Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

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Fight ratecapping
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Council workers defy Tory threats

No cuts! No sackings!

THE FIGHT to defend Council jobs and services is at a crucial stage. The next month could be decisive.

By Jim Hollinshead
(Liverpool GMBATU No 5 Branch Committee personal capacity)

and Nigel Bloch
(Treasurer Hackney Joint Shop Stewards Committee, personal capacity)

Last week's huge marches and lobbies of council meetings throughout the country showed the mass support for Councillors prepared to defy the government. The decisions by the GLC, ILEA, South Yorkshire and Merseyside County Council; to fix a rate within government limits, however, show that some Labour Councillors are not prepared to go all the way.

Ken Livingstone says the GLC will now fight cuts "line by line" in the councils chamber". This must be done, but it shows the whole limitations of just concentrating on persuading individual councillors.

Workplace meetings

The key to winning this fight is the council workforce. If they are fully involved in the campaign at all levels, with regular workplace meetings, door-to-door canvassing and mass rallies, they become an integral part of the struggle. Once a mobilisation has taken place it is then that much harder for the councillors to retreat. They are kept to their pledged by the pressure of the movement upon them.

For council workers there is no choice. Wherever the first blow lands it must be decisively defeated.

Tory Enviroment Minister Jenkin is thirsting for revenge for last year's defeat by Liverpool Council and is straining at the leash, looking for an opportunity to intervene. Within weeks Liverpool could find itself in a titanic confrontation with the government.

National campaign

But if Jenkin thinks it will be easy, he could not be more mistaken. Over 50,000 people marched in Liverpool last Thursday, dwarfing even last year's demonstration.

In Hackney the battle could be even sooner. Councillors have already been served with High Court writs from Mourad Fleming, a defeated SDP council candidate in a recent by-election, ordering them to comply with Tory legislation by 1 April.

This week the council got a further telex from Fleming's lawyers saying he would be returning to court on 1 April to order the Council to fix a rate "by say 15 April". Council workers have been told by the council leader, Hilda Keen, that they may not be able to be paid after the first week in April.



Liverpool workers demonstrate in support of their council's jobs and services. Photo: Dave Sinclair.

NATIONAL LOCAL Authorities Workers Conference. Saturday 30 March, Paddington Comprehensive School, Liverpool.

(Delegations two per 1,000 members, one for each of next thousand, from Joint Shop Stewards Committee. If no JSSC from individual branches. Fee £3.00.)

Details and delegations fees: Ian Lowes, Organising Secretary, NLACC, Grove Mount, Penny Lane, Liverpool 8. Cheques payable to "National Local Authorities Co-ordinating Committee".

The only response to the attack on jobs, wherever it comes from, can be an all-out strike. Ideas of work-ins are utopian and dangerous. But it is crucial that workers link up across the Boroughs. That is why in the next few weeks council workers under immediate threat should send delegations to speak at mass meetings of council

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Miners come to BLOC

GOLBORNE NUM in Lancashire are sending 13 delegates to the Broad Left Organising Committee (BLOC) conference in Manchester on 23 March. They know from their own experience the need for the left to get organised.

When Golborne miners marched back into their pit last week their mood was proud and defiant. Since the return, management have really tried to push the men and intimidate them. They were asked to do repair work which would not only break the national overtime ban but also the Mines Act.

Experiences

The NUM members have refused to do this under any circumstances and have been laid off as a result. Kevin Sharkley from Ashton and Haydock craftsmen's branch of Golborne NUM said that his feeling of pride after such a long battle made him all the more determined to pass on his experiences to other workers at the BLOC conference.

Application details —page 16



Broad Left Organising Committee
2nd national BLOC Conference
23 March Manchester Free Trade Hall
Speakers: Ken Livingstone (Leader GLC); Derek Hatton (Deputy Leader, Liverpool City Council); Leading NUM speaker; John Tocher (AUEW Broad Left presidential candidate); Bill Connor (USDAW Broad Left General Secretary candidate).

Staffs miners strike back

TUESDAY WAS the best day of my life. At our pit, Littleton in Staffordshire, the NUM is back together again after a 100% solid 24-hour strike over management intimidation.

By Dave Preece
(Littleton NUM branch committee, personal capacity)

At the end of the 12-month strike, only 146 of us were out, out of 2,000. But on Tuesday all three shifts were out to a man—including those who had been prominent in the so-called 'National Working Miners Committee' at our pit!

When we strikers went back last week, management thought they could try it on. We were told no union business could be carried out in work time. Then on Tuesday management tried to put one over on the 'power group' (mechanics and electricians). They were to be down-graded with only a 50% bonus, which would have meant losing a lot of money.

They walked out and by 9am the whole shift was out. The situation was explained to the afternoon and night shifts and they too came out on strike. Despite what happened in the past year, the men rallied round against management's tactics.

When we all marched past management's office I could have jumped for joy. It was better than when we marched back last week with heads held high. Today (Wednesday) management were at the negotiating table. Not only are our union representatives talking on the current situation but hoping to sort out the overtime ban issue.

Management have been ordering us to call it off, but we have explained that will only be done on the basis of a national instruction.

For me, after watching some of the lads cross picket lines for the past 12 months, to see all the NUM stand together again is the biggest morale booster ever. It's one in the eye for management. At Littleton colliery the NUM in the space of a week has regained its strength—we are united as one body.

PS. After the return to work last week, there was a half day strike at Bold colliery in Lancashire over the threatened transfer of 150 men.

General amnesty NOW



Public Meeting

Militant national speaking tour

THE *MILITANT* Editorial Board have called a series of important *Militant* Public meetings. These will be held in every region of the country. Details of those already organised are as follows:

Southern Regional Labour Party Conference, Saturday 16 March 7.30 pm. Speaker: Keith Dickinson. Sandhurst Hotel, Grand Parade, Eastbourne.

East Midlands Region Labour Party Conference, Saturday 16 March, 7.30 pm. Speaker: Ted Grant, The Parade Hotel, Skegness' (opposite Conference Hall).

Sutton, Sunday 24 March, Speaker Ted Grant.

Nottingham, Tuesday 26 March. Speaker Ted Grant.

Southampton, Thursday 28 March. Speaker: Brian Ingham, 7.30 at St Mathew's Church Hall, Onslow Road.

Welsh Organisation of Labour Students, Wednesday 20 March. Speaker Keith Dickinson, University College Cardiff.

Gwent, Monday 25 March.

Taff Vale, Tuesday 26 March

Maesteg, Thursday 28 March

Chorley, Tuesday 19 March, 8.00 pm, Coppell Working Mens Club.

Manchester, Tuesday 2nd April. Speaker Peter Jarvis.

Stafford, Sunday 24 March, Cross Keys, Hednesford.

Dudley, Tuesday 26 March. Speaker: Rob Sewell, Courthouse Pub, New Street, Dudley.

Birmingham, Wednesday 27 March. Speaker: Rob Sewell.

Glasgow, Monday 18 March.

Northumberland, Saturday 30. Speaker Clare Doyle.

Durham, Sunday 31 March. Speaker: Clare Doyle.

Newcastle, Monday 1 April. Speaker: Clare Doyle. Newcastle YMCA.

Acton, Wednesday 17 April, Acton Town Hall.

Newcastle under Lyme, Wed 3 April.

Blackburn, Wed 3 April. Speaker: Peter Jarvis.

Tilbury Thursday 11th April speaker Keith Dickenson

Bristol Tuesday 23rd April speaker Keith Dickenson

Plymouth, Wednesday 24th April speaker Keith Dickenson

Dorset Thursday 25th April speaker Keith Dickenson

Newham Tuesday 16th April

Islington Wednesday 17th April speaker Peter Taaffe

Brixton Thursday 18th April speaker Rob Sewell

Greenwich Thursday 11th April speaker Ted Grant

Liverpool Rate-capping Conference Saturday 30th March

Glasgow Monday 18th March McLellan Galleries, East Room, Sauciehall Street, Glasgow 7.30pm

Zimbabwean socialists held

THE LABOUR movement internationally has reacted with anger at the arrest of socialists by the Mugabe government. At least 14 trade unionists and ZANU (PF) members have been imprisoned and interrogated by the security police in Harare and Kwe Kwe since 1 March.

Conditions in the Kwe Kwe cells are especially bad, with seven prisoners sharing two lice-infested blankets, without proper food or sanitation.

This attack is the first concerted blow by the regime against the left wing in the unions and in ZANU itself. It shows that the planned one-party state will be a ruthless police dictatorship inside as well as outside the ruling party.

Among the workers' leaders held is M. Mashayamombe, a ZANU leader in Kwe Kwe and a party member for 16 years. In 1971 he was arrested by the Smith regime for leading protests against the Pearce Commission.

Others detained are party militants, leaders of workers' committees and activists in the Workers' Campaign for a Democratic GEMWU (the engineering union), including the union President S. Nyamhunga, and co-workers of the Southern African Labour Education Project (SALEP).

The detainees include three members of the British Labour Party teaching in Zimbabwe, who have assisted with workers' education. They are David Hemson, Darcy du Toit and Anneke Poppe.

Anneke, who holds a Dutch passport, is believed to have been released last week to care for her two small children, after intervention by the Dutch government.

Some of the Zimbabweans detained are rumoured to have been released, but the government refuses to even confirm the arrest. It is clear that a number remain in prison, and that deportation of the non-Zimbabweans may be imminent.

Protests organised by the Zimbabwean Trade unionists Defence Campaign included pickets outside Zimbabwean embassies in London, Stockholm, Bonn, Copenhagen and Brussels. Demonstrations have also taken place in Dublin and Athens.

The Foreign Secretary of the Dutch Labour Party has telexed protests to Mugabe, as has the French socialist union federation, the CFDT. The South African NUM have protested too.

The ICFTU and the Commonwealth Trade Union Council have started official enquiries, and the British T&G is taking up the issue.

Protest to Mugabe directly, or to the Zimbabwean High Commission in London. Send copies of telegrams, letters and resolutions, as well as funds for the campaign to the Zimbabwe Trade Unionists Defence Fund, c/o SALEP, 28 Martello Street, London E8.

Tens of thousands march against cuts



Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)

ABOUT 80,000 swelled into the streets of London to protest against cuts in local authority jobs and services. A wide range of groups marched including many teachers' associations and individual schools, the Fire Brigades' union with all the brigades from London, pensioners, manual workers and white collar workers from NUPE, NALGO, GMBATU, and TGWU and jount shop stewards committees from several authorities.

The demonstration which was good humoured but serious filled out the Jubilee Gardens to hear speeches from trade unionists and Labour leaders. Inevitably the media highlighted the stick-throwing at Norman Willis by a small minority of the demonstrators and ignored the groundswell of feeling shown by the rest of the march.

Debate marred by slur on LPYS

THE 1985 Scottish Labour Party conference took place at the weekend in the wake of the greatest struggle of the working class since 1926.

The miners were praised to the hilt, with an ovation given to the speech by Monktonhall miner Alex Shanks.

This determination was carried through into the debate on rate-capping, where the stands by Liverpool City Council and Edinburgh District Council were applauded.

However, the conference was marred by a sectarian attack on the LPYS, and the issue of the political levy was relegated to second place.

A resolution, from the Scottish Labour Students was used to blame the LPYS nationally for the lack of youth support for Labour. Members of Edinburgh Central and Hillhead LPYS branches claimed the LPYS nationally was 'sectarian' and 'incapable of building'—an ironic claim given the tiny size of these two particular branches. They didn't want to compare the national LPYS against their own local failures, but instead looked to the youth sections of the European socialist parties.

LPYS funding

It took Marxist LPYS members Andy Clachers and Kevin Scott to explain the difference in resources given to the British youth section and their European counterparts. Certainly the Swedish social democratic party's youth section, the SSU was larger than the British LPYS, but had a hundred full time staff and received 30% of the adult party's budget. The LPYS has one full timer and receives only one percent of the Labour Party budget.

Summing up the debate for the executive, Bill Gilby, a member for the Labour Co-Ordinating Committee said it was a pity the party did not have a youth section it "could be proud of". This view is not shared by the Scottish miners. After the conference miners praised the role the LPYS had played in the strike. Willie Hodge of the Netherthird strike centre said: "All striking miners will have a place in their hearts for the LPYS". Newtongrange miners said: "The Labour Party should be proud to be part of the LPYS!".

The LCC in their attacks on the LPYS keep repeating that it is 'not a witch-hunt'. If that's so then why is the Tory press and Labour's right wing backing their campaign to the hilt?

The real 'sectarians' in the Scottish Labour Party are those who attack the LPYS because they cannot stomach the fact that there is little support for the empty left rhetoric of the likes of the LCC in Labour's youth section. Meanwhile, as last month's best ever Scottish LPYS conference with over 450 attending shows, support for Marxism goes from strength to strength.

By Eddie Donaghee

Miner's visit to Sri Lanka

MINER MARK Thornton of Askern NUM is amongst many protesting at the imprisonment of New Socialist Party leader Vasudeva Nanayakarra, in Sri Lanka. He recently visited Sri Lankan trade unionists to build international support during the miners strike. Mark told *Militant*:

"The hospitality and friendship I was shown was unbelievable. For most of my visit I stayed at Vasudeva's house. We travelled the country together and I was impressed that everywhere we went people of all walks of life came to talk to Vasu, such is the respect shown to him.

Abject poverty

"Sri Lanka has a very high level of abject poverty, but Vasu never passed a beggar without giving alms. He has struggled and still struggles to improve the social conditions on this beautiful island. He has the full support and respect of his family, despite the fact that he's given up a relatively good standard of living as a lawyer to fight for a better society for the people of Sri Lanka.

"The government of the day have seen fit to imprison him without charges. It still surprises me that these sort of governments never learn. You cannot lock up ideas and ideals."

Labour condemns arrests

THE NORTH West Regional conference of the Labour Party has unanimously condemned the arrest and detention of the trade union activists in Zimbabwe (see article above).

The conference, held in Blackpool at the weekend, backed the resolution which protested at the detention of three British Labour Party members and five trade union activists who are also members of ZANU(PF), the country's ruling party.

The motion moved by Manchester Labour Women's Council was seconded by TASS. The Bakers Union, UCW, NCU, NUPE, the FBU as well as Labour MPs and MEPs also pledged to support the campaign for their release.

Tortured to death

CARLOS GODOY Echogoyen has been tortured to death following his arrest on 21 Febuary in Chile. A former exile in Cuba and Mexico, his farther Sergio is currently serving a 15 year prison sentence.

The Chilean police have claimed that after his arrest he experienced breathing diffilculties and died in an ambulance on the way to hospital. A pro-government newspaper suggested that he had committed suicide. But twelve others who were arrested at the same time were brutally tortured with electric shocks and said that Carlos had been particularly badly treated. He looked dead when he was taken away in the ambulance.

Letters expressing horror at the torture and murder of Carlos Godoy and demanding the release of those still held in detention should be sent to: Ricardo Garcia Rodriguez, Ministro del Interior, Palacio de La Moneda, Santiago, Chile.

With copies to: Francisco Orrego, Chilean Ambassador, 12 Devonshire Street, London W1 Tel 01 580 6392.

YTS death

THE GOVERNMENT'S YTS programme has claimed yet another victim.

In Scotland Stewart McEwan was killed last month on a scheme in a garage at Maybole, Ayrshire. A car he was working on fell on him after the ramp collapsed. He is the 22nd youth to die on a government scheme.

Patricia Moore, Scottish secretary of the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign said: "This latest fatality exposes the life and death issues at stake. We must put increased importance on the demands of the YTURC's present mobilisation regarding safety regulations."

Meanwhile in Salford, a youth has just left hospital after a three month stay following severe injuries he recieved on YTS. A friend of the victim, Anthony Woodburn of Salford LPYS, described what happened:

"My friend was placed 'on site' supposedly for 'work experience'. After loading cement for almost an hour onto a truck, he slipped and the rotating shaft on the vehicle—which did not have a guard—dragged him into the machine.

"He is now unemployed and will have to fight for many years to get a decent compensation, if any at all."

After the miners' strike



Miners' dignity-police shame

THE TELEVISION screens last week filled with scenes of striking miners proudly marching back to work.

But what the media failed to show was the disgusting scenes which took place outside Wearmouth Lodge in the Durham coalfield when a large contingent of police—clearly acting on NCB orders—attempted to prevent the returning miners marching through the pit entrance as a body (reported in last week's *Militant).*

As the marchers, many of whom were women and children, headed peacefully towards the pit gates the police suddenly decided to move in. The result was utter chaos which saw a number of marchers injured and six people arrested, including Bob Clay MP for Sunderland North.

Arrested

The first of those arrested was Bob Harker, an unemployed member of Gateshead East Labour Party and an active supporter of the miners throughout the past 12 months. Bob explains how taking part in a peaceful march back to work resulted in him spending six hours behind bars charged with 'threatening behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace'.

"At first I was marching behind the Gateshead Support Group banner laughing and joking with the miners' wives and children whom I've come to know very well over these past months.

Just before we reached the pit entrance I made my way to the front of the procession so I could stand by the gates and clap the lads as they walked on through.

The police, ushered the marchers to head straight towards the pit gates, suddenly lined up in front of everyone issuing orders that the men and their banner was to go no further. This blantant attempt to humiliate the miners infuriated those at the front who demanded that they be allowed to march through the gates with dignity. It was at this point that the police just went beserk and started lashing out at everyone in sight.

With my hands in my pockets and my back to the police I was suddenly grabbed by two officers who threw me unceremoniously onto the ground. The police then twisted both my arms up my back and literally dragged me on my stomach, then on my knees, towards a waiting van.

By this time terrified children were screaming hysterically at the sight of their fathers and brothers being pulled along the ground. Miners wives were also caught up in the thick of it as they tried desperately to free their men folk from the grip of the 'law'.

As if all this wasn't enough one of the most sickening acts of hooliganism by the police was their destruction of the Wearmouth Lodge banner after it had successfully—to the cheers of everyone present—crossed into the pit yard.

This was a shameful and disgraceful act in itself for the banner represents miners today and the memory of all those who have lost thejr lives in this pit over the past years.

I would like to thank those miners and their wives who came to the court house when my charges were being read out and who have promised me that I'll be represented by the local NUM solicitor at my hearing on the 25 March."

By Tom McGuiness
(Tynebridge CLP)

St Helens march blocked



Photo: Dave Sinclair.

THE ST HELENS Miners' march last Saturday was marred by the now familiar confrontation with Her Majesty's Constabulary, marchers sat down in the road and blocked traffic for an hour when a police line blocked the route of the march, for many of the supporters and children in the procession this was a small taste of the treatment that miners have received for the last 12 months. When the march resumed the tune had changed from "Victory to the miners" to the familiar anthem of "Maggie's monkeys, Maggie's monkeys, stick your truncheons up your arse". 1500 people attended the rally at the end of the march and the biggest applause was for demands for a complete amnesty for the 700 miners sacked.

Gerry Lerner

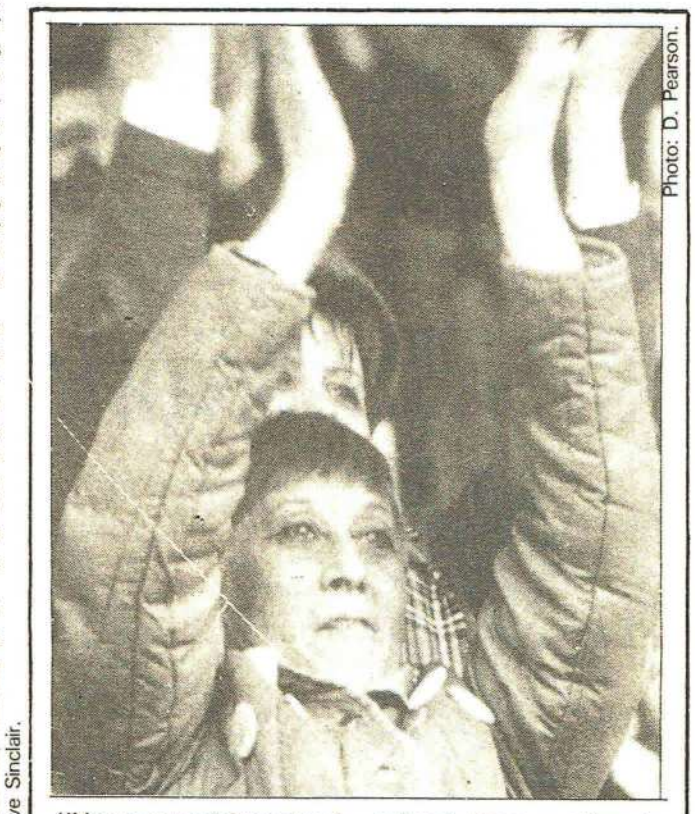


Photo: D. Pearson.

"I have never felt so proud to bring greetings from my executive as I am today" so said Arthur Scargill at the International Women's Day Rally in Chesterfield. 10,000 jubilant, confident, determined miners' wives and supporters, clapped, cheered and rose to their feet as Arthur Scargill entered the ground, the atmosphere was charged with emotion, after a year of struggle and of politicisation these miners' wives were not going to be content with returning to the home, they were looking to extend their activities. Betty Heathfield was right when she said: "It was just the beginning of an epic struggle." She made a promise that the National organisation of miners' wives would stay strong. Scargill echoed those sentiments saying "Women have left an indelible mark on the strike, you are part of this union and must remain so". The NUM must open its ranks to the wives who supported the strike so loyally. The need to discuss wider political issues was taken up at the *Militant* public meeting. Roz Russel of Clowne Women's Action Group explained how the strike and *Militant* politicised her, 50 people attended the meeting.

By Heather Rawling
(Leicester West CLP, personal capacity)

For further reading, see 'Women in Revolt' in the current issue of *Militant International Review*, price 75p.

Experience of a Kent miner

A FEELING of sadness swept over me when I heard the news of the return to work but I was adamant I wouldn't go back.

I was elated by the decision in Kent last Monday for us to stay on strike until sacked miners were reinstated. But when I watched the TV on Tuesday I couldn't hold back the tears of emotion when I watched miners go back to work. I pondered over the pitfalls of what went wrong—the treacherous leaders of some unions, the treachery from the Labour Party leadership—I remembered when Kinnock gave his first speech after being elected leader. He sent a shiver down my spine by quoting Nye Bevan—what a hypocrite!

Imagine what a response he would have got if he had stood up and said "I as leader of this class, for the miners for the unemployed, the youth to have a secure future, call for a general strike".

Our victory would have been sealed. The lesson of this dispute is that we must have leaders who feel for their class and not just puppets for the bosses. The seed of socialism was planted in me some 16 years ago, although I didn't realise it at the time. Having been on strike for a year I have had first hand experience of how the state and the capitalist system works.

Meaning of state

I have learnt a great deal from your paper. I erased the rough edges in what I believed. In going a little deeper I realised the full meaning of the state and how unreal, untrue and vile the capitalist system is.

I am not relishing the thought of going back to work but I realise I must. We must prepare for the next Tory assault on the miners. More than anything we need a Labour government with a socialist programme. I will try as best I can to assist *Militant* in achieving this aim.

By a Snowdown miner

From the pits

Bates

COAL BOARD management are trying to intimidate the union at Bates Colliery in Northumberland. The NUM has had to move its site office from the pit after their original office was burned down in an arson attack during the strike. Now the NCB say the lodge secretary will only be paid for one shift a week—on the four other shifts he must either work or if he wants to carry out union business he will have to be paid by the NUM.

Militant

OVER 65 people packed into a meeting in the former 'soup kitchen' in Keresley, Warwickshire, at a Coventry Colliery *Militant* Miners' meeting to discuss the lessons of the strike.

Victimised miner and strike committee chairman Colin Ward angrily told the meeting: "The TUC General Council would sooner crawl to No 10 for a shoddy deal than argue support for the NUM amongst their own membership. Even on the so-called left, leadership was lacking".

For the women's support group, Kath Chaplin reminded the meeting that last week she said she wanted the "the Militant Tendency back in the pit" to fight the new battles, and that this process had begun at the first post-strike branch meeting.

Despite the fact that the miners had not yet been paid, £23 was raised for the fighting fund.

By Tony Cross

Amnesty

IAN MACGREGOR came out of hiding at the weekend to try out a new moderate mask. "Only those who have been convicted of violent offences should not be reinstated" he said on the radio. But what does this mean in the Coal Board's eyes?

The South Yorkshire NCB manager has sent letters to all miners suggesting that calling someone a scab is a form of violence and therefore a sacking offence.

Nonetheless, some NCB areas are clearly retreating. In South Wales 38 out of the 46 sacked have been reinstated, including the four officials at St Johns NUM. In North Derbyshire over a hundred have been reinstated to date. It is urgent that the whole labour movement lends its support to the demand for amnesty for *all* sacked miners.

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workers in other Boroughs.

The struggle must be linked on a national plane. There must be immediate all-out strike action by council trade unions and a regional general strike the moment any councillor is debarred from office, or any worker sacked or commissioners are sent in.

An important lesson of the miners' strike is that there are no eay victories over the Tories. But if a massive campaign is built, the battle to defend local jobs, services and democracy can be won. Liverpool showed how last year. In the next few weeks the campaign will determine whether we can achieve an even more historic victory.

Ratecapping campaign—defend jobs and services

GLC backs down

THE COLLAPSE of resistance to the Government's ratecapping law by the GLC has given the Tories a big boost in their campaign against local councils.

Despite all the brave words about the GLC and ILEA defying the government and setting an example to other councils their Labour majorities crumbled in the face of the threat of legal action.

The background to this ignominious defeat is the simple fact that despite all the heroic words and gestures the majority of GLC Labour councillors had no intention of putting themselves at risk by seriously struggling against the government.



GLC/ILEA demonstration last year. Photo: M Pinder



Ken Livingstone speaking at London LPYS 1985 Conference—despite all their verbal defiance, the majority of GLC Labour councillors backed down from serious struggle.

Photo: R. Green (IFL)

Symbolic

Ken Livingstone told the Greater London Labour Party conference that a number of GLC councillors had only agreed to support the Party's 'no rate' policy because they were banking on enough Labour right wingers voting with the GLC Tories to enable a rate to be set, thereby eliminating the threat of legal action.

This policy of verbal, symbolic opposition with no risks, already seen once in practice in 1982 with the GLC's climbdown over the Law Lords ruling against the original Fares Fair policy, was undermined at the end of February when it appeared that the GLC Tories had found a way of legally abstaining on the crucial vote on whether or not to set a rate.

This threw the GLC Labour Group into panic because it meant that there was now a real chance that the GLC and ILEA might not set a rate which would lead to possible legal action against the GLC members carrying out Party policy. This legal action could have involved a 5 year ban on holding public office, thereby blocking the parliamentary hopes of some GLC members like Livingstone

The resulting splits in the GLC Labour Group were publicly exposed for the first time at the London Labour Party Conference over March 2/3. Basing himself on the fact that the GLC and ILEA, unlike the local London borough councils, legally had to set a rate by March 10, Ken Livingstone argued that the GLC members could only be expected to break the law and refuse to fix a rate if the borough councillors also took illegal action on 7 March, the day when all the threatened Labour councils had previously agreed to meet. Livingstone, knowing that many Labour borough councillors had as little intention of putting themselves at risk as many GLC Labour councillors had, demanded the impossible of the London Labour boroughs (given the make-up of their Labour groups) in order to frighten the majority of the GLC Labour Group into agreeing to set a legal rate. Livingstone's misfortune is he had to be the first Labour council leader to be seen to buckle under the Tories' threats, thereby letting other council leaders indulge in strong rhetoric against the GLC before their own councils caved in.

'Dented Shield'

In order to justify his position, of both being in favour of setting a rate and sometimes enjoying the luxury of voting against a rate, Livingstone is employing a mixture of Neil Kinnock's 'dented shield' argument and an attempt to say that the GLC is now following a 'deficit budget' strategy. The final rate which the GLC set means a further cut of £55 million over and above what the government was demanding.

In chamber

At the Greater London Labour Party Conference Livingstone declared that if a rate were set by the GLC the Labour Group would 'sit in that council chamber for as long as it takes week after week, line by line voting down any proposal for cuts in jobs and services'. Yet while rigorous opposition to any plans for cuts has to be shown in the council chamber, the battle will not be finally won there. Councils are under attack from the government and only a mass movement can hope to defeat the Tories. But unfortunately the collapse of the Labour GLC's resistance to rate-capping and the behaviour of some GLC leaders has only served to undermine the building of the mass movement.

They should have clearly denounced those Labour GLC members who were not prepared to follow the example of the miners and make personal sacrifices in the struggle against the Tories. Instead many GLC leaders were, in the days running up to the budget meeting, trying to win support for the plan drawn up by Reg Race,(the ex- Labour MP who now has a well paid GLC job), to avoid a clash with the government, but which would have meant cuts in staffing levels.

Any idea that the GLC is now following the strategy argued for by Militant supporters of councils passing a 'deficit budget' is completely wrong. The GLC and Merseyside County Council's idea of a deficit budget is not to mobilise a mass movement but to muddle through the financial year. Last year Liverpool City Council campaigned for a deficit budget in order to popularly explain that the government was responsible for the council's crisis and use it as a lever in order to build the mass movement, not as a way to dodge a battle with the Tories.

The collapse of resistance by the four big rate-capped authorities is a blow for other Labour councils under attack, but these councils must not give up the struggle. No Labour councillor should use the GLC's cave-in as a justification to give up the struggle. Every effort must be put into mobilising the working class in preparation for the coming Tory attacks on these councils.

Fainthearts

If some more Labour councillors try to back out of the struggle the council leaders must clearly call on the rest of the movement to denounce the fainthearts and intensify the struggle to win back the money the Tories have taken from the councils and protect jobs and services. The events of the past weeks have shown once again, as Liverpool did last year, that the key to defeating the Tories lies in building a mass movement with a clear, principled, non-careerist leadership.

By Bob Labi

(Bob Labi was a member of the Greater London Labour Party Executive from 1971 until a campaign by the pro-Kinnock Labour Co-ordinating Committee and pro-Livingstone London Labour Briefing finally succeeded in removing him at the GLLP 1985 conference.)

Strong support in Southwark

SOUTHWARK COUNCIL rejected ratecapping at its special meeting on 7 March.

Every Labour councillor present voted for the 'no rate' position. Before the meeting a demonstration of well over 1,000 people marched to Peckham Town Hall to lobby councillors, and any waverers were left in no doubt about the strength of feeling in the local trade unions.

A series of deputations addressed the council meeting representing tenants, welfare groups, black organisations and the local Labour Party. The packed public gallery gave very vocal encouragement to the Labour group throughout the long six hour meeting.

After the motion was passed 49 votes to 13, Labour councillors and the gallery burst into 'here we go' and the Red Flag. Policemen outside looked bemused as the singing crowd left the building at 1.30am.

A small minority on the Labour Group has already indicated however, that they will not do anything illegal. Asked for his view on the future position of the Labour Group, Council leader Tony Ritchie said: "I will not comply with any policy that results in loss of jobs and services in Southwark. I personally will be putting that policy at all times."



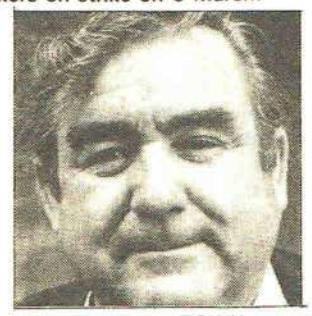
Photo: B. Eastop

Southwark council manual workers on strike on 6 March.

Asked for his comments on Ken Livingstone's behaviour, he said: "To pretend the weekend before the ratemaking process that the position of the boroughs was unknown is a total distortion of the truth...

"No person in the movement has the privilege to say one thing in private, and adopt populist attitudes in public. They should be consistent in both.

"I've told my group nothing I haven't said in public. The group has accepted them up till now."



Ron Matcham, TGWU.

Local trade unions are determined to fight any cuts. Ron Matcham (TGWU steward, chair of Southwark Council Joint Trade Union Joint Co-ordinating Committee (TUJCC) told *Militant*:

"Our attitude now in Southwark is: If you're in a union that's it. We were all divided. We recognised there was a division and decided to form the TUJCC. All London Borough of Southwark unions are on it.

"We're not about affecting the activities of individual unions. But we are trying to get a joint approach on all aspects of reorganisation of services—not just cuts. We're safeguarding services and jobs and conditions.

"We took one stance on rate-capping. Any councillor who's not with us should have got out.

"On the Labour Party we say—join us. It was founded by us, we'll fight together. The Southwark Labour Party Trade Union Committee is excellent. We should have started it years ago.

"We shouldn't have got in this ideological mess. The party should stick to class issues—like meals on wheels and so on.

"My father was sent to prison in 1926—it's my inheritance. I'm not giving it up. In the 1950s, '60s and '70s the trade unions and the Labour Party lost their way. They lost contact with working class people. Hopefully we'll turn this back. There is only one class—the working class."

By Paul Traynor
(Peckham CLP, personal capacity)

Manchester



Photo: J. Smith (IFL)

Manchester 'democracy day' demo, 6 March.

A DEMONSTRATION of between 15 – 20,000 council workers brought the centre of Manchester to a halt on 6 March. The next day the Labour Group voted that no rate should be set as it was impossible for the proposed budget to be met without a massive rate rise.

Instead the Labour Group demanded back some £30 million of the £250 million that the Tory government had taken from Manchester since 1979. The decision not to set a rate was passed by 66 votes for, 19 against, and 11 abstentions. (By Councillor John Byrne).

Sheffield

SHEFFIELD SAW a massive turn-out last Thursday with trade unions, Labour Parties, LPYS, Senior Citizens, disabled, the unemployed, school, Polytechnic and University students on the march. The theme of the rally was "Defend Sheffield City Council", but council workers told me they see the main battle as one of defending their own jobs.

There was evidence that the magnficent battle being waged by the people of Liverpool, is winning a place in the minds of many workers. Carrying a copy of *Militant* is now beginning to mean a barrage of questions, particularly with regard to rate-capping and Liverpool. (By Neville Wright).

Ratecapping campaign—defend jobs and services

Islington

Liverpool grows stronger

OVER 3,000 workers, tenants and youth created a terrific atmosphere outside Islington Town Hall and heard councillors pledge not to make a rate that involved any cuts in jobs or services.

Lennie Rathjen, GMBATU cleansing steward, speaking for the JTUC, got the biggest cheers of the night when he attacked the record of the shortlived SDP unelected council of 1981. He said that workers would never elect the SDP, let alone Tories into power in boroughs like Islington but also that the council workforce would support London Bridge solidarity action against any Labour council who tried to implement government cuts.

The only sour note of the evening were the unanswered questions of the SDP councillors who said that the council would give in and set a 'legal'' rate by the end of March. It is now up to the council unions to build for the London Bridge stewards conference on 19 March and to mobilise the workforce if any attempts are made at the next council meeting to set a ''legal'' rate that would mean cuts in jobs and services.

As one council worker said: ''The council have had 12 months to resign if they didn't want to fight. We don't have any choice but to fight for our futures.''

By R Garrad
(Islington NALGO EC, NALGO Met District Council, personal capacity)

It was the biggest ever one-day strike by Liverpool local authority workers.

Over 50,000 went on the march. The response was even more solid than last than last year.

All the city council trade unions were well represented, marching proudly behind banners from the Joint Shop Stewards Committee, GMBATU, UCATT, T&G, NUPE, EETPU, NALGO and NATFHE. Sections of NUPE that last year were convinced by the right-wing of NUPE leadership not to take action, this year insisted on being part of the demo.

A particularly striking spectacle on the demo was the large number of uniformed firemen. Big numbers of bus men also came in uniform, despite not being on strike—by agreement with the campaign organisers, they wanted transport laid on for the demonstration. Other workers represented included printers, railwaymen, CPSA members and car workers.

Inspired

But the most warmly received trade unionists were the big delegations of miners from Lancashire. These men showed absolutely no sign of being cowed; they returned the solidarity they received from the council and local authority workers. Several speakers referred to the heroism of the miners and received stormy applause from the demonstration.

Some of the most oppressed layers of the working class were prominent on the march; a big percentage of the trade unionists were women. Women workers are inspired into action by a decisive leadership who have carried out reforms that particularly affect them, such as in housing and nursery education and the planned £100 minimun wage for city council workers. The marvellous role of women in the mining areas has vastly boosted the morale of thousands of women both young and old.

The LPYS led by a group 'Jammin against Jenkin' had the liveliest section of the march. There were many youth from FE colleges and far larger numbers of black youth than previously seen on council events. A home banner declared:''Holt comprehensive council LPYS supporters.''



On the Liverpool demonstration 7 March. Photo: J Smith (IFL)

The turnout was a marvellous one after six months of lies, distortions, abuse and character assasination against the council and its leadership by the local media. The *Liverpool Echo* in particular has decended from its previous position from the gutter into the sewer. Every night sees a new banner headline about ''Jobs for the boys''''Corruption'' ''Union bully-boys'' ''Council house scandal'' ''Bins chaos'' and ''Another set-back for *Militant*'' etc.

Warning

They failed utterly. The political level of understanding of the demonstration was a clear warning to the Tories and the class system they uphold. The local authority workers showed an iron determination, a deadly serious mood and the feeling that if the government makes moves towards imposing cuts, they will face a revolt from trade unionists that would match and could even outstrip the daring and courage of the miners.

The mood especially was virtually revolutionary. Cheryl Varley (President of FELS) was cheered loudly when she said:

''It would take YTS trainees 4,151 years to earn as much as David Sainsbury earns in one year. 7% of the population own 84% of the wealth. They call us revolutionaries, well if its revolutionary to fight that inequality, then I'm a revolutionary. This area is surrounded by banks. Councils owe about £17 billion to the banks, why shouldn't they be nationalised to provide jobs and services for the working class?''

The Tories should be warned, if they imagine Liverpool can be isolated and defeated they are in for a rude awakening. *The Sunday Times* tries to console Thatcher and Jenkin by claiming that: ''My own count of the marchers as they went past suggested that there were no fewer than 3,000 and no more than 4,000.'' Either they don't teach you to count in public school or perhaps the worthy gentleman of the press dropped into too many wine bars on his way to the demo.

By Richard Venton

Haringey

Hackney goes illegal

THE LARGEST lobby of a London Council was in Haringey. A 4,000 strong demonstration gathered outside the Civic Centre.

The size of the crowd and the unprecedented support outside the Council Chamber was a victory for the campaigning work done by Haringey Council's workforce—some 85,000 signatures had been collected on petitions and in one day social services workers distributed 75,000 anti-ratecapping leaflets.

However, perhaps most important was that in the week leading up to 7 March all employees were allowed to spend two working days campaigning, as long as a skeleton service remained available to the public. From seven in the morning whole offices turned out to leaflet factories, tube stations and, later in the day, shopping centres. Others canvassed or leafletted door to door.

One Social Services Office, along with some of its clients, organised a march between council estates, where it would then stop and canvass. The response on the doorstep where the issues could be explained was excellent.

By Nick Wing
(Assistant Convenor Social Services Haringey NALGO, personal capacity)

ACCORDING TO Department of Environment sources the government fears that at least two Councils will go all the way in defying them: Liverpool because of its leadership and Hackney because the £27m gap between Council and government is too large to bridge.

Last Thursday showed the government has reason to be worried, for Hackney Council went further than any other Council in the terms of its resolution not to set a rate. It threw out a proposal by Kinnock's aide, Councillor Charles Clarke, to add the words ''at this time'' and voted by a two to one margin for a resolution which the Borough Solicitor had advised them was illegal.

Councillors did this in full knowledge of the consequences. The day before most of them had been served with a High Court writ ordering them to behave legally.

The meeting began with the Chief Executive telling the Council that as the main resolution was illegal, the meeting was out of order. ''Noted'', yelled Labour Councillor John Bloom and the Council went on to discuss the motion.

Adjourn attempt

After the failure of Tory amendments to cut £20m, and the Liberals attempt to adjourn, came the main threat to the non-rate resolution, Charles Clarke's amendment. He could hardly be heard, such were the cries of ''scab'' '' coward'', ''traitor'' and ''resign'' from the council workforce, who had packed the public gallery.

Even some of his former allies found they could not sit next to him during his speech, and the end of his speech was drowned out in boos. It was only a matter of a few words he claimed, but that did not stop him later on voting with the Tories against the substantive motion.

An even worse speech followed Clarke's, from ex-MP Maureen Coloquhon. She said we must respect the law, so that a future Labour government could get Tory councils to carry out their wishes. ''We'll be sacked by then'', yelled one council worker.

But when she moved on to attack the unions she got a furious response. ''You're talking Kinnock'', shouted one worker from the public gallery. It seems that the Labour leader has now become a general noun of abuse. Clarke's delaying amendment was defeated by 39 votes to 18.

And when the main resolution was then carried by 40 votes to 17 (with nine Labour voting against, including Clarke and Coloquhon), almost everybody was on their feet cheering. Councillor John Bloom waved a red flag, and with fists raised 'the Red Flag' echoed through the Town Hall where once Morrison was leader. Later after a number of procedural motions, the meeting closed with the singing of the Internationale.

By Jim Chrystie
(Hackney North CLP, Executive, personal capacity)

Lambeth



Photo: D. Buxton

Ted Knight, leader Lambeth Council, speaking at London Bridge rally.

LAST THURSDAY evening's lobby of Lambeth Town Hall was attended by about 3,000 people. Many people came straight from work and there was a real determined mood from those present. This,combined with well received speeches from Labour councillors, meant that the Tory councillors had to scuttle in and out of the Town Hall.(By Stephen Nally).

Lewisham

IN LEWISHAM about 1000 council trade unionists and members of tenants associations, voluntary organisations lobbied the council meeting to remind Labour councillors the fight was about their jobs, their living conditions and their services.

Lewisham voted not to set a rate—yet. Council workers wanted no rate and a fight with no conditions and determined to keep up the pressure. (By Roger shrives).

Denmark, USSR , Sri Lanka

Workers move against Danish Thatcher



Demonstration in Aarhus in December

PRACTICALLY nothing has crept into the British press about the growing class polarisation in Denmark and the mood of combativity and opposition to the Thatcherite Conservative government of Paul Schlüter.

By Alan Woods

The main flashpoint at present is the threat of legal action hanging over the heads of 62 members of the transport union charged with breach of the peace for actions arising out of a strike in Copenhagen last May.

This general strike of bus drivers and other transport workers in the capital was not about wages or conditions. It was to prevent a breakaway scab union being formed, which among other things wanted to break the link between the union and the main workers' party, the Social Democrats.

The strike within a few months of Schlüter's second election victory, showed a very high degree of class consciousness, possibly a sign of what the Tories in Britain can expect if they try to break the unions' links with the Labour Party!

The record strike level in Denmark is ignored by the British media. The press prefer flattery of Schlüter's administration. "Denmark's small economic miracle" was a *Financial Times*' headline on 12 February.

No comment

"In 1984", the article bragged, "the real increase in Gross Domestic Product was about 4½%—the fastest in Europe. This growth was derived entirely from an increase in private sector demand; there was no increase in public sector consumption and investment".

On the really remarkable rise—that in the strike movement, the *FT* had no comment. The present phase of collective bargaining is probably the most conflict-ridden since the Second World War. Days of action were called twice in December. On the first occasion, 10,000 workers demonstrated in Aarhus.

Denmark's right wing labour movement leaders have a deep fear of the words "general strike" just as they do in Britain. But their call for a "general mobilisation" reflected the pressure from below.

It is now two years since the right wing Social Democratic government was defeated by Schlüter. The SD vote fell even further in another election in January 1984 due to the leadership's unpopularity and the collapse of smaller capitalist parties.

Schlüter has cut public spending and suspended wage and price indexing in a slavish but cautious imitation of Thatcher. Danish workers have now moved on to the industrial arena. For all the *FT*'s gloating, Schlüter's policies have confirmed Denmark as the sick man of Scandanavia. Unemployment is still 11% and higher if school leavers are included, inflation runs at 7% while wages are pinned to 4%.

Although there is greater cushioning of the unemployed than in Britain (a maximum of 90% of full wages for the first period) prices and especially rents are sky high. The main attacks so far have been directed against the youth, whose wages have been slashed by the removal of price indexing. Explosions and possibly riots are implicit in the situation.

Massive debt

Denmark's external debt is of Latin American proportions equal to the Gross National Product. Rising interest rates worldwide pull in ever more money to service the debts, Kr 18 billion in 1983 and Kr 23 Bn in 1984.

That dictates Danish capitalism's policies. To reduce the debt before it strangles the economy, a savage policy of cuts in wages, education, housing, health and social services has been produced— a recipe for social convulsions—and the process is only just beginning.

When inevitably the capitalists go for the hard-won rights of Denmark's trade unions, the last year shows the resistance they will find from a working class with a long tradition of struggle. There is already talk of a general strike at workplace and shop steward level.

The TUC leaders have not so far called for action, seemingly taking the Len Murray option of lying down and playing dead. But the courage and initiative of the rank and file, not the frightened men at the top of the movement, will be decisive. The Danish Marxist paper *Socialisten* has called for a 24-hour general strike and a mass movement to bring down Schlüter and bring a Social Democratic government to power on a socialist programme.

Despite attempts by the right wing to silence the Danish Marxists by expulsions from the YS, the support for *Socialisten* is growing steadily among the youth, the unions and the Social Democrats. The events of the next few years will transform Marxism into a powerful force inside organised labour in Denmark.

Stop Press

ON 5 March the trial of the lorrydrivers went ahead. Despite the lack of a lead from the TUC, and the fact that 16,000 workers went on a demonstration on pay the day before, 2,000 workers, mainly dockers and lorrydrivers from the Tuborg side the demonstrated outside the courtrooms.

The Copenhagen dockers staged a one-day general strike and the lorry drivers organised stoppages.

Faced with an upsurge of labour militancy, the ruling class backed away from the threatened jail sentences, opting for £100 fines for each of the accused. However, the men have refused to pay the fines and are appealing.

The leaflet of the Danish Marxists calling for a 24 hour general strike met with an outstanding reception from the workers on both demonstrations.

Growing problems for Gorbachev



Gorbachev meets the Tory leaders.

KONSTANTIN Chernenko was the typical bureaucrat, a grey nonentity, "the invisible man".

In the early days of his rule when the press was trying to promote him, they joked in Moscow that it was "the cult of personality, without a personality".



Chernenko.

The debilitating, incurable illnesses from which he and his two predecessors suffered mirrored the paralysis of the economy.

The privileged, parasitical elite which Chernenko briefly represented stifled any significant economic growth while the totalitarian regime smothered any opposition. It has become a complete fetter on any further development of Russian society.

Under the totalitarian tyranny of Stalin, under which the leaders of the 1917 revolution were crushed and the bureaucratic caste built its dominant position, the economy was still expanding faster than that of any capaitalist power, thanks to the one surviving gain of the revolution—the nationalisation of major industries and the plan of production.

Today the economy is expanding more slowly than in numerous capitalist states. The bureaucrats have lost any justification for their existence. They hope that the "young" Gorbachev will be able to square the circle and reform the economy.

A supporter of the former leader Andropov,and the first Russian leader born after the revolution, he is said to favour a crack-down on the worst excesses of the bureaucracy, which Andropov had started to unveil. He began to act against managers lining their pockets through corruption and swindling. But even if Gorbachev continues along these lines, he will achieve nothing.

Stalin himself, Kruschev and, several leaders in other East European countries and recently in China, have embarked on similar drives to "reform" and "purge" the machine. For a brief period this can lead to improvements, as managers fear for their jobs.

It does nothing to change the basic problem, however. Indeed it can make it worse; every time they try to promote growth, they open up new avenues to graft and corruption. China and Hungary at present illustrate what happens when central economic control is relaxed—a new layer of even richer bureaucrats, "socialist millionaires", cash in and add their weight to the burdens already bearing down on the workers and small farmers.

Workers' democracy

The only solution is the one thing that Gorbachev can never do—relinquish the power he and his caste wield. Only the democratic checking, and accounting and management by the workers can free Russian society from the dead-hand of bureaucracy.

Once workers have the chance to run society, the days of the bureaucracy are numbered, as there is no way workers will tolerate the immense privileges, the special shops, schools, holiday villas and all the other perks of the parasites.

That is why there will be no slackening of centralised control by Gorbachev, no political opposition tolerated and no workers' control and management. Only when the workers themselves throw off this burden from their backs in a political revolution will the aims of the 1917 revolution be fully realised, in a democratic workers' state, which would free the economy from its shackles and usher in a new future for the working class of the USSR and the rest of the world.

By Pat Craven

Release Vasudeva

IT IS now almost a month since Sri Lankan union leader Vasudeva Nanayakara was arrested by Jayawardene's vicious right wing regime. He has still not been charged with any offences, nor has any date been fixed for a trial.

His arrest is a warning to all labour movement activists in Britain and other capitalist democracies. This arbitrary arrest could face any one of us as the class struggle hots up. He must not be allowed to rot in jail. Letters of protest from LPYS branches must flood into the Sri Lankan authority. The Labour Party must commit itself to cutting off all aid to Jayawardene when re-elected to government.

Vasudeva was presidential candidate in the 1982 elections, he served the poor peasants of Eheliyogoda as member of parliament from 1970 to 1977. He was leader of the 1980 general strike, which the government attempted to crush, sacking tens of thousands of workers.

He has been imprisoned before for political activities, several times by Jayawardene, and by the popular front regime in the early 1970's.

Three days before his arrest he led a student march against privatisation of education, which would close universities and colleges to all but the rich, and destroy the exceptional position amongst 'the underdeveloped countries' of 90% literacy which the Sri-Lankan masses have won over decades of militant struggle.

The government implies he was whipping up student unrest, but there is nothing illegal about organising marches. The real reason for the arrest is that the government fear that student unrest will spread to the workers and peasants, and that Vasudeva's Marxist ideas will gain massive support.

This arrest is part of a series of anti-working class measures by the regime, which comes alongside the racial and national oppression of the Tamil peoples, and attempts to destroy the welfare state. Protest now—if they come for him in the morning they'll come for us at night!

Letters and telegrams to:President Jayawardene, Presidential House, Colombo, Sri Lanka, with copies to United Federation of Labour, UK branch, 6 Ockendon Road, London N1 3NP.

'Don't relax - organise'

YTURC

PAUL WELLER and Style Council (right) performed at the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign lobby of Parliament on February 28. Paul along with Steve White have written a song especially for the campaign, dedicated to those who have died on YTS schemes.

One line goes: "The truth up there carved in stone where 21 dead now lav..."

He was joined by Billy **Bragg** at the lobby, along with the reggae band **Chalice UK** and **The Men They Couldn't Hang**.

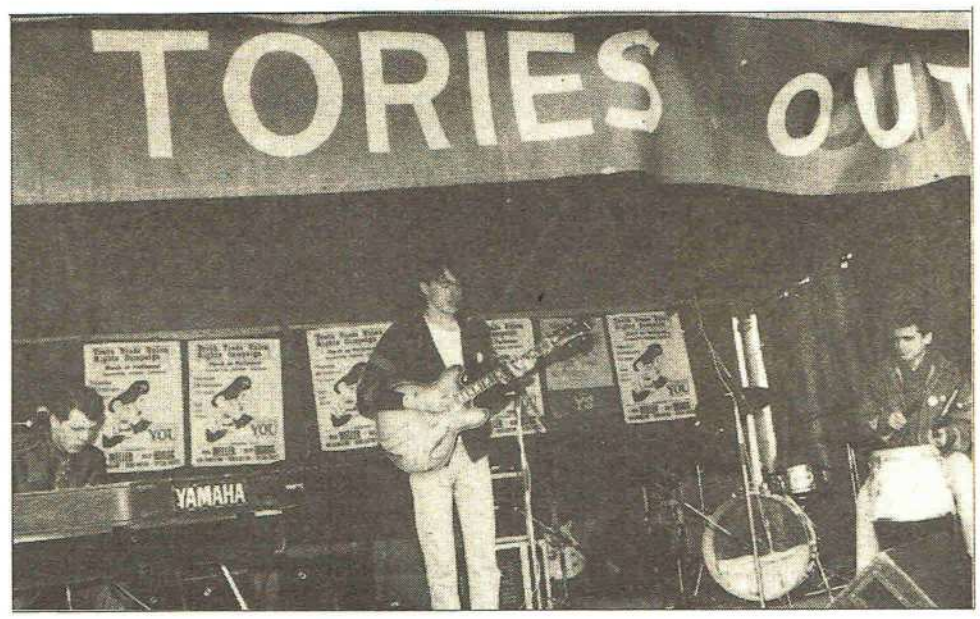
Other musicians backing the campaign and who signed the 50,000 signature petition that was presented to Downing Street, include: **Flying Pickets, Madness, Heaven 17, Alison Moyet, Smiley Culture, Big Country, Lenny Henry** and **Special AKA**, not forgetting **Frankie Goes to Hollywood** who sent the message: "Frankie say, don't relax—organise".

On returning from the lobby, trainees from the South of England gave their views to Delia Hazrati:

Leo Hawker from Portsmouth: "It was great to see bands involved. Generally the music industry is full of flabby untalented idiots trying to make money out of us. I'm glad the lobby happened because we've warned the Tories that we're going to fight them."

Michael, from Havant: "I've been on a YOP scheme. I had to fetch and carry things all the time. I was supposed to be a 'maintenance technician'. I spent over £4 on the bus fares each week so I left. I'd had enough, there was no training. I'd leave the country if I had to go on another scheme."

Anna, an apprentice hairdresser from Purbrook: "I only get £33 for a 44 hour week. I came to the lobby because YTS brings down young people's wages. I've joined a union, but one of my union officials was on a hairdressing council deciding my wages. He didn't seem to care about low wages. We need union leaders to fight low pay, especially in unions like USDAW."



Style Council perform at the YTURC lobby on 28 February.

Putting the case on screen

AS PART of our campaign against YTS conscription, Hull LPYS branches decided to make a 15 minute video.

The first thing we did was raise finance for this ambitious project. It was going to cost us £170. We publicised our idea in the labour movement and visited trade union offices. We had a good response—nearly £400 was donated in all, which paid for the video and a coach to the YTURC lobby.

★ ★ ★

Conversation overheard at the YTURC lobbby, at the entrance to Parliament; lobbier to policeman: "Next year they'll be thousands upon thousands of us." The policeman replied: "Yes, and we'll probably have guns next year."

★ ★ ★

The video was concieved, script written, film taken and edited all within less than a month. No 'Saatchi and Saatchi' for us, only real trainees, ex-trainees and Young Socialists giving their own experiences.

Success

It was a success. Two days before the YTURC lobby we had our 'premier' at a YS public meeting, shown to trainees.

There is widespread support for the YTURC campaign. Our two coach drivers to the lobby—both TGWU stewards—donated £10 each out of their wages to the campaign. We have publicised the video and have now been invited to several schools. We also hope to show it at LPYS national conference.

By Jo Parker
(Secretary, North Hull LPYS)

School lesson

OUR LPYS in Bristol organised a "Trial of Thatcher" so to publicise it, we leafletted my school in Chipping Sodbury.

After we finished we went into register—the next thing I knew I was called to see the headmaster. I went in alone. He had only picked on me, isolating me from the other comrades. I stood in front of him and he almost totally demoralised me. He threatened that my activities would be recorded in my files.

From this experience I learnt an important lesson, one which happens to workers all the time. The bosses always isolate you making you lose your power. The only thing to do is to stick together. From now on when we leaflet the school, we have resolved to stay together if the headmaster wants to see us.

By Scott Reeves
(North Avon LPYS)

Why I'm going to YS conference

THIS WEEK, Sharon Rawson, a new member of Hull LPYS, explains why she joined the Young Socialists and why she will be going to conference:

"I was on the YTS swindle in 1983, doing hairdressing. I felt degraded because I was doing the same work as the person next to me, but only earning half as much.

"After many interviews I finally got a placement. I started at 9am, got a five minute coffee-break and then had to work through my dinner-hour, eventually only getting ten minutes break. Then I worked right through till 4 pm.

"I was going to be working for 40 hours with no dinner-breaks, so I complained. My break-times weren't sorted out and I was taken off the placement. I got my £25 week in hand, but then later got a letter from the scheme saying I'd been overpaid and owed them £25. During this time my benefit was stopped by £6.50 leaving me with less than £10 a week to live on.

"I appealed and won my case but I still recieved letters saying I owed them £25.

"I joined the LPYS because youth must fight back against the Tory capitalist regime, against YTS conscription and to get across our policies that Youth "Training" victims should have full trade union rights and rates of pay."

Come to the
Labour Party Young Socialists
National Conference
Winter Gardens, Blackpool
April 5-8, 1985



Campaign news

NEARLY HALF of the sixty trainees at the Information Technology scheme in Hull have joined the local authority union NALGO. Until recently if trainees were a few minutes late they were stopped half a day's pay. Mark Mason the NALGO rep in the 'Youth Opportunities' department, brought in the union to stop this scandal. Trainees will now only be stopped quarter of an hour's pay if they are late—losing only 18p instead of £2.50. As a result of seeing the practical benefits of a union, many have joined NALGO.

• • •

Dave Nellist MP presented a YTS charter in Parliament on February 28. He also asked in question time: "In the light of the fact that more than 5,000 unemployed teenagers are lobbying the House this afternoon, will...the Prime Minister make a statement showing why, if YTS is such a good scheme, she feels the need for industrial conscription of 500,000 youngsters by denying them the right to supplementary benefit." He was told to raise the question on another day!

• • •

BILLY BRAGG'S Labour Party Jobs for Youth tour is now under way. He'll be playing at: **Liverpool Royal Court** 14 March **Sheffield University** 16 March **Bristol Studio** 17 March **Brighton Top Rank** 18 March **Guildford Civic Hall**19 March **Southend Cliffs Pavilion**21 March. Billy Bragg will also be playing at the **LPYS National Conference** on the Friday night rally . Thousands of youth will attend these concerts so it is an ideal opportunity for local LPYS branches to get their message across and publicise LPYS national conference. Every concert should be leafletted and public meetings organised to follow up the tour.

MI5's got you taped

MEMBERS OF Bath Labour Party recently attended a private screening of 'MI5's Official Secrets', the *20/20 Vision* programme about phone tapping, initially banned (eventually screened on 8 March).

By Angela Anderson
(Bath CLP, personal capacity)

The programme is based on information supplied by two former MI5 employees; Cathy Massiter, who worked as an intelligence officer, resigning in 1984 and a woman clerk, who remained anonymous.

Both firmly believe that, in tapping the phones of prominent trade unionists, CND and civil rights campaigners, and arranging for premises —including homes—to be burgled, as well as planting "moles", MI5 has consistently breached its own official terms of reference, the so called "Maxwell-Fyffe directives."

Until 1981, Massiter worked in MI5's "F" Branch, responsible for monitoring lefts in the trade unions. This involved processing information supplied by the 1,500 Special Branch officers, based throughout the country. Technically, the Special Branch is simply a section of the local police force but they are actually the "arms and legs" of MI5 and quite independent of the limited control of Police Authorities and even the operational control of Chief Constables.

Apparently the 1972 miners' strike caused a major shift of priorities in MI5 and a considerable expansion of "F" Branch. One of their main activities was phone tapping. The phones of Arthur Scargill and Mick McGahey were permanently tapped.

It was claimed that the home of TASS General Secretary Ken Gill was broken into and searched during merger talks with the AUEW Engineering Section.

These surveillance activities were not only carried out under Tory governments. During the 1978/79 Labour government, special attention was given to the permanently tapped phone of Ford Dagenham convenor Sid Harraway, in order to try and establish the Ford unions' "bottom line" in pay negotiations. This information was not required for the "safety and security of the realm", but by the Department of Employment for economic purposes.

On the surface, phone tapping does not appear widespread. In 1984 the Home Secretary approved 423 warrants to tap phones, including cases of "normal" criminal activity. But *a single warrant can cover a whole organisation.*

CND surveillance

The programme revealed that British Telecom's Network Services Field Projects department, which installs phone taps in telephone exchanges, has a staff of 40 in London alone. All are "positively vetted" and have little or no contact with normal BT workers.

Much of the programme dealt with MI5 activities in relation to CND.

In 1983 Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine set up a unit called DS19, which had the task of publishing information intended to counter CND. They sought information from Massiter—she was instructed to supply "non-classified information" from the files even though, being a party political election issue at the time, this was totally against MI5 rules.

Also, in April 1983, two months before the general election, the idea of a CND phone tap was discussed, but deferred to August because of the pending election. In August, however, with the election out of the way, Home Secretary Leon Brittan gave the authority to tap the phone of a Communist Party member of CND.

Over the years, *Militant* has repeatedly pointed out that the full force of the state is a weapon, ready to be used against workers. The role of the police in the miners' strike has provided graphic confirmation of this; a confirmation now reinforced by "MI5's Official Secrets".

No wonder the establishment, in the form of the 'Independent' Broadcasting Authority tried to suppress it.



Gordon Bennet writes—

THE Conservative Party masquerade as the party of one nation and as the upholders of 'British' values like loyalty, grit, self sacrifice and defence of the community. Along with the many things the miners have done this last year is to expose the Tories for the two faced hypocrites that they are.

The plastic patriots of the ruling class move their money and wealth in and out of the country to wherever they can make the quickest buck. They play Monopoly with people's lives and then expect us all to be grateful because it's in the 'national interest'. Which national interest are they talking about—that of the working people who produce the wealth or the parasites who take it?

They bow down before the Great God Profit and demand an 'adequate' return on their investment, thinking nothing of those who invest their lives in an industry.

They begrudge every reform, every benefit and when their system breaks down or they need to save face with a foreign adventure, they use our people for cannon fodder. Young lads who can't get work in South Wales, Liverpool, Scotland or Tyneside are lured into the army with the promise of a trade and travel. But when they bring their broken bodies back from the battlefields they're kept away from the 'victory' parades in London (soldiers without legs don't help the recruitment figures).

Karl Marx wrote that the workers have no country, meaning that we have more in common with workers in other countries than we ever will with 'our' ruling class.

When the Tories talk of defending the 'British way of life' they mean their power, wealth and influence. For workers it means defence of families, friends, homes and gains made in three hundred years of struggle. Everything that makes this country worth living in (despite the Tories) has been won by the labour movement. 'Our betters' would dearly love to take us back to their heyday—the days of the workhouse. Some Labour MPs say that they don't 'believe' in the class struggle. You might as well say that you don't believe in the weather. The Tories certainly believe in it—they wage the class war with a vengeance.

The capitalists both in this country and throughout the world have attempted to hijack history and annoint it with national chauvinism. But even they cannot cover up such magnificent examples of international solidarity as shown to the miners over the last year. This is our history, our tradition and it's on these foundations we'll build our future.

Unions must fight sexual harassment

Sexual harassment has always been a problem for women workers. During the 'Lady at Lord John' dispute in Liverpool in 1983 a woman worker from Plessey's, office workers from the city centre and even a policewoman approached the picket line to tell us of their experiences.

By Margaret Creear

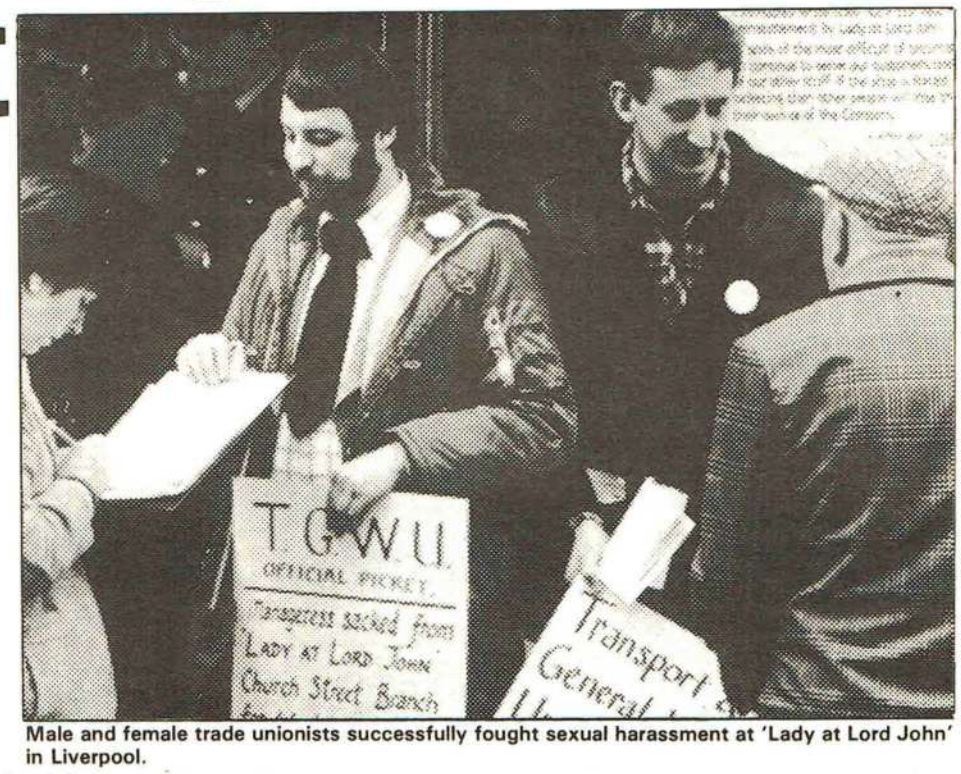


Photo: Militant

Male and female trade unionists successfully fought sexual harassment at 'Lady at Lord John' in Liverpool.

Union issue

In recent years women workers have demanded that sexual harassment should be regarded as a serious trade issue, not a personal problem. This has led to many trade unions and the TUC putting out leaflets and guidelines. General committments however are not enough, as has been graphically underlined by the very serious case in the London Fire Brigade.

Women workers have become increasingly conscious of their segregation into low-paid jobs and grades, and young women in particular have demanded equal opportunities in applying for jobs, including those not traditionally seen as 'women's work'. The GLC adopted a policy of introducing women into the London fire service, and five women now work as firefighters.

Serious

One of these women was posted to the Soho fire station where she was subjected to serious and persistent sexual harassment over a number of months. According to a circular from the Greater London Labour Party Women's Committee, this included: "being strapped to a ladder and having firehoses turned on her, which were not turned off until she had shouted her willingness to participate in oral sex with some of her colleagues; having a bucket of urine thrown over her; being forced to witness masturbation; and once, when the watch were answering an emergency call, being offered for sexual purposes to some policemen who were attending the emergency call."

The first of these incidents—strapping a new recruit to a ladder and soaking them to the skin—has been described as an 'initiation ceremony'. In many industries there are such practices, some of them trivial, but others which are barbaric and shouldn't be condoned by the labour movement, particularly where they degrade or endanger workers.

Not 'initiation'

However the incidents which took place at the Soho fire station can't be dismissed as an 'initiation ceremony'.

After a complaint by the firewoman, a disciplinary hearing reduced the rank of some firemen and fined them. One fireman was sacked but his sacking was quoshed on appeal and he was fined £300. The outcome of this case is a disgrace. Undoubtedly those responsible should have been sacked. Although some in the labour movement are calling for further action no concrete ideas as to how this can be pursued have come forward and it looks unlikely that this will take place.

The Labour movement should welcome the introduction of women into the fire service on the same conditions and training as men. We have to recognise however, that this area of work, and many others, have been male-dominated, and segregation inevitably reinforces backward prejudices. The GLC should have conducted a thoroughgoing campaign, not just with leaflets and declarations and the training of some officers, but visits and meetings in the fire stations themselves, to prepare the way for the introduction of women and to deal with problems in advance.

But the conduct of workers towards one another and the forging of workers' unity based on recognition of common interests and struggle is first and foremost the business of the trade unions, in this case the FBU.

It is pointless trade unions having equal opportunity clauses, committees and working parties if sexual harrassment is not actively opposed or even appears to be condoned. The decision of the FBU to defend the men responsible meant that right from the beginning the trade union could come out of the case with little credit.

Prejudices

Although it is the role of trade unions to defend workers, strong trade unions cannot be built on the basis of defending backward prejudices and abuse of one worker by another. The FBU should have investigated the events themselves at divisional and given the seriousness of this case, at national level. They should have proposed a course of action which included defending the woman firefighter, *and* appropriate action against the men involved.

Trade unions should have their own procedures for dealing with both sexual harassment between management and workers and amongst their own members. Many of these cases can be resolved by a discussion with the people concerned. However, in serious cases of persistent sexual harassment or abuse, there has to be provision for the removal of the union card of the person responsible, a refusal to work alongside them and, in the case of a closed shop, their removal from the workplace.

Women workers will fight alongside the rest of their class and have the right to demand that they are respected and treated as equals in the labour movement and the workplace, and that the trade unions fight all discrimination and abusive attitudes towards them.

Well Women Centre

ON MARCH 5 1985 Blackburn and District Well Women's Centre opened. Two years ago almost to the day, a public meeting was held in Blackburn to launch the campaign for a centre. At that time a group of women, mostly active in the Labour Women's Council, had an idea for a centre and now that has become reality.

We had read that Well Women's Centres were an imported idea from Australia and America and that Wythenshawe in Manchester, Rochdale and Islington had been running centres for over a year.

Every Well Women's Centre is different according to the women, both voluntary and professional, who become involved. The basic idea behind them is that they are run for women by women. Women may go to them for advice or counselling even if they are not ill.

Many women feel they don't want to bother their GP with what women regard as minor illnesses, but these can be painful or reoccur time and time again. Women often put up with these problems for years, never having the chance to discuss



Rossina Harris

with other women simple remedies that can be applied quickly and cheaply. Some Well Women's Centres will offer legal advice, basic medical checks and self-help groups are encouraged.

Tranquillisers

In Blackburn a woman wished to begin a self-help group for women on tranquillisers. Following an item on the local radio about this, the telephone at our centre didn't stop ringing with calls from women wanting to get involved.

The Blackburn Well Women's Centre operates through a series of sub groups, running the centre, the creche, publicity, fund raising, medical resources and counselling.

The initative and enthusiasm that women have shown in achieving this centre is proof of the enormous potential existing among women to be able to plan their own facilities. Undoubtedly, the NHS should be supplying such services but working class women are never consulted about the type of health service they require or the type of housing they would like to live in.

Socialists must go further than treating the surface problems and campaign for a socialist government and socialist society that will put money into developing communities rather than destroying them.

The link must be made to women that improving their immediate circumstances as with their health problems is only temporary as long as this system continues.

Rossina Harris
Secretary Blackburn and District Well Women's Centre (personal capacity).

TUC women's conference

TWO THINGS stick in my mind about the last TUC Women's Conference I attended, in Weymouth in 1977.

One is the inspiring speech of Mrs Desai, leader of the Grunwick workers on strike for trade union recognition; the other is the Co-op fashion show put on for the delegates in the evening.

This seemed to sum up the contradictions in the Women's TUC; it had the potential for being a powerful organisation of women workers, but it turned out to be a low-key debating society where women were got together once a year courtesy of the General Council of the TUC.

This year things should be different. After the magnificent role played by working class women in the miners' strike, the conference should be a focus for discussing which way forward now for women in the movement, despite the fact that no lead whatever has been given by the Women's TUC throughout the strike. The passage of Composite motion four on Women's Support Groups from CPSA and the Tobacco Workers Union will ensure that those achievements are recognised.

Vital debates

Other debates will take place around equal pay, government attacks on the welfare state and social security benefits, privatisation and the inadequacies and abuse of the YTS. There is also an emergency motion from the Women's Advisory Committee against the appeal court ruling in favour of Victoria Gillick which has virtually outlawed the giving of contraceptive advice to girls under 16 without parental consent.

All the issues under discussion at the conference are vital for the trade union movement, but we need to do more than talk about them. Women workers need action.

By Harriet Steven
CPSA delegate (personal capacity)

The Great Dublin Lockout

By Bob Wade and Kevin Ramage

TITANIC CLASHES between the classes can bring to the surface issues beyond the initial causes of a dispute. While the miners have suffered a setback over the question of pit closures, their heroic year-long struggle thwarted the Tories' intention to break the union. The ruling class have in fact have created a new generation of tens of thousands of militant class fighters who have rekindled the best traditions of the British labour movement. In the future, the miners' strike will come to be seen as a watershed in the development of the working class movement.

Similar issues were raised in Dublin in the 1913 lockout. After seven months of struggle, workers were forced to sign an employers' pledge to leave the union, but in practice the pledge remained a worthless scrap of paper, as the workers kept their union cards and continued paying their dues into Liberty Hall.

DUBLIN AT the turn of the century was a giant slum, with a higher death rate amongst its 300,000 population than even Calcutta. 20,000 families lived in single rooms in rundown, rotting tenement blocks. By 1913 unemployment stood at 8%, and inflation had left Irish workers no better off than they had been in the 1890s.

Prostitution flourished, and the streets were full of homeless children. Thousands begged in the streets to survive. The *Irish Times* likened conditions to "A picture hardly less lurid than the scene of Dante's Inferno".

Dublin was based not on industry, but commerce and shipping. The spark that was set to Dublin ablaze was ignited in industrial Belfast in 1907. A bitter dockers' strike to defend trade union rights, supported by sympathetic strike action amongst other sections of the movement, left the bosses paralysed.

Although the Belfast strike was betrayed by the right-wing leaders of the TUC, massive progress was made in uniting workers around the trade union movement. James Larkin went on to establish the Irish Transport and General Workers Union.

Non-sectarian

This work was consolidated by James Connolly when he took up the position of secretary of the Belfast ITGWU in 1911. He declared that: "The mission of the union is not to make slavery tolerable but to overthrow it and replace it by a free and independent workers' republic". This strong, non-sectarian trade union acted as a beacon to workers in the rest of the country.

If the Belfast strike of 1907 had set the Irish bosses thinking, the sympathy action of 16,000 Dublin railwaymen and other workers for the 1911 railwaymen's strike in Britain shook the bosses to the core. They were being faced with a growing, militant and confident workforce. But they saw the threat as being more than that, not just a union, but "Larkinism"—militant trade unionism, the use of sympathy strikes, and the stirring into life of the Irish trade unions and TUC.

The head of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce pronounced: "This strike is not a strike in the ordinary sense of the word—it is the beginning of a social war, a revolution,...the thin end of the wedge of socialism,...force must be met with force and the union of workers must be met by union of the employers to uphold public order".

The Belfast struggle and the recruitment to the ITGWU gave workers new hope and confidence that the bosses could be taken on. Jim Larkin, outlined the kind of approach that struck such fear in the hearts of the ruling class: "The founders of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, vulgar persons, determined within themselves that that kind of organised scabbery should cease, and so we started an industrial union for all workers...within seven short years these few common, vulgar, coal porters, dockers, teamsters, factory hands fought the Federated Employers of Ireland who control industry...wherever a woman or child of our class was degraded or oppressed we rallied to their assistance. Our motto was and will be to the end of time: 'An injury to one is the concern of all'."

In Dublin the confidence of the workers was strengthened by a small boom in the economy. Small scale strikes flared up and the ITGWU grew from 4,000 in 1911 to 30,000 by 1913.

But the "green" bosses of the South, Catholic businessmen emeshed in the hierarchy of the conservative Irish Nationalists, also drew lessons from the struggles in Belfast, and especially feared the new tactic of sympathy strike action. A champion for this rising capitalist class came forward in the form of William Martin Murphy, a conservative Nationalist boss who owned the tramways, railways, and most of the press in Dublin, with interests abroad in West Africa and his so-called enemy, Britain.

His main paper, the *Irish Independent* attacked the new scourge of "Larkinism", particularly preying on middle class nationalist prejudices, denouncing trade unionism and socialism as "an alien English importation". He also presided over the formation of the Dublin Employers' Federation, which united the city's 404 employers into one unit, pledged to "The mutual protection and indemnity of all employers of labour in Dublin".

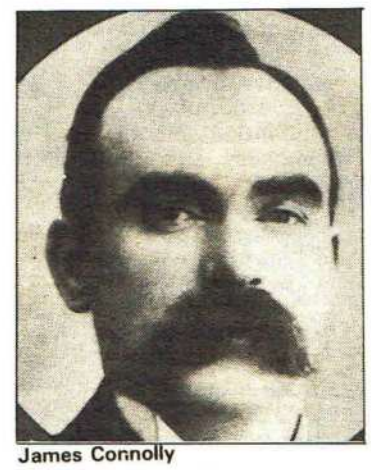
On 15 August, 1913 the battle began. Murphy ordered his newspaper despatch workers to resign from the union or be sacked—40 workers were paid off at once.

As the strike spread amongst print workers, so Murphy turned to his tramway company. He again demanded the workers sign the 'non-union' pledge: "I hereby undertake to carry out all instructions given to me by or on behalf of my employers, and, further, I agree to immediately resign my membership of the ITGWU (if a member) and I further undertake that I will not join it or in any way support this union." Larkin stepped in, calling for lightning strikes. 700 tram workers responded, leaving the trams wherever they happened to be.

In response to this, Murphy visited Dublin Castle, the seat of British rule. This champion of Irish Nationalism appealed to the British administration to invoke all the weaponry of colonial rule for the cause of the Irish bosses. A mass



Jim Larkin.



James Connolly



Arthur Griffith.

demonstration calling for the following Sunday was banned, and extra police drafted in. Larkin was later arrested after urging workers to defend themselves against police attack. Connolly was arrested on a similar charge and sentenced to three months.

On the Sunday, thousands of workers turned out for the banned demonstration. Larkin outwitted the authorities. Disguised as a clergyman, he entered the Imperial Hotel which overlooked the mass demonstration and addressed the workers. The infuriated authorities again arrested him and police baton-charged the crowds. Hundreds of people were bludgeoned to the ground in what became known in Ireland at that time as Bloody Sunday.

Police go wild

A near police pogrom followed which caused indignation throughout Europe. Lenin wrote in *Servernaya Pravda*: "The police have run wild, drunken policemen assault peaceful workers, break into houses, torment old people and women and children. Hundreds of workers have been injured and two killed...such are the casualties of this war. All prominent leaders of the workers have been arrested and people are thrown into prison for making the most peaceful speeches. The city is like an armed camp."

The atmosphere was not that of an ordinary industrial dispute. Industrial militancy mingled with national revolt.

In his articles and speeches, Larkin appealed to the national revolutionary tradition, urging the men and women of the tenements to regard themselves as the successors of Wolfe Tone and Robert Emmet. This certainly struck a sympathetic chord among workers who saw the police, not only as Murphy's protectors, but as a garrison holding the country down for a ruling class across the Irish Sea.

In September, the Great Lockout began in earnest. Taking Murphy's lead, the 400 employers shut their gates on 25,000 workers. The most famous factories in Dublin—Guiness, Jacobs, etc—went silent. Not one of the 25,000 would be taken back until they resigned from their union.



Ben Tillett.

It soon became clear that Murphy and the Employers' Federation intended a war of attrition on the workers. The poet George Russell protested in a letter to the *Irish Times*, that the bosses were: "Determined deliberately, in cold anger, to starve out a third of the population of the city, to break the manhood of the men by the sight of the suffering of their wives and the hunger of their children."

The ruthless offensive against the transport workers and other workers brought out into the open the latent antagonism between the labour movement and the Nationalists. Behind the Nationalists' patriotic demands for home rule lay what the Transport Union rule book described as the "souless, sordid, money grabbing propensities of the Irish capitalist class".

The leaders of the Irish Parliamentary Party came out against the the workers who were struggling for their very existence. They were all the more vicious because they felt threatened by organised labour, at the very time that their precious Home Rule Bill, promised by the Liberal government, was in danger of being sabotaged by Carson and the Ulster Unionists in the North.

Arthur Griffith, founder of Sinn Fein poured out his vitriol in their paper: "In Dublin, the wives of some men that Larkin has led out on strike are begging in the streets. The consequences of Larkinism are workless fathers, mourning mothers, hungry children and broken homes."

Cringing

In response to this cringing of the Nationalist leaders before the Dublin bosses, Connolly wrote in *The reconquest of Ireland*: "In the great Dublin lockout of 1913/14 the manner in which the Dublin employers, overwhelmingly unionist, received the enthusiastic and unscrupulous support of the entire Home Rule press was a foretaste of the possibilities of the new combinations with which labour in Ireland will have to reckon."

Faced with the combined opposition of the British ruling class and the Irish capitalists, both Nationalist and Unionist, the importance of support from the international labour movement soon became clear.

The British labour movement had a special duty to their Irish brothers and sisters. Indeed the



"Bloody Sunday"—Dublin 1913

anger of the British labour movement at Bloody Sunday and the lockout had been expressed by protests at TUC congress in August.

Already, following appeals from Larkin, sympathy strikes had begun at the Liverpool docks, followed by railwaymen in Birmingham, Yorkshire and South Wales.

The right-wing TUC leadership returned to Dublin hoping to settle to the stike. They sidetracked the growing solidarity movement by organising a food campaign for the starving Dublin workers. While this was essential, it should have been organised **alongside** a campaign of boycotts and sympathy strikes—but it was used in isolation and as a substitute for real action by the right-wing.

Larkin well summed-up the mood of anger of the rank and file when he stormed that the TUC leaders had "Neither a soul to be saved nor a body to be kicked"!

Even so, the enthusiasm of the British labour movement ensured that the food campaign was a huge success. Workers, from the pit villages to the predominantly Protestant Belfast shipyards, willingly gave their pennies and shillings. By the end of the lockout over £150,000, an enormous sum in those days, had been raised.

Donations came in from America and Australia, and French dockers prepared to black all Dublin goods.

Meanwhile , the lockout escalated. Building bosses and farmers locked out their labourers. Even children at the Rutland Street School were dismissed after refusing to use text books supplied by a blacked firm.

As evictions grew as workers fell behind with their rent, a scheme was begun by Irish suffragettes to evacuate Dublin children to the homes of British workers. The Dublin bosses were quick to seize upon this opportunity, raising the sectarian spectre perfected by their Orange cousins in the North. Good Catholic children, they cried, would be sent to the homes of: "Godless English Socialists". Priests actually led mobs in violent forays against striking workers. Producing a crudely forged certificate, they even claimed Larkin was a member of the Orange Order. In Belfast in 1907, Larkin was accused by the Orangemen of "conspiring with Catholicism"—in Dublin in 1913 he was being called a Protestant!

This blatant use of sectarianism blew up in the bosses' faces however. Connolly cleverly called off the scheme, urging the workers to "Put them to the test" and use the Catholic church's charity and relief organisations. The Catholic church was so overwhelmed they suddenly took a more concilliatory line to the evacuation scheme.

Scabs recruited

As the lockout dragged on into October, scabs began to pour into Dublin, recruited from the unemployed masses of Liverpool and Manchester. The workers responded by dropping individual picketing and holding mass pickets to stop the scabs. The bosses retaliated by arming the scabs—a young girl picket was shot dead by one of these desperate scum.

In November, British troops were placed at the disposal of the Dublin bosses. Murphy and the other champions of Home Rule gladly found their fortunes defended by the bayonets of British Imperialism. At the same time, in a tactic repeated more recently by Thatcher, they also raised the pay of the police who were to do battle on the picket lines.

The determined struggle of Dublin workers, like the miners, forced the bosses to bare their hand and unleash the full forces of the state, the courts, the police and the army, against the workers. Frederich Engels' comment that the state, in the final analysis, can be reduced to "armed bodies of men acting in defence of property", was illustrated to the full. The experience of the struggle served to destroy any illusions that may have existed as to the 'neutrality' and 'impartiality' of the state.

It was at this stage that Connolly began the formation of the Irish Citizens Army, a trade union defence corps to defend the workers on the picket lines, an idea first raised in the columns of the *Daily Herald*.

The ICA began first as a means of drilling workers to instill discipline into the mass of willing pickets. But with events beginning to boil in the North—where Lord Carson and the Orange bosses, with the encouragement of British army officers, were forming and arming Ulster volunteers to fight Home Rule—the ICA appeared armed with staves and hurling sticks.

The workers reckoned that if the Carsonites could take up arms to defend their narrow class interests, then why should the Dublin workers not do the same to defend basic, democratic rights?

Larkin and Connolly again went to Britain to make a further appeal to British workers to support the Dublin trade unionists. Blacking committees had been formed throughout Britain and the railwaymen were refusing to handle Dublin goods, but with the scabs arriving unchecked, the situation would become hopeless unless the dockers at Glasgow and Liverpool held sympathy strikes.

Larkin and Connolly argued for a general strike or at least a national blacking campaign, but still the TUC vacillated on the issue.

Pressure eventually forced the TUC to call a special conference. But it was not held until 4 December—four months after the lockout had begun. The conference itself consisted of 350 full-time union officials. The right wing proposed merely to increase the levy to allow more funds to Dublin, while the left put forward a motion of a boycott of Dublin, to back it up "if necessary" with a national strike to prevent victimisation.

Sadly, the scales were tipped against the Dublin workers when Ben Tillet, the militant leader of the past battles on the London docks condemned the tactics of Connolly and the Irish labour leaders. The cauldron of class struggle in Dublin proved too hot even for former heroes of the movement. The boycott motion was lost by over 1½ million votes.

Although the Dublin workers were starving and effectively isolated, still there was no weakening in their resolve. But the final stage of the struggle now opened up. The stubborness of Murphy precluded a settlement. But neither side was in any position to fight on.

Peace talks were begun again, and dragged out with intermissions. No settlement was ever to come between the main contestants. The numbers on strike slowly dwindled from December onwards but the mammoth struggle only came to a close in March 1914 with the return to work of the Jacobs workers.

Many thousands of workers were forced to sign Murphy's pledge but many remained members of the union. They continued to pay their subscriptions at Liberty Hall. There were no sackings. The pledge for which the capitalists had starved, tortured and murdered men for eight months was now reduced to a scrap of paper whose provisions they could not enforce.

Connolly wrote in 1914: "The battle was a drawn battle. The employers, despite their Napoleonic ruthlessness and unscrupulous use of foul means, were unable to carry on their business without men and women who remained loyal to the union. The workers were unable to force the employers into a formal recognition of the union, and to give preference to organised labour.

Still proud

"But the working class has lost none of its aggressiveness, none of its confidence, none of its hope of ultimate triumph. No traitor among the ranks has permanently gained, even materially, by his or her treachery. The flag of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union still flies proudly and defiantly at the head of the gathering hosts who stand for a regenerated union, resting upon a people industrially free."

The struggle had exposed the role of the Irish capitalist class, and it endorsed the prophetic conclusion of Connolly in his pamphlet, *Labour in Irish history*, written in 1910:

"Capitalism is now the enemy...the merely political heresy under which the middle class doctrinaires have for nearly 250 years clubbed the Irish fight for freedom, has thus run its course...the Irish toilers from hence forward will base their fight for freedom not upon winning or losing the right to talk in an Irish Parliament, but upon their progress towards mastering of those factories, workshops and farms upon which a people's bread and liberties depend".

In the summer of 1914, the Irish TUC, on Connolly's initiative, voted to transform itself into the Irish TUC and Labour Party. The same conference adopted a resolution explicitly stating socialist aims: "Labour unrest can only be ended by the abolition of the capitalist system of wealth production and its inherent injustice and poverty."

While the bloodbath of the First World War cut across industrial militancy for a period, the traditions laid by Larkin and Connolly, and defended in the lock-out were to re-emerge, particularly under the impact of the Russian revolution in 1917, as the ITGWU grew from 5,000 members in 1916 to 130,000 in 1921. But the execution of Connolly after the defeat of the Easter rebellion in 1916, together with Larkin's absence in the USA, left the movement without its outstanding leaders which was to provide decisive in the unfolding national liberation struggle.

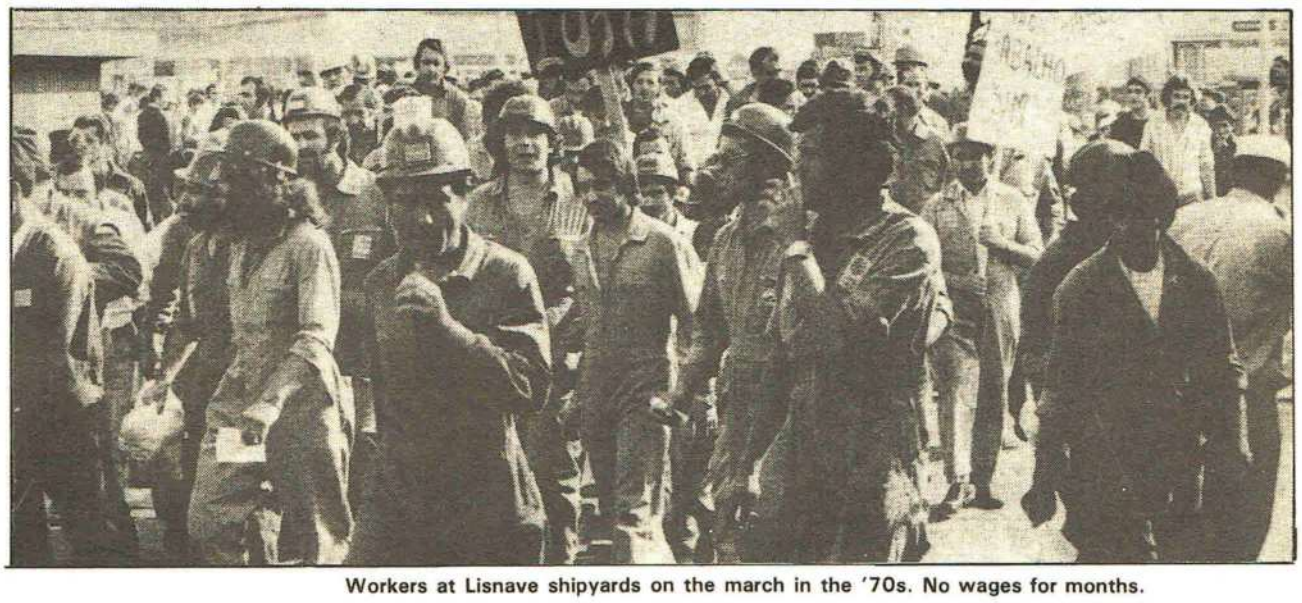
Today in Britain after the year-long heroism of the miners' strike the words of Jim Larkin, speaking before a Commission appointed by the British government in 1914 to enquire into the Dublin lockout once more ring true:

"The employers may...compel them, after a long and weary struggle, to recognise the documents submitted to them not to belong to the Irish Transport Workers' Union, but it will only be for a time. The day will come when they will break their bonds, and give back blow for blow."

Portugal, South Korea



Revolutionary upsurge in Portugal 1974-75. The revolution was stopped half way by the workers' parties leadership.



Workers at Lisnave shipyards on the march in the '70s. No wages for months.

'Left' government - right wing policies

THE PORTUGUESE revolution of April 1974 brought down the Caetano dictatorship and opened up the floodgates for a massive class mobilisation. This reached its highest point just ten years ago in March 1975 with the nationalisation of the banks "from below" by the workers.

By a Portuguese correspondent

But the workers' parties failed during 1974-75 to harness the power of the movement. They restricted the horizons of struggle to the gaining of democracy after 50 years of dictatorship. This preserved a foothold for the capitalists to return and led to a downturn in the movement and the election of a right wing government in 1979.

The right wing victory was however only temporary and by 1983 the vote for the left parties (which has never fallen very far) was back at the 1974 level with over 50% shared between the Communist Party and Socialist Party.

Mario Soares, the Socialist leader, formed a government but in alliance with the right wing Social Democratic Party (PSD). His campaign had one message—austerity; savage cuts on all fronts to try to avoid total collapse of the bankrupt economy. Nobody could say he hasn't carried out this promise—nobody that is except the members of parliament who earn between 5 and 10 times the average workers wage.

For the rest of Portugal including many in the middle class the last two years have meant a plunge into misery unheard of since the years of dictatorship (see inset box).

The working class organisations' leaders are not however posing a real alternative. Faced with the collapse of the capitalist economy, the Portuguese Communist Party have put forward the demand "Soares out, for a national democratic government". But an all-party government of 'national salvation' based on the capitalist system couldn't solve any of the workers' problems. The only content of their programme is to defend the gains of the 1974 revolution.

Public sector

The extension of the public sector is admittedly the bogey of the right wing parties. But the CP do not explain that without a socialist plan for industry under workers' control and management it is impossible to reverse the domination of private industry over the state sector. The big shareholders sti'l co-exist with the government in many state companies.

By limiting their programme to democracy and national sovereignty the CP are preparing for a coalition with Eanes, now President but shortly to resign and with a fair chance of winning an important share of the vote in the Assembly elections at the head of his new party. The CP openly favours this form of "presidentialist" party to posing the unity of the workers' parties on a class programme. The CP daily *O Diario* praises the president's "anxiety" over the unemployed and those with wages in arrears.

Secret police

Eanes has a certain cunning. He has refused to confirm a state security law passed by Soares and parliament which would be the prelude to creating a secret police body (the dictatorship's police PIDE were purged in the 1974 revolution). What the CP doesn't explain in their support for Eanes is that he didn't need a law when he purged the Army lefts including CP supporters in November 1975. The president is no friend of the working class.

This intimacy of all those against the Soares government and the constant splits and divisions within and between the parties is the most visible aspect of the crisis. Manoeuvring for next December's elections dominates the news.

Almost daily there have been rumours of resignations and new elections. The state of continuous crisis has reached a new pitch after 11 years in which not one of the 13 governments has reached the end of its term of office.

This instability is not accidental. It reflects the fact that in spite of all the disappointment of the masses in the unfulfilled expectations of April 1974, they are not prepared to let the counter-revolutionaries, or their slick agents disguised as democrats, roll back completely the film of the reforms achieved by the revolution.

Half of the land occupied by the peasant movement is still in the hands of cooperatives and the economy depends on the state sector for investment. The nationalised banks remain although in the hands of "experts" from the right.



Mario Soares.

Control long ago slipped away from the workers, tired out by the refusal of their parties and governments to give full power to workers' control in the nationalised sector.

According to a recent survey, 88% of the people are against dismantling the public sector companies (the main banner of the right). Soares has not denationalised the banks though he has given permission for foreign private banks to operate. The bosses' parties have to pose dismantling as the only way of decreasing state spending and also have to attack union rights in cases of sackings etc.

In the light of the continued support of the workers, the "Socialist" leaders bear a criminal responsibility not using this basis for change. Instead they make a vain attempt to carry out the programme of the right aided by billions of dollars from the USA. But just look at the left votes in elections since 1975, when the CP and SP together got 54%. In 1976 their votes were 49%, in 1979 46% in 1980 45% and in 1983 54%. Only in one election, 1980 did the main right wing parties get more votes.

The blocking of the aspirations of the 3 million who voted CP and SP in 1983 will find expression in an upsurge of struggle by organised workers. 1½ million are organised in the *Intersindical* dominated by the CP which organised a demonstration of 100,000 in Lisbon on 15 December under the slogan "down with the Soares government".

There is still at present a lull in the movement of industrial workers. Soares pats himself on the back for this good fortune, but the bosses know better. A recent employers' federation conference warned against talking about a *coup d'etat* saying that even without such a provocation the situation is full of explosive elements.

The first two months of 1985 saw a number of demonstrations by *Intersindical* over different firms in crisis and the federation's leaders even hint at a general strike in 1985 though there is no campaign as yet.

The horrors of the crisis and disappointment in the left governments since 1975 will have left their mark on the workers' movement. The social peace of 1984 can not last for long. The crisis of government shown by the "will they, won't they stay" attitude of Soares' right wing-allies the PSD reflects the resistance of the workers even where they are not mobilised.

The crisis may well mean the CP's participation in government in late 1985 or 1986. Again the mobilisation of workers, the turmoil and divisions in the workers' parties will open up the possibility of creating a large Marxist current, absent so disastrously during the last 10 years of revolution and attempted counter-revolution. It will be needed all the more in the next decade. The alternatives now are socialism, or ever-increasing misery.

Redundancies and falling wages

REAL wages have fallen below the 1973 level and the purchasing power of the minimum wage (earned by about a third of all workers) is only 75% of what it was before the April revolution. Rural wages are less than £20 a week.

The situation is grim enough for those in work, but there is no benefit scheme at all for the 600,000 unemployed (out of an active population of 4 million), and for another 150,000 working in companies which are semi-bankrupt but not closed down. Many of them have had no wages for months on end.

Even the enormous Lisnave ship yards, now down to 6000 workers, doesn't pay regularly. Employees are owed five months wages each on average and their normal pay is only £140 a month. The shiprepair capacity is only used by about 3 or 4 ships and workers get what comes in from repairs as they are done. A member of the Works Committee told me he had received about £40 in December and £25 in January.

After 1000 voluntary redundancies (the workers still haven't got their redundancy pay, of course) management want another thousand to go—voluntary or not. Many workers have to walk 20 kilometres to work as they can't pay the bus fare and their children cannot afford to use the bus or buy materials for school. There have been two suicides at the yard recently.

If this is the case in Lisnave, once the highest wage earners and the spearhead of the class movement in Lisbon, it is far worse in the thousands of small firms, with wage arrears of more than a year. Bishops have denounced the spread of hunger, particularly in the rural areas and shanty towns. Soares denies the hunger but admits the misery. Record suicides and crime are no coincidence.

The government has brought in a new law giving some unemployment benefits but it already seems that only a minority of the unemployed will be affected, the youth will get nothing for instance.

The government justified their austerity in 1983 by promises that the economy would "open up" in 1985, but last year at the peak of the emergency programme there was a 20% fall in investment and GNP fell by 2 to 3%! Exports went up but only due to devaluation of the *escudo* and the world upswing. Even in this favourable period Portuguese capitalism's bankruptcy was only avoided by foreign currency from tourists and remittances from immigrant workers in Europe and America.

Despite these austerity moves, not all the IMF loan requisites were met particularly on public spending although a $500 million loan from the banks has given a very short breathing space for the bosses.

Miners demand democracy

ABOUT 500 South Korean miners seized control of the country's largest coal mine early this month, demanding free trade unions.

This followed three days of sit ins after the results of indirect elections in their union retained a right-wing leader. He is widely known to support the military-backed government. The miners want direct union elections..

Workers have undoubtedly been encouraged by the regime's easing of restrictions on oppositionists including the freeing of opposition leader Kim Dae Jung from house arrest. The government have been worried by the results of last month's elections for the powerless National Assembly. A new opposition force the New Korea Democratic Party won 30% of the vote, and proved especialy strong in the big cities.

South Korea's continued economic growth during world recession has been achieved at the expense of low pay and sometimes cruelly long hours of work. Now the working class will start to organise to demand a share of this wealth.

LETTERS

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

Property-owning democracy?

Dear Comrades,

Thatcher came to power offering the dream of a property-owning democracy. In real life a record 5,320 mortgagees were turfed out onto the streets in the first six months of last year.

Moreover, according to the latest report of the Building Societies' Association there were then 33,000 loans which were more than six months in arrears. This means that the number of evictions could well be higher for the latter half of the year.

They openly admit that the culprit is unemployment but they then give Thatcher an alibi by blaming the poor financial management of working class families. Isn't it typical of the lower orders - they will keep lashing out on food and clothes for the kids instead of looking after their long-term investments!

Given the lack of decent council housing - the situation has deteriorated with the sale of council houses - many young couples end up living with parents and we all know the pressures that can create.

It is hardly surprising that they end up taking on mortgages they can't afford for matchbox-construction houses. They give an arm and a leg to the estate agent, a pound of flesh to the solicitor and whatever's left to the bank or building society. They move in. Then they find themselves the victims of Thatcher-style economic recovery and make the acquaintance of their local SS officer.

The SS will not pay for "luxuries" and a decent home is a "luxury" in Thatcher's Britain. So they bid farewell to their dream house and it waits for the next sucker.

Socialists are always being told that their ideas are "Utopian", but it would seem that it is those who expect any sort of decent existence under capitalism who are the utopians. What can you expect from a system which has consistently kept high waiting lists alongside queues of unemployed building workers?

One of the first acts of a socialist Labour Government would be to initiate an emergency house-building programme. The second act would be to nationalise the banks and finance houses and get these bloodsuckers off our backs.

Yours Fraternally
Derek McMillan



The NHS is a vital service for working people, but for the Tories workers' health is expendable. Photo: Militant

Crisis in the NHS

Dear Comrades,

An accident I had recently brought home to me the real effects of the cuts in the NHS.

I was hit by a van, and with a broken collar-bone and head injuries, I waited two hours on a stretcher to be seen by a doctor in the accident and emergency department, as they were so busy. I was discharged from hospital two days later, although I could barely walk—the doctor apologised, but said they were desperate for the bed.

The consultant I saw at the out-patients said he couldn't refer me for physiotherapy, as this was only given for 'loss of function'—for example, if you can't do up your laces—but not for pain (I can't carry anything heavy or move my neck without pain). An osteopath could help my injuries, but that costs £8 a session.

To top it all, I got a bill from the District Health Authority for £10.90 for the provision of an ambulance: "In accordance with the Road Traffic Act 1971"!

Workers' health is expendable—the NHS has been starved of resources, and there's only one remedy; fight for socialist policies and a free and comprehensive health service.

Fraternally,
Liz Floyd
Newham NW CLP

Dear Comrades,

A doctor I know in Market Harborough (Leicestershire) told me of a man who died in the street recently. It took 45 minutes for an ambulance to arrive. The man was breathing for 20 minutes.

Another doctor who works in Oxford told me about an elderly woman who was seriously ill when seen in outpatients one morning. It was decided to admit her immediately to the ward. Due to shortage of beds, she had to wait seven hours lying on a trolley in casualty, without food. When she eventually reached the ward, her body temperature was 32°C (instead of 37°C). She had developed hypothermia in hospital.

Like Paul Smith's letter (issue 737) these cases show the crises developing throughout the NHS, and the need for urgent action by the Labour movement to save it.

Yours Fraternally
John Dale

Obituary:

George MacDonald

WITH DEEP regret, we have to inform the readers of *Militant* of the death of George MacDonald. A member of the Canadian Communist Party from an early age, George joined the Trotskyist movement in 1933 after the victory of Hitler. The criminal failure of the German Communist Party, on the instructions of Stalin, to organise a united front with the Social Democrats to stop Hitler from coming to power played a fatal role. This disastrous policy was supported by all the other Communist parties, that of Canada included, despite the repeated appeals for a united front made by Trotsky and the International Left Opposition.

This betrayal, ending in the destruction of the mighty German labour movement, made an enormous impression on George. He had understood from a reading of Trotsky's writings that this would inevitably result in war on the Soviet Union.

A leading activist in the Trotskyist movement, George became unemployed in the world recession before the war. He volunteered for the Canadian army, like many unemployed workers in Britain and Canada today.

He was amongst the first contingents of Canadian troops to be sent to Britain in 1940. He immediately contacted the Trotskyists when he was on leave. Their headquarters were in a small loft in Northdown Street, Kings Cross, London. I met George there and formed a firm friendship, politically and personally. He maintained his connection with the Marxist movement in Britain. Throughout the dark days of the 1950s and 1960s, George never lost heart, always maintaining his faith in the working class and in socialism.

In the last months, he enthusiastically followed the miners' strike. Ill and house-bound, George's interest in the workers' movement never dimmed for an instant. He was an enthusiastic supporter and reader of *Militant*.

Those of us who knew George will remember him as a gentle and considerate person. The harsh and bitter realities of life under capitalism left no trace upon this side of his character. The many comrades he helped during his lifetime can testify to his unshrinking kindness. Despite all the setbacks and difficulties, his faith in the socialist future of mankind remained undimmed until the end.

George MacDonald left all he possesses to *Militant*. He skimped himself to try and leave as much as possible to continue the fight for socialism. It is with emotion that we bid farewell to an old soldier in the cause of the socialist revolution. The torch he has dropped will be picked up and carried by the young supporters of *Militant*. If they remain as faithful to the ideas of Marxism as old George, the future of socialism will be assured.

By Ted Grant

Abortion-a political issue

Dear Comrades,

In her reply to Fiona Winders' article, Mrs Farmer makes some good points. Of course the question of abortion should not (and was not in Fiona's article) raised in isolation.

The question of a woman's right to choose should be raised with demands for free contraceptives, an expanded health system, decent housing and better sex education.

It is necessary however to look at the reasons why women seek abortions. No woman "chooses" abortion without a great deal of thought. Many women suffer long term psychological problems after having an abortion.

For many women however this society leaves little choice; bad housing, poverty etc. can lead to abortion. Reversing the 1976 Abortion Act would be a retrograde step. The rich have never had a problem. They can and will continue to have abortions at exclusive clinics. The people who will be hit are working class women who depend on the NHS. They will once again be forced into the hands of the back-street abortionists with the possibility of infection, illness and even death.

Of course young people ought to be able to dicuss with their parents, but for many that is not possible. Ending confidentiality for under 16's seeking contraception will only lead to an upsurge in the demand from this age group for abortion due to unwanted pregnancy.

Again the demand for this contraception must go hand in hand with demands for better sex education and the best medical and social counselling.

These questions are not 'moral' questions, they are political. They raise further questions about society, a society where many women see no answer to their problems except through abortion.

Abortion, Mrs Farmer, is not the answer to the ills of society. The struggle for the socialist transformation of society and its achievement is.

Yours fraternally
Norma Craven
Newham North West

Snatching the Presidency

Dear Comrades,

An article appeared in the *Daily Mail* last week (21/2/85), penned by Frank Chapple, advising shop-workers of an assualt on their union by the notorious *Militant* Tendency.

The best bit being when he accused Jeff Price of "trying to snatch the union presidency from Labour Party moderate Sid Tierney."

Anybody would think that Jeff had been involved in some sort of commando-style raid on Tierney's home in order to "snatch the presidency" instead of simply taking part in a democratic election for the position as laid down in the union rule book.

Yours Fraternally
Helen Gasking
USDAW, Booksellers and Stationers

Miners' Thanks

Dear Comrades,

In Sunderland North recently a *Militant* readers meeting was held. Kevin Gallager, a striking miner at Wearmouth and a councillor, took the opportunity to personally thank *Militant* and the LPYS for their tremendous support, both financial and on the picket lines during the past 12 months.

Kevin also called upon the LPYS to increase their support for the miners to prevent any more striking miners being starved back to work, quoting the example of the striking miner at Wearmouth who is now on hunger strike.

Fraternally
Paul Rowan
Washington LPYS

Tory heating racket

Dear Comrades,

The recent tragic deaths from hypothermia of a 31 year old mother and her 11 year old daughter highlight the inhuman conditions endured by millions of working people, particularly pensioners, during cold winters in Thatcher's Britain.

The DHSS heating allowances for pensioners on Supplementary Benefit are pitifully inadequate: £1.10 per week for over 65s. £4.20 for over 85s.

Additional "exceptionally severe weather payments" fail to meet pensioners' needs. The system whereby these latter payments are made is regionally biased; a lower temperature is required to trigger the payment in cooler parts of the country. The trigger points range from 0.5°C in Plymouth to −2.9°C in Aberdeen.

Moreover the payment is made only when the average temperature stays below the trigger point for a whole week. (Thus, when the latest spell of sub-zero weather began, no areas qualified for payment as the cold spell was preceded by milder weather). In fact, the trigger has only been achieved twice this winter—and in a mere five areas.

Further barriers to obtaining the extra allowance include: claimants must have less than £500 in savings; the claim must be submitted with their fuel bill; payments are retrospective. Even those pensioners who qualify will receive, on average, a paltry 50p a week—sufficient for a few hours of extra heating.

The scheme is so poorly publicised that in 1981 – 82, 300,000 extra payments were made yet more than a million eligible pensioners never claimed.

Yours fraternally
Andy Wallwork
N. Ireland

Marxist Daily Building Fund 1985

Total received since 1 January:

			£
Eastern	1731	Scotland East	1365
East Midlands	1916	Scotland West	791
Humberside	963	Southern	1591
London East	2174	South West	528
London West	1329	Wales East	1080
London SE	1296	Wales West	1151
London SW	1075	West Midlands	761
Lancashire	305	Yorkshire	295
Manchester	389	National	985
Merseyside	777		
Northern	1817	Total	22,320

SEAN GILL, a member of Bath LPYS, has sent us the following letter.

"Last year David Sainsbury, head of Sainsbury's Stores, earned £5,666,331. He employs 500 YTS trainees. I converted the figures to relate to the wage of a YTS worker. I found that to my disgust that in just over half a working (?) day, David Sainsbury earns more than a YTS trainee would in 10 years.

"Or put another way, one week's income for a YTS worker is equivalent to the money that David Sainsbury gets for 'working' for about 40 seconds!

"I also discovered that by employing 500 YTS workers, his chain of stores is better off by £1.5m per year. If one day David Sainsbury decided, in a fit of generosity, to boost his YTS worker's pay he could give every one of them a hand out of £10,000 and still leave himself £666,331. As this is unlikely I think I'd like to put in a wage claim on behalf of Mr Sainsbury: a reduction of 873,600% and see how he'd survive on the wage of a YTS worker."

We don't expect Mr David Sainsbury to donate a week's income to the Marxist Daily Building Fund but many young workers on YTS have already done just that. We need a daily paper to fight against the poverty wages on YTS, against the millionaire bosses and the propaganda of their press. We need a daily paper to fight on behalf of the working class, and fight for a socialist society. To produce that paper we need your help.

More and more readers are following the example of those who have donated a week's income to the Building Fund this year. From a young school student who gave 50p to a miner in Mid Glamorgan who has promised the first £50 of his first pay packet, readers are seeing the vital need to boost our campaign.

Neil Allen, Walthamstow, has donated £116 and a soldier on leave has given £100. Readers in Lambeth and Wandsworth have sent £743 this week. Now every area should follow these examples. If the money keeps on coming we could even surpass the £175,000 we raised last year.

Now's the time to boost sales!

THERE CAN never have been a better opportunity to sell *Militant* to active trade unionists. Politically aware workers have seen how the current Labour and Trade Union leaders let the miners' down, and others are now prevaricating over resisting the Tories' rate-capping attack.

What paper other than *Militant* has given unstinting support to Labour councils like Liverpool that have had the courage to stand firm? *Militant* sellers should seize this chance to get down to the council depots and offices. Excellent sales to council workers were recorded on the demonstrations and lobbies last week. Over one hundred copies were sold on the Sheffield march and up to four hundred in Liverpool.

London sellers also deserve a mention. Thanks to them *Militant* was prominently displayed at all the budget day lobbies. 80 papers were sold outside Hackney Town Hall, and 100 in Southwark. Haringey sellers sold out of all the 75 papers they took with them, the lessons being always take more than you think you might need.

Seller of the week, however, must be Alan Hartley who himself sold 200 copies of the miners supplement on the Sheffield march. The supplement was also well received at the Women Against Pit Closures march in Chesterfield where 100 were sold.

The miners may be going back to work, but they will be even keener to read *MIlitant* on the lessons of the strike, and how to fight for reinstatement of their sacked workmates. They will also have at least a little cash now to buy the paper.

Sellers in mining areas should urgently try to establish regular sales in the pits and women's support groups in which they have made themselves known. Go around the mining villages from door to door with the paper, and for another week anyway with the miners' supplement too. In Keresley, Coventry sellers sold 10 in the first street they tried.

Don't forget the Labour Party sales either. At the Scottish Labour Party Conference last weekend 100 *Militants* were sold. All this shows that in the present political climate no *Militant* seller should be happy unless they are winning several extra regular sales.

By Jeremy Birch

FIGHTING FUND

This week: £1,979

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	715		2900
East Midlands	627		2800
Humberside	386		1850
London East	665		3250
London West	492		2150
London South East	721		2000
London South West	278		1600
Lancashire	270		1100
Manchester	474		2750
Merseyside	943		6000
Northern	633		4900
Scotland East	232		3000
Scotland West	530		3800
Southern	516		5000
South West	554		2000
Wales East	72		2450
Wales West	101		2150
West Midlands	847		4400
Yorkshire	888		5900
Others	529		10000
Total received	10,473		70000

THE ENDING of the miners strike has left numerous questions in the minds of many people. No socialist could have watched the processions back to the pits last week, without a lump in their throat. Men and women proud of their class and the struggle they have undertaken, children proud of their parents.

One battle does not decide a war and miners and their families have gone back determined not only to fight for amnesty but to build up the battalions; to change those leaders of the working class who refused to lead or who openly stabbed the movement in the back.

More and more, miners are seeing that the role of *Militant* is crucial in the battles to come, but the sinews of any war is money. Every worker should be approached for cash to build our paper. The miners especially are prepared to back the paper that backs them.

Special appeal sheets should be taken to every trade union branch, lodge, support group and Labour Party activist. Special letters and new appeal sheets are available now.

Even people who have had little or nothing to do with the strike are daily becoming more and more convinced that we have to fight back against the Tories, so get out on to the streets with your rattling cans. There is lots of money just waiting to be collected.

Up to the end of week five we had received £10,473. However, by the time you read this we will be almost half way through the quarter. Make sure you get your area back on target. The targets are based on what needs to be done to build our resources and our paper. Every reader can help by simply asking. Ask your friends and relatives for a donation or organise joint activities with other readers such as jumble sales, bazaars, socials, sponsored events.

Get organising in your area now and write in to tell us about your successes! Good luck!

Thanks this week to: P. Rodger, Stafford YS, 30p; Mrs. Allen, Stevenage, 75p; Lee Copestick, Rochdale YS £3; Eileen Galwood, Oldham £5; Neil Hargreaves, Hounslow £20; Birmingham TGWU 5/909 £5; Diane Hayes, Newham South YS £1; J. Humphries, Ealing North CLP 75p; C. Holmes, Southall CLP £1.50; B. Cummings, Southall CLP 75p; D. Musker, Liverpool POEU £50; W.E Ursell, Pensioner from Brent £10; another collection at British Gas, Easington £10.67; Leicester Labour Party member sent in £10.50; P. Kenny, Leicester £2; Helen Suret Woolwich £20; Alan Simpson, Woolwich £2; I Taylor Croydon £11.50; Tony Healey, Croydon £3.

Many thanks also to the reader in Cannock who went round the pub asking people if they agreed with page two of the 'What We Stand For' pamphlet and asking for donations. West Lancs supporters collected £18.05 on an appeal sheet and Blackley supporters collected £13 also.

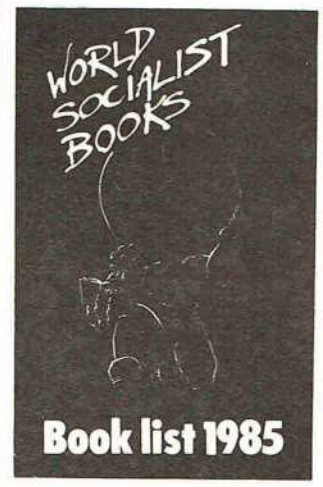
ads

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

TED & HILARY Mooney wish to inform all comrades and friends that they have moved home. New address: 55 Queens Drive, Walton, Liverpool, L4 6SF. Telephone number remains unchanged.



MAKE some Fighting Fund for your Area! Militant "No Slave Labour On YTS" stickers now available. Price: £1.50 for 100—but they must be sold for a donation! Send order to *Militant*, 3-13 Hepscott Rd, London E9. Cheques/Po's made payable to *Militant*.



Book list 1985

World Socialist Books booklist available free from: World Socialist Books, 3-13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB

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.

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.

"LIVERPOOL MILITANT Labour" badge with Labour logo, "Black and white youth unite" badge with red Militant logo, 25p each plus 25p minimum p&p. FF cheques payable to P. Cooper, Liverpool, L6 8NB.

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

FOR SALE 'V' registered red Fiat Strada 65L taxed and tested June 1985—49,00 miles—recent new front tyres, stereo radio (acquisition of another car is the reason for sale) £1,050 o.n.o—further information/ enquiries telephone Rotherham (0709)540539 5.30 pm to 7.00pm Mon—Thurs.

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

Militant 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.

Militant Teacher Readers' meeting in Manchester: "Teachers in dispute—which way forward?" Speakers: Tony Harvey (*Militant Teacher* Editorial Board), Maggie Lerner (Salford NUT, personal capacity) on: Tuesday 19 March 7.30pm at: Manchester Town Hall, Committee room 5.

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.

May Day greetings

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.

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

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

LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS

BLACK WORKERS AND THE LABOUR PARTY



Discussion document 35p

This document has been produced by black members of the Labour Party Young Socialists as a contribution to the debate within the labour movement. It has not been endorsed by the Labour Party NEC and therefore does not represent Labour Party policy

COPIES of this discussion document, produced by members of the LPYS from: Andy Bevan, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT.

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Left gain in Scots' CPSA

DANNY WILLIAMSON the Branch Secretary of the Department of National Savings, Glasgow CPSA Branch leads a team of Broad Left members who recently won the leadership of the branch.

This election is a severe blow to the Communist Party in the West of Scotland and in the national union, following their attempt to split the national Broad Left.

Bill Boyle talked to Danny about some of the problems they face and lessons learnt.

What do you see as your first job as Branch Secretary, Danny?

The first job is to involve the membership in the fights that they face. It is clear that the major issue is job cuts.

The previous leadership thought that they could defend jobs in the negotiating chamber, so they never took the issue to the membership. The task is to raise the conciousness of the membership. We don't have a membership who are prepared to run out on the stones on every issue at this stage.

We need to rebuild the role of the local representatives who were just used as messenger boys under the control of the bureaucracy. We are going to use the enthusiasm generated during the election campaign and turn that into a real enthusiasm for a campaign to defend jobs over the next year.

Do you see DNS Glasgow playing a role in the pay campaign?

DNS Glasgow is the biggest Civil Service Union Branch in the West of Scotland. It is seen as a focal point. If DNS Glasgow is seen to enthusiastically support the pay campaign that will, in my view, have its effect in the whole of the region.

If the Broad Left are prepared to campaign vigorously around their claim it will be supported by our members. Given a campaign nationally our members will support it.

Unlike the old leadership we intend to keep in touch with the members, especially on the question of staff inspections. These have cost us countless jobs.

When I joined the Bank in 1974 the CPSA membership was over 5,000. It is now 2,500. Since 1979 there have been 2,000 jobs lost- every one of them by natural wastage. That shows you the size of our task. Only the membership, organised behind the Broad Left leadership of CPSA, can resist these cuts.

How do you answer the accusations of the split-off grouplet from the Broad Left that you "blocked" with the right wing to win your crushing victory?

Thats obviously absolute rubbish. In their own election material they supported candidates "who were not necessarily members of Broad Left '84". At least two candidates whom they supported have stood in the past on right wing lists and could not be even remotely regarded as lefts. It was they who "blocked" with the right wing.

The elections have proved that the membership's allegiances are with the original Broad Left and that they will not tolerate smear campaigns against proven left wing fighters. We take heart from this result. The implications for the national elections are obvious.



Photo: Paul Traynor

No to Post Office closures

THE CAMPAIGN against Crown Post Office closures in South London continues. Over 100 pensioners, mothers with children, and trade unionists demonstrated outside the Old Street Regional Post Office headquarters.

A delegation of 30 local people saw regional management and told them in no uncertain terms how they felt. Closure of Borough and Bricklayers' offices would force people to travel much further afield, across dangerous roads, in an area of high street crime. Mrs Theresa Gibbons, over 80 years old said: "They just want to pack us off to the crematorium. How are the blind people, the deaf, the disabled supposed to get to Post Offices when their local one is shut. We're speaking for hundreds of old people."

Moss Haley, UCW spokesman said: "We're keeping up the pressure. Local people really showed their feelings today. The management couldn't fail to get the message. Whatever management decide, and they still say no final decision has been made, local people and the union will take direct action to get justice."

By Paul Traynor

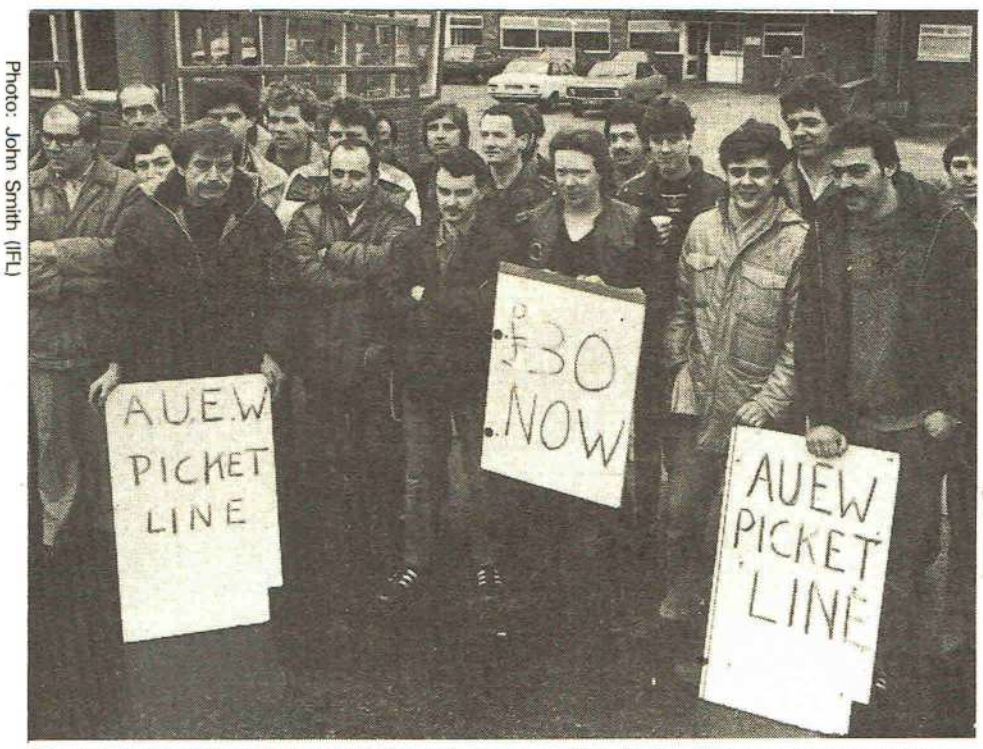


Photo: John Smith (IFL)

One hundred and fifty workers at Coleman's Fastners, Manchester, members of the AUEW on strike since 5 March for a £30 wage claim. This is still well below average earnings in the industry. The company is part of an American multinational with a long history of union bashing. Two years ago there was no union at this site but despite victimisation, victories have been won. Messages of support and donations to Coleman's Fastners Strike Fund, c/o AUEW House, 43 The Crescent, Salford, M5.

Vote to fight against shops low pay

UNION OF Shop Distributive and Allied Workers (USDAW) union branches will begin the process of electing a new General Secretary next week. Nominations will open on 25 March for what promises to be a hard fought election in the TUC's sixth largest union.

By George Williamson
(Eastern Divisional Council, personal capacity, and USDAW Broad Left Chair)

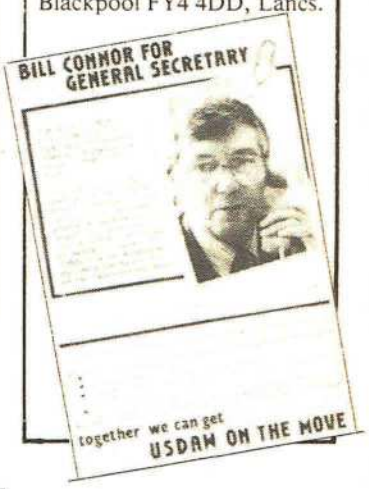
The USDAW Broad Left will be putting forward its own candidate, widely known and well respected national officer, Bill Connor.

The problems facing USDAW members today are enormous. Retail distribution is a low-paid industry and has been for years. It is not uncommon for shopworkers to work a 39 hour week and take home less than £65. The industrial muscle of the union has not been utilised in the fight to win a decent condition for our members.

The Broad Left has argued for years for a low pay campaign. It should be launched by the union leadership to mobilise the membership to fight for a living wage and linked up with the unions facing similar problems.

Bill Connor is committed to such a strategy. If he is elected General Secretary of USDAW the days of timid right wing leadership will be over.

Attend your USDAW branch meeting between 25 March and 3 May and get it to nominate Bill Connor for General Secretary. For more details about Bill write to the USDAW Broad Left secretary for the nomination leaflet: Mick Wainwright, 14 Johnson Road, Marton, Blackpool FY4 4DD, Lancs.



Care workers' dispute

RESIDENTIAL workers in Strathclyde successfully forced concessions from their employers despite demoralisation following the failure of their action in 1983.

The action was sparked off on 5 February at Wallacewell Children's Home, Glasgow. Following an alleged assault by a 14 year old boy on a member of staff, the staff decided to walk out. This occured after a series of grievances; there had been no Head of Home for a year, internal management was poor and there was increasing instances of violence. There was immediate support for the action throughout the residential sector.

In accordance with NALGO's national rules, a ballot of residential workers was held. Management sat back expecting the strike to fold. But the result was overwhelming in support of escalation, which began on 23 February. The employers offered a package which appeared to allow a return to work but then reneged on a central part of the agreement. They refused to renew the contract of a temporary worker whose contract had run out in the course of the dispute; and indicated this would happen to any temporary worker involved in industrial action.

Eighteen homes struck in response and the employers were again forced to back down, the general threat was withdrawn and the particular employee was offered alternative employment.

The residential workers were fully backed in their action by manual workers who also came out in support. This is an important step forward as previously the employers have played on the traditional antagonism between white collar and manual workers to undermine action. There is now greater awareness of the need for joint action to oppose the effects of cuts.

Strathclyde is a Labour authority which seems more willing to confront their own workers than the Tory government.

By Willie Campbell and Mairi Miller
(Strathclyde NALGO, personal capacity)

Democratic rights trampled on

MILTON KEYNES electrician Chris Hill has been banned from holding any elected position in the EETPU for a period of eighteen months. This was the decision of a TUC Appeals Committee which met to review the decision of an EETPU disciplinary committee to ban him for five years.

The disciplinary action followed an industrial conference where Chris Hill unsuccessfully attempted to question the executive on their inability to arouse the electrical contracting membership on the 1984 wage claim. The leadership have alleged that he attempted to disrupt the conference. However, a recently published verbatum report would suggest otherwise.

The appeals committee were presented with a series of general allegations against Chris Hill, who was able to refute these in detail.

All those who oppose the EETPU's present totalitarian-style leadership will be outraged at this decision.

By a *Militant* reporter

THE BATTLE of Edinburgh Lodge against the undemocratic leadership of the electrician's union continues.

The Executive Council of the EETPU has lifted the ban of Edinburgh Lodge. But it has also decided to appoint a full time official as secretary/treasurer while allowing elections for President and committee positions.

Furious lodge members said this flouted the democratic right to elect their own representatives. And in effect it debarred the elected secretary/treasurer Jim Greer.

A stormy and packed lodge meeting voted itself invalid, in protest against the NEC's decision. And members resolved to campaign in the EETPU and Labour movement for its reversal. Our democratic rights are being trampled on.

Messages of support to Edinburgh Lodge Campaign c/o Edinburgh Trades Council 14 Picardy Place, Edinburgh.

By Edinburgh Lodge members

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Escalate teachers' action

THE TEACHERS' pay campaign is gathering momentum. About 6,000 NUT members in 42 areas are on strike for three days this week.

The other major teachers' union in England and Wales, the NAS/UWT, is staging walkouts during the day in 16 authorities.

In Scotland, 7,000 members of the main teachers' union the Educational Institute of Scotland will be on strike at some point in the week as part of their campaign for an independent pay review.

Colleges hit?

It is likely that the college lecturers union NATFHE could also soon be calling on its members to take industrial action. They want the government to relax cash limits for their pay campaign and a restructuring of the grading system.

It is necessary to rapidly escalate the action. Three local education authorities: Wigan, Solihull and Labour controlled Newcastle are docking pay from teachers following union policy of not covering for absentees after one day. The one day concession should be immediately abolished.

Maximum pressure on the executive is required for escalation before the NUT's annual conference at Easter. Closer co-ordination with other local authority unions and a one-day national strike are urgently needed to hit hard and fast. Maximum pressure on the education authorities and government now!

By John Barr

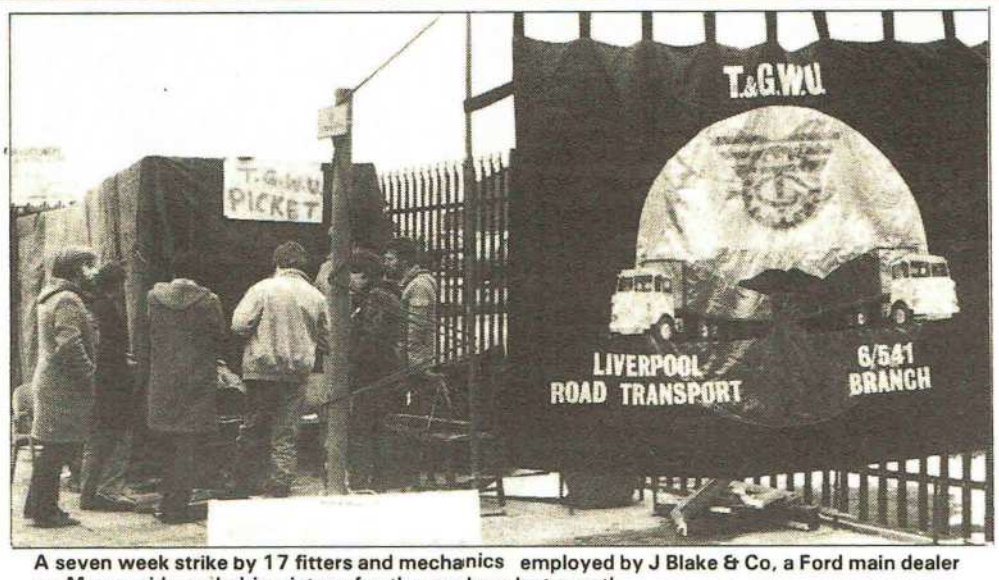
Print

70 NGA members have been locked out at at the *Express* and *Star* newspaper, Wolverhampton. A further 50 at the *Shropshire Star* and 60 at PCP Telford.

Management plans to do away with the NGA jobs has backfired. Only three scabs have agreed to accept the *Star*'s new technology without the agreement of the union. The bosses plan to use typists and telephonists to accept copy over the phone and key it directly into computers for typesetting, by-passing the traditional compositor.

According to Vernon, NGA national council member, they thought that if they acted now it would split the NGA chapel down the middle. But the workers surprised management with their solidarity and refusal to accept the new technology which led to their suspension. Already messages have been sent to the strikers from other NGA chapels offering to take solidarity action. The *Birmingham Post* and *Mail* chapel sent pickets up to Wolverhampton within days.

By Bill Mullins



A seven week strike by 17 fitters and mechanics employed by J Blake & Co, a Ford main dealer on Merseyside ended in victory for the workers last month.

The employer had attempted to victimise an activist in the TGWU 6/541 Liverpool road haulage branch. Our members received exellent support from workers at the main car delivery agents for Ford on Mersyside as well as Esso tanker drivers and Ford shop stewards at Halewood.

The company were eventually forced to reinstate the sacked shop steward, give the TGWU full recognition and to drop all claims for damages against the union.

By Dave Williams, TGWU 6/541 (CRTC) personal capacity.

Heinz Harlesden redundancies

BRIAN SMITH, AUEW Convenor at the Heinz factory in Harlesden, talked to Alex Moore about threatened job losses.

In 1982 there were 1,940 workers at the Heinz factory in Harlesden in West London, but if management have their way, only 800 workers will be kept on.

In 1982 under the Harlesden Efficiency Improvement programme agreement we were given a five year commitment that the factory would stay open if we shed 540 jobs.

Now we are being asked to lose another 600, under a new plan called 'The most productive operator scheme'.

We have also been fighting a constant battle over demarcation and the use of outside contractors. Management argue that Heinz is being undercut by the private labels, who use cheap, non-unionised labour, but Heinz made a £34 million profit in the last financial year, £9 million of which was paid out in dividends.

Last year factory costs were down 5.5% and productivity went up by 12%. The biggest single rise in the accounts was a staggering 31% pay increase for the company's highest paid employees, guess who!

When we get more details the stewards from the different unions will get together to discuss how best to defend our jobs and it will be important to strengthen our links with the fight in Wigan, which is coming under a similar attack. We have had differences in the past but now we are going to need to stick together to defend our jobs as best we can.

Schools closure threat

COVENTRY SCHOOLS threatened with closure have organised Action Committees and there have been various meetings of staff, parents and pupils, along with a lobby of a meeting of the city council Education Committee.

The NUT have organised a march and rally to oppose school closures on the morning of Friday, 22 March at Central Hall. The Community and Youth Workers Union has pledged support and moves are under way to involve NUPE, NALGO and NAS/UWT. Other trade unions are being urged to send delegates with banners to demonstrate the widespread opposition to the closures.

Coventry South-East Labour Party has opposed the closure programme, and organised a public meeting to discuss the way forward. (See details below). What is needed now is a programme of action to meet the needs of this struggle. This should include.

★ Action Committees in every threatened school, comprising parents, teachers, other staff and pupils.

★ Regular, democratically-run public meetings to report on the progress of the campaign and take up new initiatives.

★ Regular delegations to lobby councillors and Council officials, mass lobbies of the Education Committee and the City Council.

★ Local Labour Parties must demand that Councillors' fight against and vote against these proposals or make way for those who will.

★ Unity is strength—link all the threatened schools—united mass action to force the withdrawal of the closures.

★ Parents, teachers, ancillary workers and school students—join the fight where it counts, join the Labour Party and the LPYS.

★ Strike action on 22 March. Demonstrations to be organised from every affected school to link up at a mass rally.

★ No cuts, no school closures, force the City Council to fight the Tory government to give back the money we need.

By Malcolm Emmerson
(Cheylesmore Labour Party, Coventry SE)

and Pete MacNally
(Binley and Willenhall LP, Coventry SE)

Coventry South-East Labour Party Public Meeting.
'Labour Councils—No cuts, fight the Tories!'
Speakers—Tony Mulhearn, Liverpool City Council. Dave Nellist, MP Peter Lees, Coventry City Council, plus a school student.
Tuesday 26 March 7.30 pm at the Sir Colin Campbell, Gosford St, Coventry.

Transport

THE AGM of London Transport's District Council (NUR) unanimously agreed to fight threats of redundancies to guards, permanent way workers, engineering staff and canteen and station staff. Workshop closures could escalate and privatisation looms hungrily in the background. LRT is also threatening to withdraw the 7½ per cent for one person operation payment and bulldoze through driver only trains on management terms.

If the latest LRT business plan is successful the effect on jobs, conditions and even on the public will be devastating. This was recognised by the AGM, and after heated debate over tactics a campaign to explain these issues to the membership leading to industrial action was agreed.

The only thing this government understands is strength. Weakness invites attack. Activists must link the struggle by Underground workers with our brothers and sisters on the buses and in British Rail who face a similar offensive from the government.

By a London Transport District Council delegate,

Civil Service pay

THE CIVIL Service unions (CPSA, SCPS, IRSF) are about to launch a concerted programme of action to win the 1985 pay campaign. Union representatives will welcome this overdue announcement and will now look to the leadership to work hard to secure its success.

The basic outline of the strategy is: a one-day strike on 1 April which will demonstrate the strength of feeling of civil servants to the 20% to 25% cut in living standards over the past five years. This will bring members of the CPSA, SCPS and IRSF together and give a warning to the government of the workers determination to fight years of discrimination.

This will be followed by geographically based selective strikes which will keep the pressure up on the Tories and build the involvement, mood and confidence of members. The areas selected should take into account action being taken by other public service workers, and effort must be made to link up at TUC and local level.

If no settlement is secured by mid-April then the unions will launch consultative exercises with a recommendation for an all-out strike on 1 May. For civil servants this is momentous proposal.

At the CPSA's Civil Service Executive committee (CSEC) meeting on Sunday 3 March, Kevin Roddy argued for a national overtime ban to be launched in advance of 1 April (as opposed to during the 2-30 April). This was passed by 8 votes to 7 despite opposition from the so-called Broad Left'84. Together with a policy of non-cooperation, work to rule etc, this could play a useful part in involving members in a campaign and building up the mood and likelihood of a 'yes' vote to the one-day strike. The Tories are likely to make a miserable offer of around 3% or 4% and the unions need to start their action and hit departments now, not later. With the loss of 120,000 civil service jobs in five years, there should be no overtime working. The executive refused however, by 10 votes to 5, to advance the other preparatory disruptive steps.

The executive also agreed an amendment from Kevin Roddy, against the bureaucracy, the right wing and Broad Left '84 to consult members in the two stages of strategy (one day strike/ selective strikes and then all-out strike) under the current union policy of voting at work-place meetings instead of by secret ballot according to the Tories' Trade union laws. The CPSA is one of the most democratic unions in the movement, voting in branch meetings on industrial action is a well established feature of the union, fashioned by the Broad Left. The fact that ex-Broad Left members should join with Alistair Graham and the right-wing in ignoring conference policy and TUC policy on the Tory anti-union laws is a scandal. This is the real face of Broad Left '84.

If we were to bend the knee to our employers, the government on a democratic union rule, our branches and members would not believe that we were serious over a fight on pay and jobs. It is now impossible for workers to take industrial action without breaking some Tory law or other.

The overall strategy is now fixed, representatives at every level must take it up immediately. Local council of civil service unions and CPSA area committees must urgently convene branch committee open meetings to plan the campaign in every branch of the unions involved. Speakers from national level should be used to win support for the campaign and strategy. All regional Broad Left organisations must meet and plan their local interventions and in the process build up support for a Broad Left victory in the 1985 CPSA national elections.

CP join witch-hunt

DESPITE THE massive vote of confidence in the Broad Left at the Department of National Savings Branch in Glasgow (see article page 14), the Communist Party and their fellow travellers have launched a witch-hunt against John Macreadie. John is DNS section secretary and past Broad Left candidate for union general secretary against the right wing incumbent, Alistair Graham.

At a hastily convened meeting with no notice of the agenda, a motion of 'no-confidence' was passed against him by nine votes to four. Of the nine, five are CP members and all are members of the anti-*Militant* split-off 'Broad Left '84' grouping. Amongst the four were one CP member and one non-CP 'Broad Left '84' member politically honest enough to resist this manoeuvre.

There is no doubt that John has the confidence of the membership at DNS as will be shown at their conference in May. He is summoned to see Alistair Graham, general secretary, on Thursday 14 March. Further details next week.

Militant

Dublin lockout 1913
Pages 8-9

Miners Amnesty Campaign

Fight victimisation

THE MINERS' Amnesty Campaign has been launched by rank and file miners to publicise and raise support within the labour and trade union movement, for sacked and imprisoned miners to fight for their reinstatement and to pass on to the wider movement information about victories in local areas.

The NCB is in no mood at present to grant a general amnesty. It is only solidarity of the NUM, together with the whole of the labour movement that can force a retreat. Until then, many cases will be reviewed on a pit by pit basis. Likewise here the decisive question will be the unity of the movement, with demonstrations, lobbies of NCB premises and letters of protest from the labour and trade union movement in the area being used to apply pressure to the NCB.

Solidarity

The Miners' Amnesty Campaign has produced an initial statement of aims, an appeal letter and model resolution. This material is available now through the

By Phillip White
(Acting Secretary—Miners' Amnesty Campaign.)

Campaign Secretary (details below). Our intention is to co-ordinate support for the victimised miners in the labour movement, to produce publicity material outlining cases of victimised miners and to organise for striking miners to speak at as many sections of the labour and trade union movement as possible.

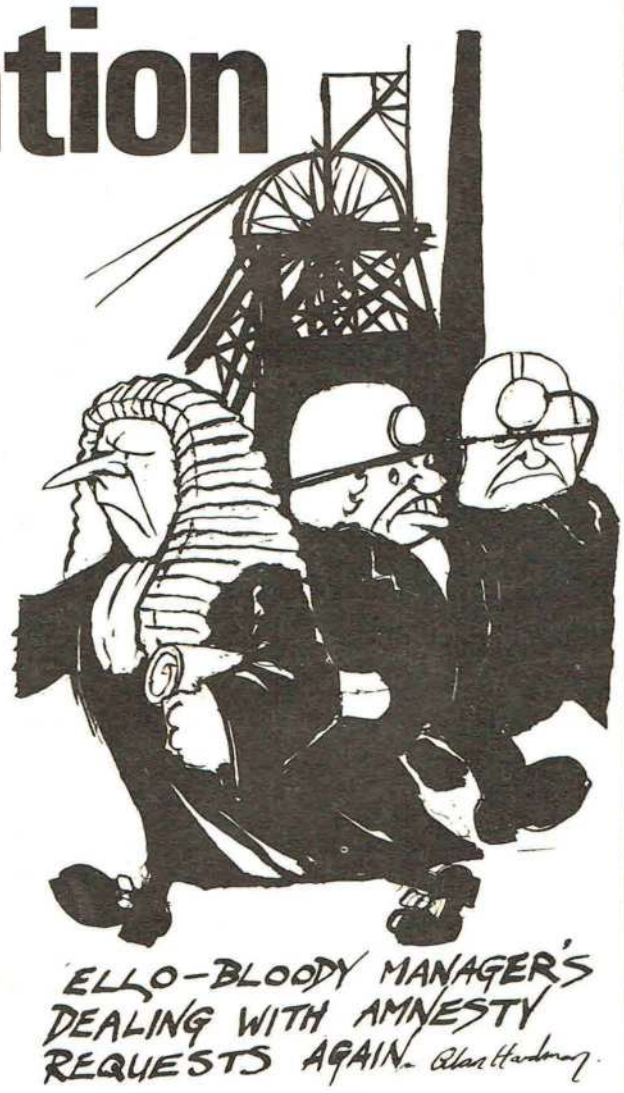
Of course organising this will cost money, so we are appealing to organisations to become sponsors of the Miners' Amnesty Campaign, by endorsing the statement of aims and sending a minimum £5 donation to enable us to develop this work.

Areas should follow the example of Northumberland, where sacked miners are being taken round the factories to explain their case to workers, to encourage levies to be put on, resolutions to be passed by trade union branches, executives and conferences and for the adoption of jailed miners by union branches, shop stewards' committees etc.

Force retreat

BLOC supporters in the Lothians area are following up their excellent solidarity work in the strike by "adopting" the Miners Amnesty Campaign, using contacts gained to build a mass movement to force a retreat by the Tories.

Send resolutions of support, sponsorship for MAC, requests for literature etc. to: Phillip White, 10 Herman road, Caerau, Maesteg, Mid Glamorgan.



Build the campaign

"WE'VE GOT a faction of about 30-40 real militants and this is an ideal time to sort these people out"

These comments from the manager of Silverwood colliery, Yorkshire, shows what a "spirit of reconciliiation" really means for the Coal Board bosses.

Up to last Friday, only 52 out of 726 sacked miners had been reinstated and there are over 5,000 court cases still to be heard. Nor is acquittal in a court case a guarantee of keeping a job, Energy Secretary Walker has said: "The fact that a person has been acquitted of a particular offence is not a guarantee that he will continue if in view of the management, that person has committed an offence against the interest of the company." The colliery managers are to act as prosecution judge and jury.

Every day brings new reports of sackings. At Bates Colliery in Northumberland, where six have already been sacked, another eight are threatened with dismissal. Sackings of miners who had returned to work at Manton and Kiverton Park in Yorkshire led to mass walkouts, while Arthur Oxley, Vane Tempest delegate, (Durham area) and John Smith, NUM Secretary at Ashington Colliery (Northumberland) are two of the most recent additions to the long list of sacked NUM officials.

Union activists

42 Kent miners out of only 2,000 remain sacked, 26 of these for the "criminal" offence of occupying Betteshanger pit and inviting TV cameras in to see how the NCB had been lying about damage to the underground workings. Almost the whole Betteshanger branch leadership has been sacked, a blatant attempt to remove a whole layer of leaders.

While the Scottish area NCB chief, Wheeler, has declared: "There can be no amnesty", successes have been gained in other areas. In North Derbyshire, a third of the sacked miners have been reinstated. At Markham pit, all bar one have been reinstated, and negotiations continue on that case. At St John's, in South Wales, all eight sacked men have been reinstated.

Unfortunately some amongst the Labour leadership have refused to support a general amnesty, saying that there are "serious offences" where it could not be justified. But as the discrimination by the Board, between striking and working miners proves these sackings have been aimed not at the worst "offenders", but at the best union activists.

Every offence alleged to have been committed in the strike is the responsibility of the Tories and their plans to slash employment in the industry. If there had been no Pit Closures plans there would have been no strike and no picket lines.

That is why there must be an amnesty for all those sacked as a result of actions taken to further the aims of the strike, including the reinstatement of those jailed, when their sentences are finished.

Miners dismissed—area by area.

Area	Sacked	Re-Instated	Number still sacked
Kent	42	0	42
S. Wales	46	38	8
S. Mids	8+	0	8+
S. Notts	22+	0	22+
N. Notts	Not known		
N. Derbys	155+	100+	55approx
Scotland	180+	0	
N. East	135	70	65
Yorks	197	0	197
Western	17	0	17
Total	802+	208+	594+

BLOC Conference Support grows

DELEGATES ARE coming in thick and fast particularly from the Manchester area. Last week at a 10,000-strong march in defiance of Tory attacks on local government, many individual trade union branches particularly those from the council direct works schemes showed their willingness to be there on the day.

They were adamant that they wanted to be a part of any organisation to change trade unions into fighting socialist organisations with determined leaders to match, as they had many complaints about many of their own union leaders, particularly their inaction over the attacks on local authorities.

Among those sending delegates are:

NUM Houghton Main; ASTMS Coventry Motors 976 branch; MonoPumps, Manchester JSSC; MonoPumps Staff Reps Committee; ASTMS 605 br div 13; NUPE Peterborough Hospitals; NUPE Prestwich Health Branch; ASTMS Salford University & UMIST; SOGAT WH Smith (Wholesale) Stockport; AUEW Ryde IOW; NUT Barnsley; MF Industrial, Stretford JSSC; Walsall & District Trades Council; NCU Glasgow Engineering; ASTMS Coventry City; TGWU 5/573 Nottingham; TGWU 6/72 Manchester Commercial; AUEW (Eng) Manchester South DC; Rhymney Valley Women's Support Group; Penallta Miners' Wives. NEI Mining Equipment Manufacturers, Manchester JSSC.

Apply 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 delegates—cheques made payable to: BLOC, c/o George Williamson, 11 Sutton Place, London E9 6E8.

Train bookings for BLOC Conference, 23 March. Train seats from London Euston. £16 return (£2 cheaper than inter city) This is a limited booking on two trains. Book now, though. First leaves London 6.50am. Manchester 18.15. 2nd leaves 8.15am London, Manchester 19.15. Cheques payable to Broad Left Organising Committee. Send to G.Robertson, c/o 33, Langdon House, Ida Street, London E14



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