civil and Public Services Association. Alistair Graham, the CPSA's right wing general secretary, was particularly pleased. He wrote in the union's journal (*Red Tape*, January): "There is now greater scope for sensible decision making at meetings of the National Executive Committee..." and that the right wing and the breakaway could now "unofficially combine to push the Militant Tendency to the outer fringes of the union where they belong". By your friends...

FIGHTING FUND

Final total: £45,224

Area	Received	Target
Eastern	3270	2900
East Midlands	1685	3100
Humberside	1791	1750
London East	3513	3200
London West	2490	2150
London South East	1971	1900
London South West	2581	1800
Lancashire	828	1150
Manchester	1630	2750
Merseyside	2204	6250
Northern	2632	4650
Scotland East	1166	2950
Scotland West	1524	3750
Southern	2818	5100
South West	1086	2150
Wales East	1086	2550
Wales West	1239	2100
West Midlands	3090	4050
Yorkshire	3213	5750
Others	5404	5000
Total received	45224	65000

A record week for Militant

OUR FINAL total for the last three months of *Militant's* Fighting Fund was £45,224. £30,564 was raised in January of which over half £15,377 came in the last week alone!

Look how many areas passed 100%. All four London lines are over the end. Special thanks to supporters in Hackney and Tower Hamlets who swept in £709 last week. Eastern and Humberside areas also showed their staying power.

We have been overwhelmed by the response to our call last week to readers to rally round. A construction worker, Andy Phillips sent us one week's wage and special thanks to John Forbes of Portobello in Edinburgh who sent us £100 after being four years on the dole!

A *Militant Miners'* forum in Duckmanton, East Midlands held a collection for the fighting fund and raised £28.00. A readers' meeting in Wearside raised £20.92 and another at the Southern Regional LPYS conference raised £80.77. Once again young workers rallied to our support with donations of £20 or more coming in from Chapel Green YS, Barnsley YS, Broadgreen Tuebrook YS, and Garston North YS amongst many.

Other fund raising activities included a donation from Pauline Gorman of £500 from the proceeds of her forthcoming book on Education. Again, sponsored events seem to have no limit; in Lancashire a sponsored house clearance raised £50. Lots of areas held video and games nights and socials ranged from Chinese evenings to Superbowl with Home Brew, to a Burns Supper in Falkirk which raised an amazing £84.25.

Rattling tins

Many comrades aimed to raise at least £50 in the final two weeks and succeeded. It shows how easy it is to raise cash for *Militant*. Ask and you shall receive!

The campaign to get this £50 must go on. Ask for a week's income, a day's pay, fivers or tenners from friends and relatives.

We want money to start rolling in straight away. All areas should be laying plans now for special events, socials, and collections. But remember that just using a rattling tin brings in lots of cash. One street collection in Enfield raised £16.05. To get half the target for the new quarter in by the beginning of March, would avoid a last minute rush.

We cannot include all the individual donations we receive due to lack of space but we list below a small proportion of those who contributed last week.

JOHN STRAW, striking miner gave £10.00; John Dewsnap, Chesterfield £1.00; Hackney North YS £10.00; Eastham YS £8.27; J. Golden, Croydon £55.00; Jocko McFoy £50.00; M O'Brien, a student from Leicester £40; John Ellis IRSF gave a days pay £20; Mrs Thorpe East Midlands £15; Mr and Mrs Arnold East Midlands £4.00; Carol and John Jones, GMBATU, Merseyside £5.00; Penny Redwood, London £5; Harry Cohen MP Leyton £5 and Terry Wheeler, Cllr Leyton £5.

By Ruth Campbell

A week's wages for a daily paper

WE PREDICT a big shift in the Building Fund over the next month. Already we have had a good response to our appeal for readers to donate a week's income to help us pay off our debts.

Every area reports a big drive to ask all readers for a week's income. To help things along we are going to reinstate the chart to show how your area is progressing and perhaps to provoke a little bit of "socialist competition" If a special campaign is taken up in **your** area, there could be hundreds of thousands of pounds raised in all. When the Fund was first launched we had a remarkable response. We now ask all our readers to repeat that sucess.

We also need to take the campaign for funds into the labour movement. Every trade union branch and shop stewards committee must be approached. A daily Marxist paper will be an invaluable asset for all who want to fight for socialism. Let's take the campaign to all workers—those who need a paper to champion their cause.

Talking politics, selling Militant

EVERY THURSDAY lunchtime, *Militant* sellers come from various parts of Hull to pick up the new issues and the first sale starts right away outside the station. Last week we sold 18, got a couple of names of possible regular readers and raised cash for the *Militant* and for the miners in our rattling tins.

You can get a good response if you approach people individually and tell them you're selling a socialist paper that supports the miners. The same pitch is covered every Friday and on Saturdays there are always two or three street sales in different parts of the city.

Building sales

Trevor Grewar says that regular readers in Hull always get their copy by Friday. Trevor works at Easington where he met Tony Davison. They had adjoining lockers and in no time they started talking about politics and Tony was introduced to *Militant*.

Since then they have built up over 60 sales on the building site.

They say when there are two sellers together in a workplace it's a lot easier because you can discuss successes and mistakes and give each other encouragement.

Tony travels 33 miles from Hull by car with some workmates. One time the driver said: "I'm f**** sick of you always talking about socialism—shut up or get out!" Six months later four of the five get *Militant* weekly, including the driver.**

Trevor says: "Every penny to the fighting fund is a political donation". They get their legs pulled because they are always after fighting fund, but they are seen to be making big donations themselves, so even some of the lads who wouldn't think of buying *Militant* occasionally chip in.

Tony: "You're judged by what you do as well as what you say. it might not register with all of them now but as the capitalist system inflicts more and more on them they'll think 'these are genuine lads, they put their money where their mouths are'."

ads

Militant

CLASSIFIED: 10p per word, minimum 10 words.
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.
All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

INQABA YA BASEBENZI the journal of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress. Issue number 15 contains a supplement: "South Africa, how close to revolution?" and the second part of "Southern Africa after the Nkomati accord" plus articles on Zimbabwe, Botswana and Malawi. Send payment with orders (75p including postage and packing) to BM Box 1719, London WC1 3XX.

CASSETTE TAPES with two issues of *Militant* (one each side). Available fortnightly. £3.50 per quarter, £13 for year.

Now available on cassette: all centre page articles from issue 693–721. Send either seven blank C-90 cassettes or £6.30 payable to *Militant* Tapes, 18 Blandford Grove, Woodhouse Leeds 2. Phone: (0532) 455936

SHOW YOUR solidarity with a socialist newspaper. Get your trade union, Labour Party, LPYS, Women's Council, Shop Stewards' Committee or Trades Council organisation to send greetings to *Militant* on the traditional workers' day, May Day.

All copy to reach: Circulation Department, *Militant*, 3-13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB by Wednesday 24 Arpil.

Rates: 3 col cms £6; 6 col cms £10; 1/16 page £15; 1/8 page £25; 1/4 page £50.

New *Militant International Review*
Out now
Price 90p (inc p+p) from World Socialist Books, 3–13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB.

WALTHAM MINERS' Support Group: Public Meeting: Monday 11 February, 7.30 pm. Speakers: Roy Jones (Staffs NUM), Dennis Skinner (MP), and a South Wales Miner. At Walthamstow Assembly Halls, Forest Road, London E17.

ADDRESS BOOKS 60p, plastic paper sleeves 20p, bookmarks 40p, sew on badges 50p. 10 plus half price for resale. FF cheques to M King, 10 Rodney Ct, Anson Drive, Sholing, Soton SO2 8RU

NORTHERN IRELAND—a Marxist analysis. A 32 page analysis published by Militant Irish Monthly. 75p (plus 15p postage) 5 or more post free. Order from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscott Rd, London E9.

STREATHAM LABOUR PARTY: "Stop the Robbery". Anti-privatisation and miners' support rally at Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton, London SW2. 7.30pm, 12 February. Speakers include: Rodney Bickerstaffe, Eric Clarke, Jo Richardson, K McKinley, Ted Knight. Entance 50p.

LIVEN UP your benefit disco; it's 'The Miners Strike Rap' by Michael Rosen. A record for the miners 'aint no such thing as a pit that loses money while the bees do the work and the boss gets the honey.' Buy this record now, all profits to the miners families. Cost £1.50 each plus p&p 25p per record. Cheques payable to MIS address: 22 Madeira Grove, Woodford, Essex 1GB

BADGES—1" button badges with 20th anniversary slogan 20p each (10p each for orders over 20)—1" button badge—'Militant' on coloured background (white/yellow/green/blue) 20p each. Enamel stud badges—"Militant for Labour and Youth" 75p each. All orders for badges must be accompanied with minimum 25p for p&p.

Cash with order. Cheques made payable to 'Militant' send to 3-13 Hepscott Road, London, E9 5HB.

"DIRTY 30" Leicestershire Striking Miners. New posters, T-shirts, materials, badges, etc now available. From: 346 Municipal Buildings, Charles Street, Leicester. Tel: (0533) 532201.

SMOKING PLEDGE: Amount donated *Tripled*! Anytime Mike (iron will) King starts smoking again. For your signed pledge send cheques to Sue Atkins, 10 Rodney Court, Anson Drive, Sholing, So'ton.

HOLIDAYS: Large three-bedroomed house in Paris available during the month of August. Normal rent (£75/week) to be shared amongst number of occupants. Comrades interested write to: Chez Mathey, 67 Boulevard Voltaire, 75011 Paris, France.

Meetings

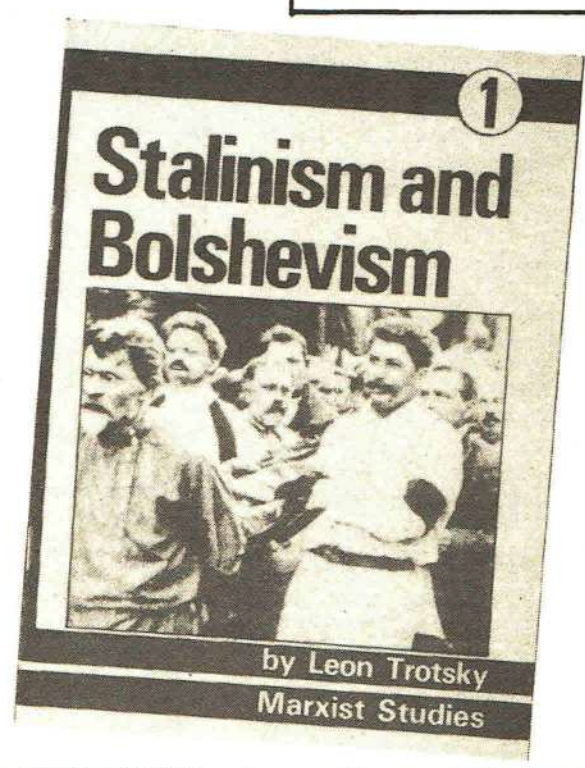
SOUTHAMPTON: Marxist Discussion Group meets every Friday 7.45, 206 Honeysuckle Road, Bassett, Southampton. Tel: 551420 for details of subjects or any further information.

UPPER RHONDDA Marxist Discussion Group. Meeting every Sunday at 7.00 pm in the Red Cow, High Street, Treorchy. Phone Steve Brown on Treorchy 773455 for more details.

HULL Militant public meeting. Victory to the Miners, socialist policies for Labour. Hear: Pat Wall (President Bradford Trades Council) On: Friday 8 February 7.30pm. At: Trades and Labour Club, Beverly Road.

LAMBETH Militant Readers Meeting. The Miners and South Africa. Speakers: Roy Jones (Staffs NUM) Linda Douglas (LPYS) Wednesday 13 February 7.30 pm St. Matthews Meeting Place, Brixton, London SW2

ELTHAM *Militant* supporters:
14 Feb: Victory to the miners.
All at 8 pm, Lionel Road Community Centre, Westhorne Avenue, Eltham.



WHAT HAPPENED to the Russian Revolution? How did Stalin come to power? Is Stalinism inevitable?

In this pamphlet two articles by Trotsky show the roots of Stalinism were not the October 1917 revolution but the conditions of backwardness following the isolation of the revolution to Russia and the destruction of four years of civil war.

Stalinism represented a political revolution creating a new task for the international working class, a new political revolution to restore workers democracy to the state and economy. The pamphlet, written in 1937 in the aftermath of the Moscow show trials shows the difference between Bolshevism as the real heir to the traditions of October 1917 and Stalinism and answers those who try to confuse the two.

THIS PAMPHLET is the first in the "Marxist Studies" series, where we will be republishing classics of Marxism which have been out of print, together with pamphlets dealing with the issues confronting Marxism today.

All the pamphlets will be printed within the reach of young workers, unemployed readers etc. Our aim is to produce about one title every 6 weeks, building up into a pocket library, but the exact regularity will partly depend on sales income covering production costs.

The first six titles planned are:

Stalinism and Bolshevism By Trotsky (out now)
The Spanish Revolution 1931–7 By Taaffe and Grant
In Defence of October By Trotsky
The Chinese Revolution By Taaffe
Menace of Fascism By Grant
Will there be a slump By Grant

To ensure rapid development of the series we appeal to readers to take out a special 'foundation subscription' of £4 for the first 6 pamphlets, and we will send you the pamphlet as soon as it is printed.

PLEASE send the first six 'Marxist Studies' pamphlets as they are printed.

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Please make cheques payable to World Socialist Books and return to 3/13 Hepscott Rd, London E9

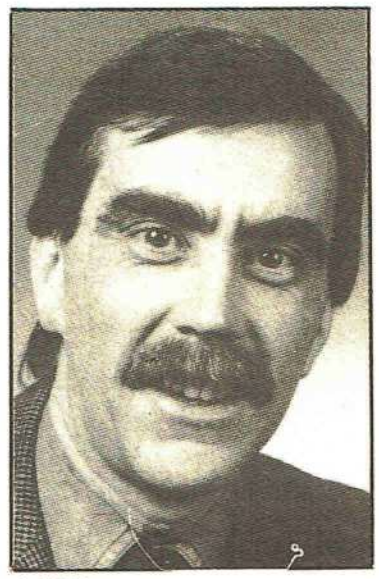
THURSDAY 14 February: Thatcher's got no soul nite at the West Indian Club, Brinton's Road, So'ton 7 till 11. All welcome. Details: 432480.

CO–OP stamps wanted for F/F. Send to Circulation Dept, 3–13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.

USDAW presidential election

Broad Left candidate for union change

JEFF PRICE, Broad Left Presidential Candidate for the shop and distributive workers' union, USDAW, talked to *Militant* about the major issues of the election currently taking place.



Jeff Price.

What do you believe is the most important issue in this election?

Jeff: For USDAW members, the most important issue must be low-pay. USDAW represents some of the lowest paid trade unionists in the country. Many members have a take-home pay of £60 per week, often after working in excess of forty hours.

At the 1984 USDAW conference, the General Secretary Bill Whatley shocked delegates when he claimed that USDAW was not a low-paid union. There were audible cries of disbelief from the conference, demonstrating how out of touch the leadership is from the problems of USDAW members.

Many of the union's female members work part-time, being employed in large stores and warehouses and for them the position is even worse. Their working hours are subject to constant change and many earn less than £30 take-home pay.

What realistically can USDAW do to fight low pay?

Jeff: Firstly the union should launch an immediate campaign amongst its own members to mobilise a fight for the union's policy of £100 for a 35-hour week. Then our industrial muscle should be used, where necessary, to force employers to concede this demand as a minimum. In sections of the membership where the union's strength is weaker, we should link up with other unions organising in retail distribution in a joint campaign.

The leadership have done little to implement the union policy on wages. What is needed is a mass publicity campaign to explain to other workers why shopworkers need a decent living wage. If this were done, USDAW members would quickly gain general support.

There has been much coverage in the media recently on the Sunday trading laws, can you explain what is happening?

Jeff: The Tories are planning to abolish the 1950 Shops Act. This means that there would be no control on what a shop sells or when it sells it. For shopworkers this would mean 24-hour, seven day trading. Many workers not employed in retail distribution believe that this would be a a better arrangement, but they are not aware of its full implications.

Seven-day working for shopworkers would mean the same for delivery workers and warehouse workers. There would have to be a more comprehensive service of public facilities such as transport, refuse collections, banking, etc. There would be more part-time workers. Small shopkeepers would be forced out of business. Higher prices and poorer service in shops would result. There would be widespread redundancies of full-time shopworkers—up to 80,000 jobs would disappear in retail distribution. Deregulation of the 1950 Shops Act would be a disaster for shopworkers and all but a handful of large retailers.

USDAW has a large female membership. What would you like to see the union do to protect their interests?

Jeff: Over 60% of the union's membership are women. They are the most exploited section of our membership. There have been growing demands over the past few years that the union should do more for them. All they have had from the union's right wing leadership so far is platitidues and promises.

Women need to see real action. The union must fight for equal pay, proper training, and protection for part-time workers. We need union meetings in work time and greater resources to help women play a more active role in the union.

Aren't young people badly off too?

Jeff: They are certainly badly paid. Many are now on Youth Training Schemes where they are used as cheap labour and receive little training. There is a motion to this year's union conference calling for a national youth conference which I support as this would be a step forward on the part of the union. union.

I would like to see young people in USDAW properly organised in the union and fully involved. Links with the Labour Party Young Socialists would be formed which would give them a political perspective too. I would urge young people in USDAW to become involved with the LPYS and Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign which is seeking to unionise YTS trainees and mobilise them against the government's industrial conscription plans this year.

It is from the youth and women in USDAW that the Broad Left is drawing increasing support. It is clear from this that the days of the right-wing are numbered.

Most industries have experienced a great number of job losses, is this also the case in USDAW?

Jeff: Yes. Jobs have been lost at an alarming rate. Just recently it was announced that 2,000 jobs are to go at Littlewoods. Over the past year many jobs have been lost at Woolworth.

I would like to see the union take a more dynamic approach. If redundancies are announced the union tends to take the attitude that nothing can be done. The miners didn't take this attitude last March—why should shopworkers? With the case of Woolworth many members wanted a fightback. The union did nothing and the stores closed.



A low paid, largely female workforce, shopworkers need a new, fighting leadership.

How do you feel about the proposed ballots for unions to maintain political funds?

Jeff: I have been a member of the Labour Party for 11 years and have always supported the Labour Party. I want to see a Labour government that fights for the working class with the same grit and determination that the Thatcher government fights for the rich and powerful.

Whether the Tories are giving money for postal ballots or trying to get it taken away from the Labour Party as in this case, all their legislation is aimed at undermining the ability of unions to defend the membership. It is the thin end of the wedge to co-operate with them.

Unfortunately the leadership of the movement has failed to confront the Tories, letting the NGA, and in particular the miners, down badly. The campaign for non-co-operation with the Tory trade union legislation should be continued and stepped up. I strongly disagree with the AUEW's decision to take government money for ballots—everything has its price.

But in the case of ballots to maintain political funds it is clear that all the unions will be holding them before the deadline of March next year. For the time being the task we face is pressuring every union into mounting a real campaign to reach every member, explaining in practical terms the necessity of keeping the links between the industrial and political arms of the working class.

In the case of USDAW I feel that little is being done. The right wing of the unions and the Labour Party do not have the political will to counter the Tories because they have no confidence in the membership. That is another reason why need a new President.

Despite Syd Tierney's (incumbent President-ed) heavy involvement with the right wing on Labour's NEC the importance of our links with the Labour Party are not being communicated to the rank and file.



Syd Tierney, sitting President.

I would like to see USDAW play a more positive role in the Labour Party. We need to improve USDAW representation and involvement in the party at all levels, especially at local level; we need to have the voice of retail distributive workers heard loud and clear in the Labour Party. We need to ensure that the leadership of the unions and the Labour Party have policies and the will to really change society for working people.

Convenor's view of AUEW ballot money

JASON HUNTER, convenor, Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, Thorn-EMI, Padiham near Burnley, spoke to *Militant* about his reaction to the AUEW decision to accept government money for ballots.

'I believe it's a disgrace for a number of reasons. We had a discussion about it on our shop stewards committee and the general consensus was the same.

Firstly, it makes us beholden to the government. If you are dependent upon a large amount of your funds from the government it will inevitably create problems. You could be forced to back down in the future, forced to agree to things you don't want. It's like having a union financed by management.

Secondly, the need for this money arises because postal ballots are so expensive. If we had factory ballots, supervised by area officials or possibly other officers of the union, whether secret or not, they'd be far less expensive and more genuinely democratic. The bosses want us voting in the isolation of the home, under the pressure of the media, away from the workmates we face problems with.

Thirdly, taking this money reinforces an already bad system, apart from the cost. According to one of our full-time officials in Burnley, as many of 30% of our members eligible to vote don't receive ballot papers because the registers are out of date.

Fourthly, members don't see that it is counted fairly. There is a certain distrust by the membership of those conducting the ballots. You can't just discount it. In any ballot there is the danger of ballot boxes being exchanged. In a postal ballot the problems are even worse. I can't be sure my ballot paper has been received, counted or not exchanged for another.

Fifthly, even the shop stewards often don't know the people standing. At present we get a list of names of the candidates. If we are lucky we get an electoral statement. If voting was conducted on a factory basis there would be pressure on the shop stewards to find out who the candidates are.

Ideally, we would get a supporter of each candidate to speak at mass meetings in the factory.

Sixth, postal ballots are only used at the moment for the election of individuals. With government money it will be argued by some that balloting should take place over other issues, on the grounds that it costs the union nothing. It would cut down the speed and effectiveness with which the local and national leadership can respond to management attacks.

Finally, this issue has to be seen in the light of recent events during the the strike at Austin Rover. We have written to the AUEW executive complaining about their response to BL and government pressure to hold a pre-strike ballot. Already the EC are talking about changing the rules, centralising power so that the decision to make a strike official should be their's and not the District Committee's. In the meantime they are telling DCs to be very careful before making a strike official. They mean, don't make it official.

Again, all this is linked to the Tory anti-union laws. That's what the leadership failed to get over in this vote on money for ballots and that's why members mistakenly voted to accept it.'

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

A&P shipyard closure and pay freeze fought off

WORKERS AT Austin and Pickersgill shipyard, Sunderland have successfully fought off a threat of closure.

For months British Shipbuilders refused to disclose information about the planned run-down of the yard ready for privatisation, (see *Militant* 733). The uncertainty led to some men opting for voluntary redudancy but the majority threatened a yard occupation and confiscation of the three vessels under construction

With the lure of a two vessel order BS hit back by ignoring agreed national procedure and issued a six-point ultimatum demanding acceptance within 48 hours.

The demands included: a two year wages freeze; increased productivity without pro-rata payment; the scrapping of overtime parity agreement taking control of overtime away from the unions; introduction of sub-contracting in blacksmithing, painting and staging; nationalisation of pipework and electrical installation; introduction of new welding techniques believed by the men to be hazardous, ie low hydrogen electrodes on zinc-silicate primer.

Hard choices

At a series of mass meetings the men bent over backwards to save the yard—with its repercussions for job-starved Sunderland. It was clear that several hard-won rights were the price BS demanded. The pressure on the welders to accept new hazardous techniques, in a no win situation, was tremendous.

The sticking point, however, was the pay freeze. On Friday last week the shop stewards went back to management to say, "Close the yard", whilst pointing to the 1,500 workers walking up the bank on a spontaneous 24-hour strike.

Management's bluff had been called. BS now claim they managed to persuade the "unamed Liberian owner", who had insisted on a decision by Friday morning, to take advantage of favourable exchange rates and give them more time.

The owner, since revealed as Egon Oldendorff of Lubek on West Germany's Baltic Coast, who has had a previous nine vessels built by A&P, apparently agreed.

Management withdrew their demands on pay and are now claiming they were never part of the deal anyway. A mass meeting on Monday agreed to resume normal working.

The two vessels secured, with an option on a third, means work for the immediate future. BS have been set back in their scheme to impose privatisation at the cost of wages and conditions. The victory is only temporary, however, and the Tories will be back but A&P workers have won a valuable breathing space. It must now be used to pressure the unions nationally to fight to save the industry and to prepare for further local attacks.

By Bob Stothard
(Houghton and Washington CLP)

Turning Southampton into Felixstowe

AT A mass meeting on 24 January, Southampton dockers voted 3-1 to accept a deal ending their 14 week industrial dispute.

The dispute was started by management of Associated British Ports (ABP) trying to introduce cuts in manning levels and pay. When the dockers rejected this, they were put on a basic 40-hour week—involving a massive cut in pay.

In the 14 weeks, the dockers and all other workers in the port have been under tremendous pressure. A procession of shipping companies announced they were leaving the port. Management have forced through nearly 1,000 redundancies among dockers and all other workers in the port. There were dark threats that the whole port would permanently close down. The dockers' position was seriously weakened when other ports handled their trade.

Against this background of threats and intimidation, the settlement marks a serious setback. The deal means a cut in average pay of up to £40 a week, a reduction in manning levels, a two-year pay deal of 5% each year, and a two-year local no-strike agreement.

The aim of ABP is clear. They want to make Southampton into a Felixstowe rather than a Hull or a Liverpool. The Southampton deal will be used to try to undermine other ports in the National Dock Labour Scheme.

The second half of 1984 has seen management introduce splits among dockers. 1985 must see us making strenuous efforts to rebuild the unity we achieved in the 1970s. Unless this is done, the Southampton deal will be only the thin end of the wedge in a concerted attack by management and the Tory government to destroy all the gains made by dockers in the last two decades.

By Alex Carson
(TGWU 2/28 branch, Southampton Dockers, personal capacity)

Wirral strike against council cuts



Photo: John Smith (IFL)

Starting with school cleaners, caretakers and kitchen staff the strike at Wirral district council has now been escalated to other sections. Despite vague concessions the Tory council wishes to reserve the right to make other as yet unspecified cuts. At a meeting on Tuesday night workers voted to continue the strike.

NUPE 'investigates' Broad Left

FOLLOWING expressions of "concern" about the activities of the Broad Left at various sub-committees of the NUPE national executive a "special investigating group" has been set up by the South & Eastern Divisional Council. The national secretary of the Broad Left has been asked to appear before it on 11 February.

NUPE has a proud tradition of fighting for low paid workers in the public sector. Its campaigning stance successfully built the union on the basis of struggles such as the 'dirty jobs' dispute and the 'winter of discontent'.

In recent years, however, we have been faced with a co-ordinated national assault by a Tory government intent on slashing and privatising services and real wage cuts. Barking and Addenbrookes hospitals, Wandsworth and Wirral councils are better publicised examples of the many local struggles the union is engaged in.

The failure to co-ordinate these types of struggles in a national campaign and to win over NUPE members not immediately faced with cuts has meant we are threatened with being picked off one by one.

In the opinion of many activists in NUPE the national response has not matched the campaigns of the seventies and there is now a need for a Broad Left in the union. An open, honest and democratic debate at all levels in the union is necessary to help us meet the attacks we face.

NUPE has a long tradition as an open and democratic union and our record in pushing for democratic changes in the wider labour and trade union movement is second to none.

It will therefore be a matter of "concern" to many members to find a section of our leadership resorting to the same bureaucratic tactics against the newly formed Broad Left that we have seen used by some avowedly right wing union leaders.

By a NUPE member

Heinz

DESPITE record profits over the last 12 months (three times the normal) and a £75 million investment scheme at the Heinz factory in Kitt Green, near Wigan, management have announced 1,200 redundancies—40% of the workforce.

This is yet another blow to 'reasonable negotiations' and 'realism'. Thousands of jobs and one Heinz factory in the Wigan area have gone over the last ten years.

As one of the largest employers in the area this will mean a sharp rise in the already 20% level of unemployment in the Wigan area.

By Alex Pandofo

Soda Stream sit-in wins out

WORKERS AT the Soda Stream factory in Peterborough won a victory after a sit-in and picket over the weekend of 25 January. Management backed out of a deal including consolidation of grades and an 8% rise which the TGWU thought was nearly agreed.

The 207 workers responded quickly. A mass meeting was called on Friday morning and a decision to strike taken. A sit-in and picket was organised for 11.30 am. The sit-in lasted until 7.45 pm and the picket was maintained over the weekend. The T&G moved fast to make the strike official.

There was a good turnout on the picket, with mass meetings and plenty of support. The company was taken by surprise and forced to agree consolidation of grades (with top grade A to get a one-off 5% supplementary rise for one year; an average rise of 6.8%; a working week of 37½ hours; no compulsory redundancies (after earlier claiming that 60 were required).

Some workers moved to unsuitable jobs had wanted to take voluntary redundancy. The mood now is very different. Convenor Dave Clark said: "With this result few if any will want to leave. The unity and mood on the picket line was amazing."

By Keith Wyatt
(TGWU 10/74B)

British Aerospace gets Militant

WHILE SELLING *Militant* at British Aerospace, Preston, one worker came up to buy the paper and told me he'd had no chance to read last week's copy—because of the article on the aerospace industry the paper was passed around the shop and finally the article ended up on the notice board!

This goes to show that just one paper can have a wide readership amongst workers. Together with the usual paper sale, four copies of the new MIR were also sold last week at BAe.

Management are obviously getting worried. After our first *Militant Aerospace Worker* bulletin, a notice went up warning workers about who they spoke to outside the factory.

By Phil Forrester

Second BLOC conf

THE FIRST BLOC conference took place at the outset of the miners' struggle and will again centre on the dispute. The Broad Left Organising Committee and our supporters have worked flat-out to build solidarity action in support of the NUM, including the successful lobby of the TUC in September.

All over the country workers are preparing to battle for their livelihoods, particularly local authority workers, facing savage cuts on jobs ond services through rate-capping. The 23 March conference will discuss the battle to save local government and its services and will link in as well with the conference for local authority workers in Liverpool on 23 February. Both conferences are vital opportunities in forging a united strategy to fight the Tories' plans.

Already applications are coming in for the conference. Move fast to get your delegations in we have set a target date of 9 March for receiving all delegations. You need to be well in advance of that date to avoid disappointment. For details see front page ad.

By Mick Barwood
(Bloc National Committee, Editor COHSE Broad Left Group 81)

Militant

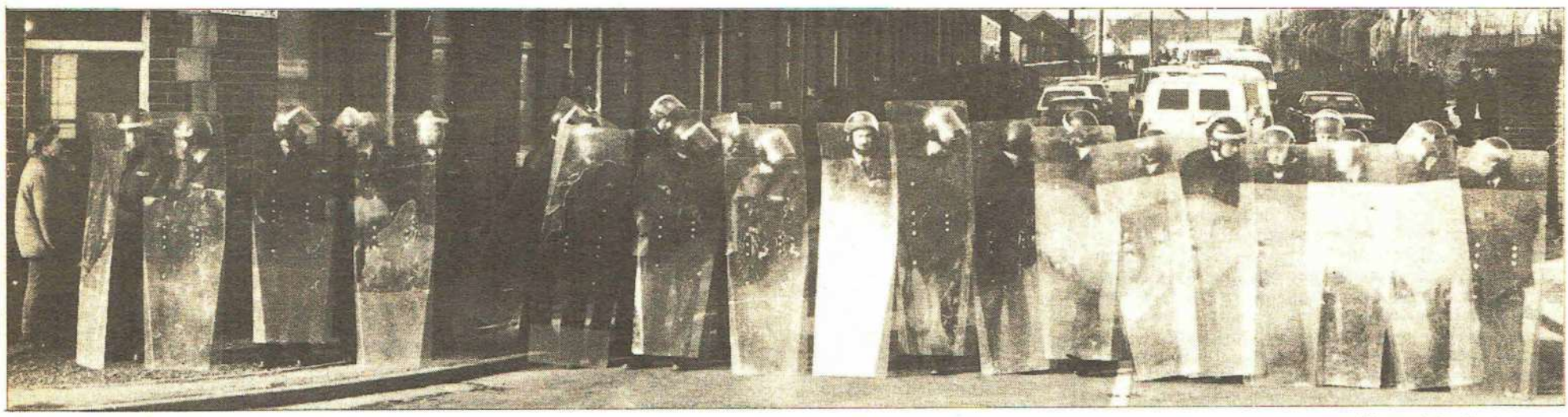
The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

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8 February 1985

25p

Liverpool under attack Pages 8–9

No return to Spencerism Page 4



Riot police confront a mass picket at Houghton Main colliery, 1 February. The Tories now want to humiliate the miners. Photo: John Harris (IFL)

Thatcher wants miners smashed

Drive back Tory offensive

THE MINERS' strike is at a critical stage. Ninety per cent of all those miners who went on strike last March are still standing firm. The government and Coal Board have clearly failed to achieve the massive surge back to work they hoped for.

By Brian Ingham

The 130,000 strikers have shown heroic determination in the face of unending propaganda, bribes and threats. They are adamant that there will be no signing of documents agreeing to the closure of pits.

The onus is now on NACODS. Their fate will be that of the NUM. The NUM must call on members of NACODS, to join in industrial action to save their jobs. Their agreement with the NCB is a sham. The demand that the NUM agree in advance to pit closures proves that the "independent review procedure" offered to NACODS was no more than a sop to prevent a strike. Unless the mienrs stop them. Thatcher and MacGregor will close pits whatever any "independent" body says.

"We have to stand up and be counted to protect our agreement," declared Peter MacNestry, national secretary of NACODS; "Mrs Thatcher tramples on weakness." He said that the union could call a strike ballot unless the NCB withdraws its demand on the NUM. Now is the time to hold the ballot.

Support for miners

Miners should never underestimate the support for their fight from the movement's rank and file. The TUC has failed to face up to its responsibilities. The NUM must appeal over their heads to the ranks.

In addition to mobilising the maximum support for the 11 February Day of Action called by the Yorkshire and Humberside and South East regions of the TUC, there must be visits to every workplace, conferences of shop stewards in the areas and a national conference of the executives of left trade unions, to call, prepare and organise a one-day general strike.

When the NUM names the day, three weeks or so in advance, it will be a signal for activists to mobilise for the greatest day of industrial action for a generation.

Following a successful one-day general strike, the NUM could then step up the appeal to the power stations, oil terminals and transport depots. Their jobs are linked to those of the miners. If a clear call came from the NUM, backed up by leafleting and factory gate meetings, they would be persuaded to block supplies to the power stations and force the government to back down.

Continued on back page

A record fighting fund

***MILITANT'S* FIGHTING Fund raised the record sum of £45,244 in the last quarter from the pockets of many thousands of workers. A push in the last four weeks raised over £30,000 and a record £15,377 in the last week alone.**

***Militant* supporters have proved once again how good they are at collecting cash. For the year a massive total of £158,702 was raised for the fighting fund. What other paper could boast such an achievement? But it is even greater when £153,054 of the Building Fund is added in making a total of £311,756 raised by *Militant* supporters in 1984.**

Benn warns Thatcher

"I SHOULD like to place on record my tribute to the 130,000 miners and their families who have endured appalling hardship in the past, almost, 12 months in order to defend their industry, their jobs, and their communities. I feel great pride for them."

Tony Benn MP spoke for thousands of Labour activists in Monday's debate in Parliament on the coal industry dispute. "Any government", he warned, "who try to convert the 'enemy within' to the 'enemy underground' by driving men back to work through hardship will destroy the industry and its prospects".

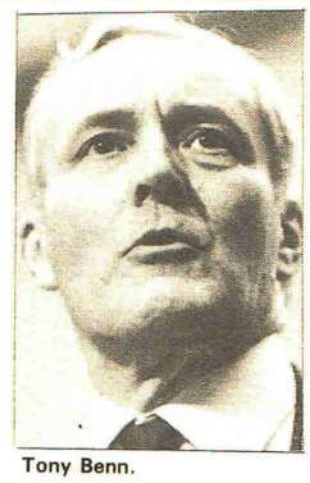
He went on to destroy the NCB's arguments for closing "uneconomic" pits—"If a pit is denied investment, it can be turned into what is called an 'uneconomic' pit, just as, if the roof of a home or a burst pipe is not mended, or if broken windows are not replaced, that home will be turned into a slum".

He alleged that the government was deliberately starving pits of investment in order to feed money into high productivity pits with a view to selling them off. "This government would sell off the royal family if they could make a quick profit".

In real terms, he argued, coal is far cheaper to produce than either oil or nuclear power—"we should be converting from nuclear power and oil to coal, and providing free fuel to pensioners who die in their hundreds from hypothermia during the winter. These old people cannot afford to keep warm in winter. But the miners who dig that coal could keep their jobs, save the country money and save the lives of the old."

"The government" he declared, "rely on cold and hunger to try to drive the miners back, but I do not believe they will succeed. The other way to end the strike quickly is to follow the lead of the NUR, ASLEF and the National Union of Seamen and provide industrial support and further political action.

"Ministers should study their history. After the 1926 general strike, the Tory government were swept from office in the following general election."



Tony Benn.

Tilbury picket

A MASS picket of Tilbury power station has been called for Monday 11 February commencing at 6 am and linked to the SERTUC day of action calling for the blacking of scab oil.

A campaign is being conducted by the TGWU shop stewards at West Thurrock for other power stations to step up solidarity action. A letter is being distributed to power workers throughout the country calling on them to abide by the TUC guidelines.

By John McKay

Militant

Further Education students organise
Page 6
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Page 14

Jobs, pay, services

Tories' blast at education

BOTH school students and teachers are at risk from Tory attacks on education.

By Bob Sulatycki
(West London Teachers' Association, NUT)



In 1980 when Gaywood school, Hackney was threatened by cuts, parents joined teachers in an occupation. A campaign today against the attacks on education could gain widespread sympathy.

Many schools are suffering from gross neglect. The *Times Education Supplement* recently did a survey which showed school classrooms which hadn't had a lick of paint for 25 years. Creeping neglect will turn into a horrifying decline unless there is a fight to save education. Year after year, many areas' education budgets have been slashed with staff and services cut. That is even before rate-capping.

A common excuse has been to blame teachers for being "overpaid". BOB SULATYCKI looks at the current pay claim:

MEMBERS OF the National Union of Teachers (NUT) support the demand for a £1,200 across the board increase for all teachers through the introduction of a unified salary scale.

Attempts to link these questions to allowing a deterioration in teachers' conditions of service, including assessment, will be completely rejected. The attempt on the employers' side to refer the claim to arbitration in order to diffuse any possible action will also be seen as a cynical manoeuvre.

Local authority employers, backed by the government, have already shown they are willing to dock pay if we take action for our claim.

The unions should immediately launch a levy of all members and prepare for the eventuality of strike action and make the rule changes necessary to enable sustentation (strike fund) for a full-scale strike. We must also foster school, local and national links with other public sector workers (eg. local authority workers, civil servants) who are now entering into pay disputes.

Wanted— a campaign

We will also need to coordinate a massive campaign, involving meetings, petitions, leafletting, to explain our pay demands and the crisis of state education.

We will have to combat a barrage of hostility from the mass media. If the unions, locally and nationally adopt that approach, not only can the union gain a substantial pay rise, but we can also defeat the other government attacks on state education, such as central control of the curriculum and the cuts it wants through rate-capping and spending limits.

Challenging cash limits

TEACHERS IN England and Wales are not the only group of public sector workers challenging government cash limits over pay. Scottish teachers are already staging strikes demanding a pay review.

Industrial action

Leaders of the largest union representing local authority manual workers NUPE have supported the idea of industrial action after talks on the local government pay offer of £3.70 a week broke down.

Fight rate-capping

THE TORIES are out for total capitulation from local authorities. At a meeting this Monday with 26 local councils threatened by rate-capping or financial crisis, Environment Secretary Jenkin made this obvious.

★ He refused to negotiate about the £560m he is demanding in cuts from their budgets.

★ He refused to give Councils the assumptions he made when he determined what their rates should be (although he has leaked some of this information to the media).

★ He refused to set up a six-month inquiry to try and resolve financing local government services.

★ He refused to restore the money taken in Rate Support Grant since 1979.

Tory intransigence does not come from concern for ratepayers. Their aim is political. They want to break the power of local authorities and destroy their ability to defend local people.

At the Labour Local Government Conference last weekend Neil Kinnock seemed to have given up already. He said everyone must obey the Tory law and then carry on with "dented shields".

Defeat Tory plans

Such romantic medieval metaphors obscure the devastation that would follow giving in to the Tories. 64,000 workers would be sacked and local services torn apart.

There is no alternative but to fight. The response of local authorities to Jenkin's threats should be clear. Liverpool beat him last year. And if they stay united to defend jobs and services the Tories can be beaten again.

By Josie Aitman

Labour's right wing attack striking miner

A NOTTS striking miner and a local *Militant* supporter have been summoned to appear before the executive of Mansfield Labour Party. Their crime—speaking at a *Militant* Readers' Meeting in support of the miners.

As *Militant* goes to press, striking miner Graham Naylor and *Militant* supporter Paul Shawcroft have been called before the EC on 7 February. At a previous EC meeting, the constituency MP Don Concannon produced the 'evidence' against them—a leaflet advertising the meeting, at which Terry Fields MP spoke along with Notts striking miners.

Graham Naylor addressed the meeting which was chaired by Paul Shawcroft. The meeting took place last **June**—it has taken eight months for this 'evidence' to come to light. Subsequently the CLP's General Committee moved that the two appear before the EC to 'explain' their involvement.

These two were singled out in an obvious attempt to stop democratic discussion in the party over the role Don Concannon has played in the miners' strike, Already many striking miners and their wives have joined Mansfield Labour Party because of their experience over the past 11 months, while support for *Militant* has grown.

However, attempts by the right-wing to create the atmosphere of a witch-hunt will not prevent the move to the left in the local party.

Miners

From page one

Any doubt that this is a political dispute have been shattered by the rabid statements of Thatcher and her ministers. Whatever reservations some junior ministers or Coal Board officials may still harbour, the ones who really matter, Thatcher and her top ministers want nothing less than the smashing of the strike and the humiliation of the NUM. It is vital for every worker that they fail.

A government victory would be the prelude to an all-out assault on every right trade unionists have ever won. They must not succeed; they will not succeed; but the broadening of the struggle to involve the whole movement cannot be delayed any longer. All-out strike action led by the NUM is now imperative.

BLOC

Broad Left Organising Committee

1985 BLOC Conference
23rd March
Manchester Free Trade Hall

The conference will discuss primarily two issues, the strategies needed to defeat all the Tory anti-union laws and the building of a national campaign to defend local government jobs, services and democracy.

Applications for delegates' credentials—each National Broad Left/Trade Union organisation can send up to four delegates (please include names and addresses of delegates on separate pieces of paper).

£3 per delegate—cheques made payable to 'BLOC'. All cheques and forms to be sent to: BLOC, c/o George Williamson, 11 Sutton Place, London E9 6E8.



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