Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

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Yarrow shipyard occupation
—page 14

Tory threat to education system

Strike to save schools

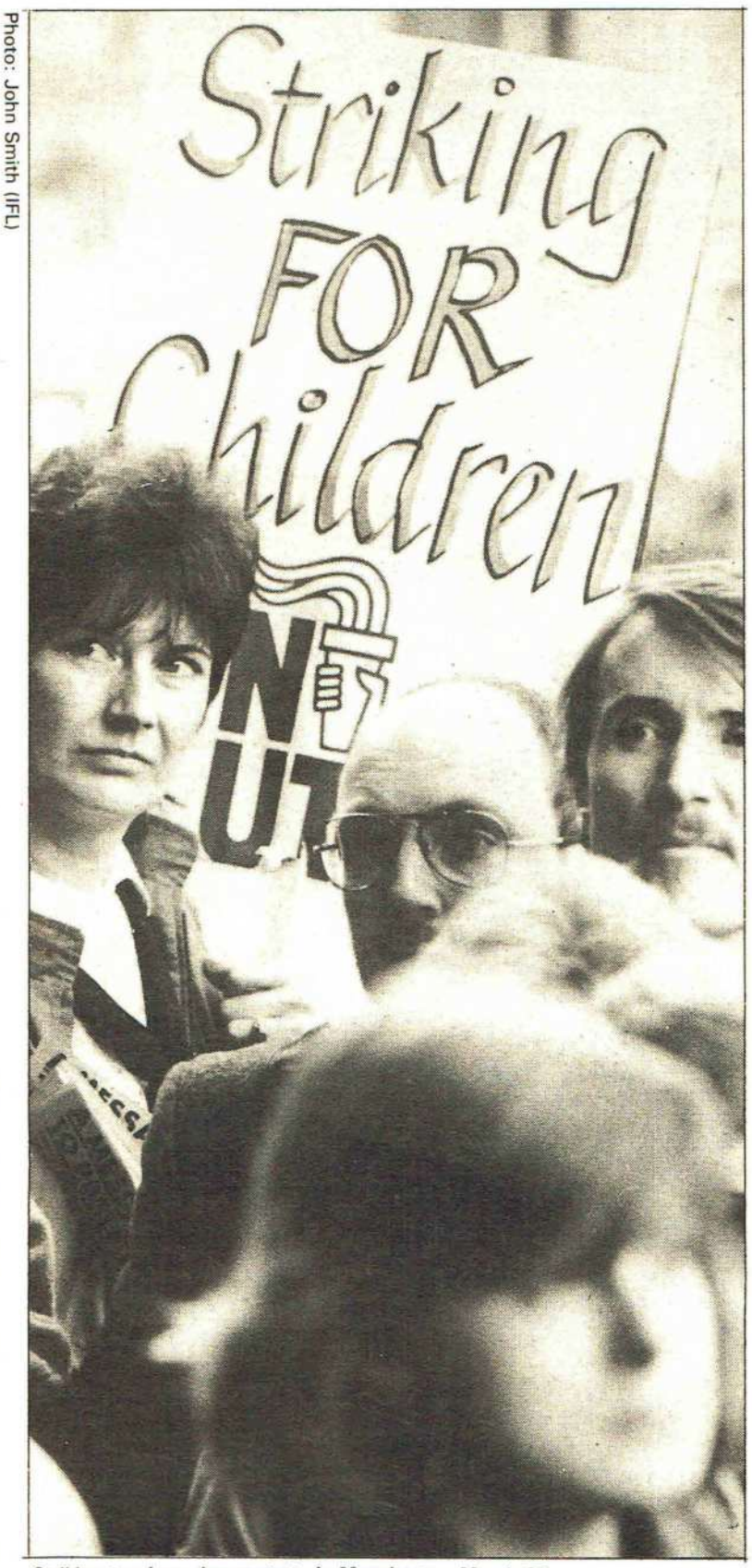


Photo: John Smith (IFL)

Striking teachers demonstrate in Manchester, March 26.

TEACHERS BATTLING for a decent wage are facing Tory abuse and the media 'lie machine'. The Tories want teachers to be 'assessed' and the 'incompetent' sacked.

By Bob Wade

But it is this government which should be given the boot—their policies have slashed jobs and pay of teachers and staff. Meanwhile a whole generation of school leavers face a no-hope future—their anger has erupted in school strikes up and down the country.

Teachers' pay

Since 1979, 30,000 teaching jobs have gone. Another 6,000 are to go, with a further 4,000 threatened by rate-cappoing.

Teachers face long hours and are relatively low paid. In a National Union of Teachers' survey, primary teachers were found to be working on average 47 hours a week. The bottom scale of teachers' pay is £5,442 p.a.—generally it is far below their professional equivalents. The current joke amongst teachers is that on demonstrations in support of their case, they find former pupils now earning better money than them—as police officers; an 18½ year old PC starts on £8,556!

Many teachers moonlight to maintain living standards. *The Observer* (10 March) told how a head of department was working in a factory at night, just so he could support his family.

The Tories are wrecking the ancillary services that maintain the schools. Hereford and East Sussex County Councils both recently sacked their school meals staff—then re-employed those they required for a reduced service on less pay by cutting their hours. Nationally, as working hours are cut, so conditions deteriorate—cleaning standards drop, while traditional school dinners are replaced with fast food trash.

School rolls are falling. Yet in this profit-first society this means schools close rather than teacher:pupil ratios and educational facilities improved. 70 schools have closed in London, while in Coventry 350 ancillary staff face the sack as schools are threatened with closure.

YTS or dole?

The Tories are trying to camouflage their assault on education by blaming falling standards on the 'quality' of teachers. But whose fault is it that students are becoming increasingly frustrated and demoralised? How are teachers meant to inspire their pupils in areas like Kirkby in Merseyside where 94 per cent of school leavers are on the dole?

But this Tory offensive is not without resistance. Not only are teachers fighting back, but school students too. Where the Labour Party Young Socialists and the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign have intervened in, the widespread school strikes, students' anger has been directed at the Tories. In Scotland, 20,000 students went on strike, the biggest school strike in history, after a call by YTURC.

This Easter weekend, two conferences will be taking this battle forward. The NUT meet in Scarborough to discuss furthering their action—a call for a national 24-hour teachers' strike as part of an escalation of the campaign would gain enormous support.

In Blackpool, 3,000 or more LPYS members will meet—many will be school students who will be taking up the need for a national school students' union and national action to support the teachers.

The Tories can be beaten—education secretary Sir Keith Joseph has already had to back down over his 'voucher' plans and the realignment of school governing boards. The labour movement must mobilise to defend and improve education as a basic right for all.

LPYS CONFERENCE *MILITANT* READERS' MEETING

Saturday 6 April, 7.00 pm, Pavilion Theatre, Blackpool.
Speakers: Derek Hatton (Deputy Leader, Liverpool Council),
Jackie Galbraith (Chair, Scottish LPYS, personal capacity),
Linda Douglas (LPYS National Committee-elect, London South),
Ted Grant, (Political Editor, *Militant*)

Inside - LPYS conference preview

Militant

Youth look to socialism

THE MINERS' strike, in its intensity and bitterness, has set the tone for future social developments in Britain. It has had a profound effect on the labour movement, and has also sent seismic shock-waves to those sections of the ruling class most sensitive to the growing class polarisation.

Thus, for example, a special Church of England study into social trends and aspirations, came to the conclusion last week that the strike may be "the pattern of things to come". Economic changes, it argued, could have serious implications for "political stability".

In the same week, Tory "wets" Peter Walker and Ted Heath issued warnings to the Government about the effects of high unemployment, the latter remarking with a glance at the Parliamentary Tory party, that "a lot of people will lose their seats".

These warnings reflect, from the standpoint of the ruling class, forbodings about future uncertainties and the possibilities of social upheaval. Even if Thatcher is blind to it, the bishops and the Tory "wets" can see the mountain of combustible human material being stockpiled by the government, especially among the unemployed and the youth.

The new long-term unemployed are the youth: more than a quarter of a million 16 and 17 year olds are on the dole—half of them never having had a job since leaving school. Total youth unemployed are over 1.3 million—a third of them out of work for a full year or more. As a means of doctoring the figures, nearly half a million young people are now on Government-sponsored cheap-labour schemes, seven times more than in 1979.

The only strategy the Tories have for youth is the reduction of the wages and the worsening of the conditions among those seven million or so young workers lucky enough to have work. So among this section also there is growing anger at the Tory government.

Even school students—no doubt looking ahead to their own places in the unemployment queue—have increasingly been prepared to register their protests against the lack of a decent future.

The opinion polls, a rough indicator of social trends, have begun to register the class gulf opened up by the Tories. The MORI/LWT poll published in the first week of March showed a growing awareness of the threat of social upheaval. 62 per cent of those asked thought that young people would be more likely to turn to "revolutionary violence", as a result of Government policies.

Capitalism has nothing to offer workers, and in this 'International Year of Youth', even less to offer young people. Such fundamental political implications have not been lost even on the representatives of big business. A recent report of the Confederation of British Industry acknowledged that the capitalist system itself was being increasingly questioned. "If the free enterprise system cannot find ways of ending the blight of unemployment in this country and allow for the development of deprived peoples here and overseas", it states, "then its validity is in question".

But despite the bleak warnings of the Church of England, the Tory "wets" or the CBI, they cannot alter the fundamental workings of the economic system which they all, in the final analysis represent. It is precisely because capitalism is organically incapable of ending social "blights" like unemployment and low pay that young workers especially are turning to socialist conclusions.

Drawing lessons from their own experiences, thousands look to Marxist ideas, to the programme of public ownership of the commanding heights of the economy, of workers' control and management and of a democratic plan of production. Rationally organised, the economy can provide the essentials of life which capitalism can not even begin to offer.

This system is itself preparing the most fertile ground for winning young people to Marxist ideas. Among all youth—students, unemployed and workers—there is a thirst for change, for some alternative to the system, apart from drugs and despair.

The Labour Party Young Socialists, meeting this weekend for their annual conference has the potential to win hundreds of thousands of young people to socialist ideas. It must set itself the goal of building an active, mass Young Socialists, to spearhead the struggle of the broader labour movement for the building of a new society.



Photo: Mark Salmon

Law threat to peace demo

THOUSANDS OF CND members are expected at Molesworth on Easter Monday—it will be a defiant protest against the Tories' new restrictive laws against peace campaigners, introduced on Monday April 1. The new laws are an extension of the 1982 Military Lands Act. Whereas before protesters were only charged with criminal damage etc, this new law gives the police and military wide powers—last Monday alone 50 women were arrested at Greenham and 23 arrested at Molesworth. The CND protest on Easter Monday plans to encircle the Molesworth base in Cambridgeshire.

By-election test

AN IMPORTANT county council by-election is under way in Bradford, West Yorkshire. Ken Little is the Labour candidate, standing on a 'no cuts, no job losses' platform and against the Tory threat of abolition of the metropolitan authority.

The Labour controlled authority has accepted 'minimun legal co-operation' with the Tories' abolition plans. But senior council officials have attacked NALGO trade unionists who are firmly demanding non co-operation.

This by-election covers most of the Bradford North constituency. It will be an important test of Labour's support—in the 1983 election Labour candidate Pat Wall was only beaten by the Tories when the former Labour MP Ben Ford stood against him, splitting the vote.

Offers of help in canvassing should be made to Bill Read (Bradford 633374) Ken Little (Bradford 499581) or Andy Jones (Bradford 614137).

General Strike in Denmark

AROUND 250,000 workers demonstrated in massive meetings throughout Denmark on 1 April.

They were protesting at government intervention to impose a wage settlement in an eight-day long dispute (see page 10). Many workers now call for a general strike against the Thatcherite government of Poul Schlüter.

300,000 private sector workers were ordered back to work by the government but instead of subsiding, the movement got enormously bigger despite the Danish TUC saying that it "upheld the law" and "opposed illegal strikes". Workers blockaded the road to Parliament and industrial estates. Demonstrators lay across railway tracks near Aarhus. The public sector also came out in support with bus services, post, oil and petrol and many other areas affected. Confrontations with the police were reported in many towns.

Political strike

The LO (the Danish TUC) have accepted the settlement terms and are trying to get union members back to work. But this is now a political strike. As one worker, a dockers' leader, Karsten Andersson told the Danish Marxist paper, *Socialisten*: "If the workers had a leadership now, they would be able to take power."

Supporters of *Socialisten* are demanding an **all-out** general strike to bring down the government, as are some big local unions and some trades councils. A fuller report in a future issue.

By a correspondent in Copenhagen

Protest at expulsion

NEWCASTLE EAST Labour Party is voting on Bill Hopwood's expulsion on 12 April, many letters and resolutions against it have been received but more are needed before the meeting to: Carole West, Secretary, Newcastle East CLP, 15 Simondside Terrace, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE6 5JY, copies to Bill Hopwood, 55 Flodden Street, Newcastle NE6 2QL.

Bill spoke at a meeting on 1 April attended by 90 people and invoked the socialist tradition in the Labour Party by quoting Keir Hardy. Other speakers included Alan Maltman from Bates NUM who spoke on the amnesty campaign, Clare Doyle *Militant* Editorial Board.

Daisy Rawling spoke from the floor; she is a third generation socialist, whose mother was expelled from the Labour Party.

Labour's jobs strategy

NEIL KINNOCK has announced officially that Labour would not contemplate a pact with the SDP in government.

There would be fierce opposition from Labour's membership to any such deal.

The Labour leader significantly omitted to rule out any deal with the Liberals. In the last Labour government the Liberals were exposed as an anti-working class party supporting the policies of wage restraint and cuts in public spending, effectively assisting the Labour leadership in blocking radical reform.

Spending

This week Labour announces its "jobs and industry" campaign against unemployment. A serious campaign by Labour will be welcomed.

Labour's leadership rightly points to a 'long history of under-investment' for Britain's economic ills.

The large scale government spending on railways, roads, homes and hospitals would be a good start to combat Thatcher's policies of destruction, but the campaign doesn't explain how these will be paid for.

Kinnock himself talks about working together and building a partnership to manage the economy. But on their past record big business has been less than willing to co-operate with a socialist government. Why should they start now?

This 'strategy' has more in common with the SDP—which Kinnock doesn't want a pact with.

March with Newham Seven

THE NEWHAM Seven Campaign are calling a national demonstration against racist attacks on 27 April.

Some of the Newham 7 have still to come to court. They were arrested last year when Asian youth fought back against racist gangs in Upton Park after a day of racist attacks on Asian families.

One of the seven, Parvaiz Khan, was picked up a day after the incident. He was travelling in a friend's car, which was stopped by police. They found wood in the boot (his friend is a builder) and arrested them for possessing an offensive weapon—they were held in custody for seven weeks.

Role of LPYS

Parvaiz Kahn spoke to *Militant*:

"We have to defend ourselves because the police are not doing their job. When Asian kids get beaten up nothing is done, but when we fight back the police turn up like a swarm of bees.

"It is important to involve the Labour Party and the unions; they have always helped us out. When the miners were on strike they came to all our meetings and we went to theirs.

"The LPYS and *Militant* always help us, they were there at the start. They've given us good reports in the paper—better than some of the Asian groups".

Newham Seven speakers will be at LPYS national conference this weekend. For more details of the coming demonstration contact PO Box 273, Forest Gate, London E7, or contact East Ham LPYS on 01-552 3204.



Gordon Bennet writes—

A FRIEND of mine was recently told that he has a brain tumor. It took around six months from the time he first went to the hospital until he got the news. During that period he was fobbed off with various bull, kept uninformed and generally treated shoddily.

Like a lot of other working class people he and his family had a great deal of respect for the medical profession and simply thought that if they hadn't been told anything then there was nothing to tell.

When a relative who is a doctor made some enquiries she was treated as though she was a bloody nuisance.

The NHS is the jewel in the crown of the achievements of the British labour movement. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, there is a very real danger that the story related above will become more common as the Tories continue their relentless drive to create a two tier health system in this country.

The roots of the problem lie in the way that the NHS was set up. The 1945 Labour Government made a major error when they bought off the opposition of the consultants by 'stuffing their mouths with gold' as Nye Bevan put it.

They are now an entrenched power bloc within the NHS who will have to be brought under democratic control at the earliest opportunity. Their use of private practice within the Health Service is a national disgrace and should be ended on day one of the next Labour Government.

Secondly, despite the hard work and dedication of the ancilliaries, nurses, admin staff and junior doctors, the NHS often appears to be a faceless bureaucracy. It's about time it was democratised and brought under the real control of those who work there and those who use it.

Marxism demands the maximum participation of working people in the institutions that affect us—not for any sentimental reason—but because socialism is all about the working class controlling their own lives and destiny.

The Tories use death by a thousand cuts to whittle away the effectiveness of the NHS so that more and more people in desperation turn to the private sector.

The beauty of this strategy from the Tories' point of view is that very often it's not them who get the blame for the long waiting lists and declining standards, but the idea of public provision itself.

The Labour leaders should cut the waffle and make cast iron pledges about expansion and democratisation. In the meantime they should be publicly supporting the health workers every time they take action in defence of the NHS.

Miner jailed for smashing window

A YOUNG Miner was sentenced to three weeks in jail recently. His crime was smashing one window. There were no other charges and the miner, Pete Furo, had no previous convictions.

Pete has also been sacked from his job in Elsecar workshops in Yorkshire. His wife, Elaine had a baby in the first week of the strike; the baby's first birthday was while he was in prison. His wife wasn't told where he'd been for a week after the sentence.

Like all miners' families, Pete and Elaine have been left with enormous debts after the year long strike. They are now faced with the dole unable to pay off these debts. Elaine is determined to fight on for a victory in the amnesty campaign. Messages of support and donations to 80 Stratford Avenue, Elsecar near Barnsley.

General amnesty NOW



By Pat Reet

The Miners Amnesty Campaign was launched by rank and file miners to raise support for sacked and imprisoned miners and fight for their reinstatement. Send resolutions of support and sponsorship of the campaign to Phillip White, 10 Herman Road, Caerau, Maesteg, Mid Glamorgan.



"Support sacked miners" demonstration in Sheffield last weekend attended by 4,000. Photo: John Harris IFL

Midlands NUM ranks back strikers

RECENT ELECTIONS in the NUM Midlands' Area have shown a shift to the left and support for those who supported the strike at grass roots level, balanced against an apparent move to the right by some union bureaucrats.

Lea Hall Colliery, Rugeley

A striking miner, Graham Warner was elected branch secretary, beating Tony Morris, a leading member of the National Working Miners' Committee, by six votes. 90 per cent of the miners were working at the end of the strike. Lea Hall strikers swallowed their gut feelings against those who had crossed picket lines and campaigned to isolate Morris.

Jock McKie who supported the strike was nominated by the Lea Hall branch for Area Agent, beating Midlands Area Working Miners Committee nominee and leading scab Cyril Dickenson.

Littleton Colliery Cannock

The last branch meeting saw a move by leading scabs to lift the overtime ban soundly defeated. This comes soon after a one-day strike supported by all but 25 men in support of victimised and down-graded ex-strikers. The strike forced the management to recognise the NUM and to negotiate with local branch officials.

Keresley Colliery, Coventry

Recent branch elections saw the unprecedented move in which management arranged coaches to 'bus-in' strikebreakers so that they could vote at the Sunday morning meeting. Ironically, this interference backfired and strike-supporter Frank Allen was re-elected as secretary. Also 10 out of the 12 branch committee positions were won by strikers, significantly including Colin Ward, a leading member of the strike committee and one of the 11 sacked miners at Keresley Colliery.

The vote for Colin Ward is evidence of the support and confidence that exists for sacked miners.

Ironically, it is the lack of organisation by branch officials during the strike that has created the possibility of open broad lefts that are needed to re-vitalise the Midlands area. In most areas the strikers are continuing with regular meetings with attendances of over 200 men. These meetings could become the basis of future broad lefts within the Midlands Area.

By Nigel Wheatley
(Walsall)



Press conference of NUM and NACODS leaders in February. Even at this stage the deputies should have called a strike to link up with the NUM. Photo: Phillip Gordon (Reflex)

Deputies angered

THE NATIONAL Coal Board are trying to turn the screws on the mining industry after the end of the NUM strike.

They have been digging in their heels over victimisation and are using the excuse of shortage of cash to get around their much vaunted "agreement" with the deputies' union, NACODS.

Strike ballot

When NACODS gained an overwhelming vote in a ballot for strike action last autumn the Coal Board cobbled together a "colliery review procedure" to stop the threat of joint action, which NACODS accepted.

The NUM warned that this was a meaningless bit of paper and are now being proved right. The Board have announced closure of Frances Colliery in Scotland and Bedwas in South Wales using the excuse that the cost of repair to "badly damaged" pits was too high. The Board say they can close such pits with no reference to the review procedure.

NACODS are enraged and claim they have been "hoodwinked" by the Tories. They are now discussing strike action. Such a call would be welcome in the fight to save pits but would have been more appropriate when the miners' strike was still on.

A full agreement needs to be worked out between the NUM and NACODS on joint action to solve all the problems after the strike, including pit closures and victimisation of sacked miners.

NUJ backs amnesty

THE NATIONAL Union of Journalists at their Annual Delegate Meeting this week, agreed to sponsor the Miners' Amnesty Campaign. This was carried in an emergency resolution moved by Bryan Beckingham from Bristol branch. The conference also agreed to give full support to the struggle of the miners during their strike and condemned the lack of that support from the Trades Union Congress. It also agreed to set up a public enquiry into the media bias during the dispute.



Militant Third National Rally

21st Birthday celebration
Sunday 3 November, 1985
Royal Albert Hall

Speakers include:

Peter Taaffe Ted Grant Harry De Boer

All tickets £3 (Cheques to "Militant Rally")
(Créche available, but places must be booked)

THE Albert Hall, scene of the first rally of welcome for the Russian revolution in 1917, will be the venue this year for *Militant*'s 21st birthday!

***Militant* is proud to include on this year's platform Harry De Boer—the veteran Trotskyist and Teamsters' picket captain during their historic 1934 strike. Harry was shot and wounded during that strike by the police. Later on Harry went to Mexico for a few weeks and met Leon Trotsky. Harry will be speaking of his experiences in the labour movement up to his meeting with Trotsky.**

Tickets are *strictly first come, first served* so we are putting them on sale earlier this year. Avoid disappointment, buy yours now! Leaflets and posters available soon. There will also be tickets on sale at the *Militant* Readers' Meeting at the LPYS conference.

After the miners' strike

What future for women's support groups?

Discussion of the future of the Women's groups is urgent. *Militant* would welcome letters, articles and comments on how a new generation of women class fighters can build on their achievements of the last year.

WHAT HAPPENS now to the women's support groups which were built during the miners' strike? That is the question most of the women involved are asking. Unfortunately, no answers are being offered by the labour movement.

By Jane Hartley

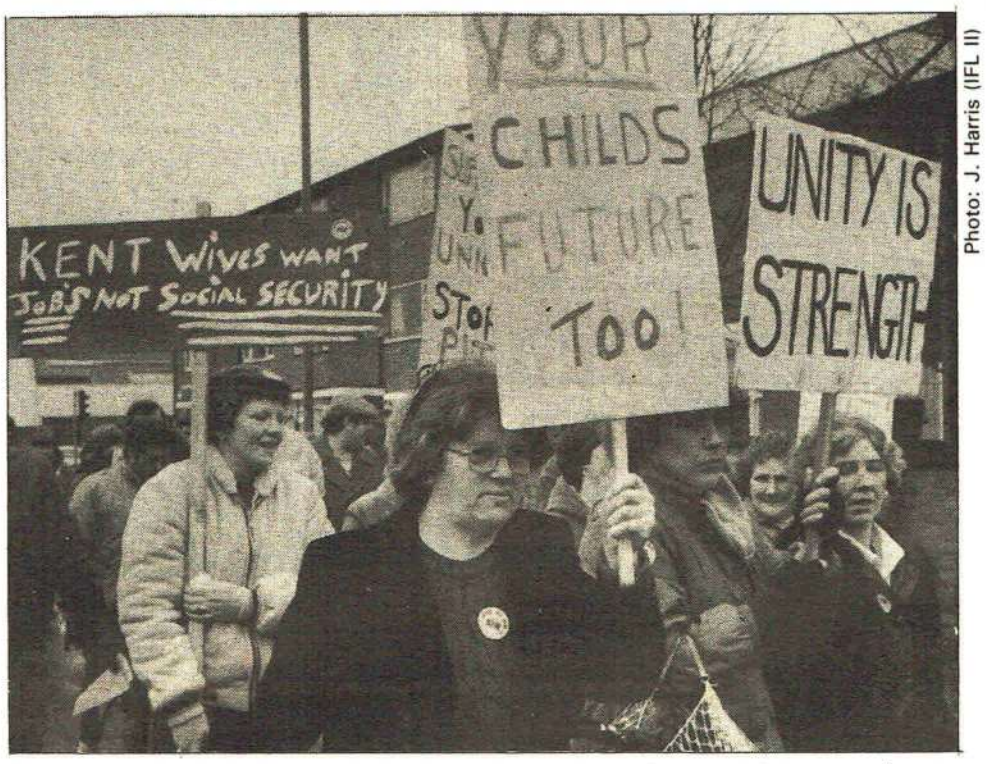


Photo: J. Harris (IFL II)

Kent miners wives in Coalville at the beginning of the strike set the tone for the next year of unprecedented involvement in the struggle.

The activity and support of working class women was a crucial ingredient in the strike. They prevented the Tories splitting families and using women's fears in the return to work campaign. The food parcels and soup kitchens sustained the strike.

Many discovered abilities they would never have believed possible, playing leading roles in organising, speaking at meetings and picketing. Women who had been isolated in their homes for years flowered in this struggle. In one of Castleford's soup kitchens, a woman who suffered from agrophobia and hadn't been out of her house for thirteen years became one of its hardest workers.

As the strike developed so did the women's groups, building links with workers in non-mining areas of Britain, making international contacts and visits, to raise money and establish a national structure.

This led in the autumn to the formation of Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC), with national and area committees. At that time it was felt impossible to hold a national conference involving all the groups.

It was the intention of WAPC to hold a conference at the end of the dispute on the basis of one delegate per group to allow the most democratic conference to decide on a structure, election of officers and future work, etc. That conference must now take place. It is urgently needed.

In some parts of the country smaller groups are already winding up and only the area groups are continuing. There is a danger that many women could be lost from activity if nothing is done.

With the miners' return to work women are now pulled back into the home to support their working husbands and sons. Through shift work the NCB imposes a discipline not just on the miners, but on the women as well.

Though many women have been awakened to wider activity by the strike, because of capitalism's double exploitation of women as workers and in the home, time is very precious. Unless they see a practical and effective use of their time in continuing activity, the women's groups will quickly disappear or become social clubs organising children's parties and trips as happened in Kent after the 1972/74 strikes.

In the latter part of the strike, as the running of soup kitchens settled into a routine, more women began to get politically active. Many have joined the Labour Party. A few, such as in Whitwell in North Derbyshire, have formed the basis of a new Labour Party Women's section.

Build Women's sections

In part of north Yorkshire where women are spread out in different wards the idea of a women's section where they can stick together has proved attractive. The lack of work in the dispute by the Labour Party Women's Section national committee means huge opportunities to build the Women's Section are slipping by.

At the Chesterfield demonstration on International Women's Day the Labour Party Women's Section had no stall, no leaflets even, urging women to join the Labour Party.

All the women's support groups should be invited to send fraternal delegates to the Labour Women's conference in June. The national and regional women's committees should co-opt representatives from WAPC. The battle has got to be won to affiliate WAPC to the Labour Party, just as the NUM is affiliated.

That will only happen if the Labour Party women's sections show that it fights and campaigns on every issue affecting working class women, whether it is pit closures, the amnesty campaign, jobs, wages or peace.

Affiliation to the Labour Party has many attractions. They would be able to tell the party and its leaders what women in the mining areas think (and they've got a lot to tell Kinnock).

On the other hand the Labour Party cannot tell WAPC what to do. This is also an important point in relation to links with the NUM. At the Chesterfield rally Scargill said: "You are part of our union now."

The name of the union would be a welcome recognition of the women's contribution. However, backward ideas in some areas have produced many battles against ignorance, unthinking attitudes, or just plain bureaucratic heavy stifling initiatives outside official control.

Once the women were organised they didn't allow anything to stand in their way—neither prejudice nor bureaucracy. They value their independence and are proud of their achievements. A link with the NUM would have the advantage of a link in each pit, but it would need a cast-iron guarantee of non-interference.

A conference allowing all groups delegates and visitors must be held.

Another problem is where groups have split—which was inevitable in some cases considering the pressure on the active women. By and large WAPC recognises all the groups, but would the NUM?

The campaign which would hold most women's groups together, commanding the deepest feelings, is the amnesty campaign. The women's groups could play a major role in supporting sacked miners and their families and by exerting pressure in the labour movement to ensure their is no retreat by the Labour leadership if the NUM is unable to win a full amnesty.

Discussion on the future of the women's groups is urgent. A conference allowing all groups a delegate and visitors must be held. Decisions on links with the NUM, affiliation to the Labour Party, future work and the amnesty campaign could be taken.

The labour movement has a duty to find the new generation of women class fighters which has emerged out of this strike a full role in shaping the future. The talents which have been revealed, the struggles against old chauvinistic attitudes which have been waged, must be built on.

The strike has given a glimpse of the potential of a socialist society—not soup kitchens but community restaurants and other facilities which could relieve women of household drudgery. For many miners and their wives this has been a year not dominated by NCB dictats or shift patterns, which, despite the hardships, has released abilities and interests previously submerged.

The WAPC has to develop a programme taking up issues specially affecting women and showing how they relate to the struggle to change society. Only a socialist society can guarantee jobs, a secure future and the full development of human potential.

Talking it through

The NUM meeting at BLOC conference produced a discussion over the future for the Women's Support Groups. Three participants in the campaign talked to IAN ILETT about their experiences and the best way to build on them.

Roz Russell, Clowne. We have been out on a limb because we hadn't got a pit for a start. We have been feeding everybody in both villages regardless of which pit they worked at and we had to beg all the way.

We've not had any NUM support; we have been second class citizens. We were worried about them being able to influence any decisions we made, by becoming affiliated to the NUM.



Rita Aspinall

Rita Aspinall, Chorley Lancashire.

My experience is totally different because our wives group is only a subcommittee of the local Support Group. Like Clowne, we don't have one particular pit. We've fed families from Bold, Parkside, Goldburn, about four pits. Because our pits had closed years ago all our men have moved out to various pits. We have had little contact with the NUM. But if we have asked for money or anything like that we have received it and we haven't been treated like second class citizens.

I don't really know about being affiliated to the NUM. I don't think the women should go in competition with the miners. Although we have shown what we can do, we don't go down the pits.

We can't be regarded as NUM members as such.

I'm not doing women down. But as I see it an honorary role in the NUM, a role that we can look back on in a few years time and say we fought and earned that beside our men.

Obviously the fight in the pits is going to go on. But I think also we have got to broaden out into other disputes. We have got to get the youth in. Various other unions are going to have problems. We have got to get into the Labour Party and get things changed.

Margaret Creear, Rochdale.

There are a lot of different experiences in the Wives Support Groups. In some areas, like Yorkshire, you've got the official wives group which is related to the NUM. But you have also got wives groups which aren't related to the NUM because of arguments at various points during the course of the strike.

There is also a fear amongst the women that they will lose a certain amount of their independance, that they won't be able to decide what they want to campaign on but that they will be told. There needs to be much bigger discussion in the Wives Groups themselves, I don't think they have decided yet.



Margaret Creear

A lot of Wives Groups want to stay together, but within the Wives groups as well, there are other smaller groups of women who also want to be more directly involved in politics and I know quite a few of them are joining the Labour Party and setting up Womens Sections.

A big step forward would be for the National Committee of Wives Against Pit Closures to call a national delegate conference of all the Miners Wives Support Groups because they have never ever had one.

Roz Russell

That would be great. But from personal experience in Chesterfield we would have to get it done democratically. They had a top table, and the elected members were there before we went. They had got a Chairman, a Treasurer and everything.



Roz Russell

They should have delegates elected from the existing Womens Action Groups as they are now—which would be a lot different from what they were in the beginning.

Fight rate-capping — defend jobs and services

Council workers build for combine

NEARLY 300 delegates and visitors representing over half a million workers in 40 local authorities met in Liverpool last Saturday.

The structure was established for a national combine of all local authority workers.

Jim Hollinshead (Liverpool JSSC) moving the constitution and statement of aims of the National Local Authorities Co-ordinating Committee (NLACC) said it marked a new phase in the struggle of local authority unions which could lead to the setting up of a public sector alliance of trade unions.

The conference committed itself to campaigning for a nationally co-ordinated strategy of solidarity strike action if any local authorities face legal action or the threat of commissioners or compulsory redundancies.

A National Co-ordinating Committee will be set up with three delegates from each local authority JSSC or JTUC whose first meeting will be in Sheffield on 13 April, where an executive of six will be elected. Over £1,000 was collected at the conference to carry out the work of the NLACC.

By Ken Smith



Miners wives group back Liverpool council outside the Town Hall, 7 March 1985.

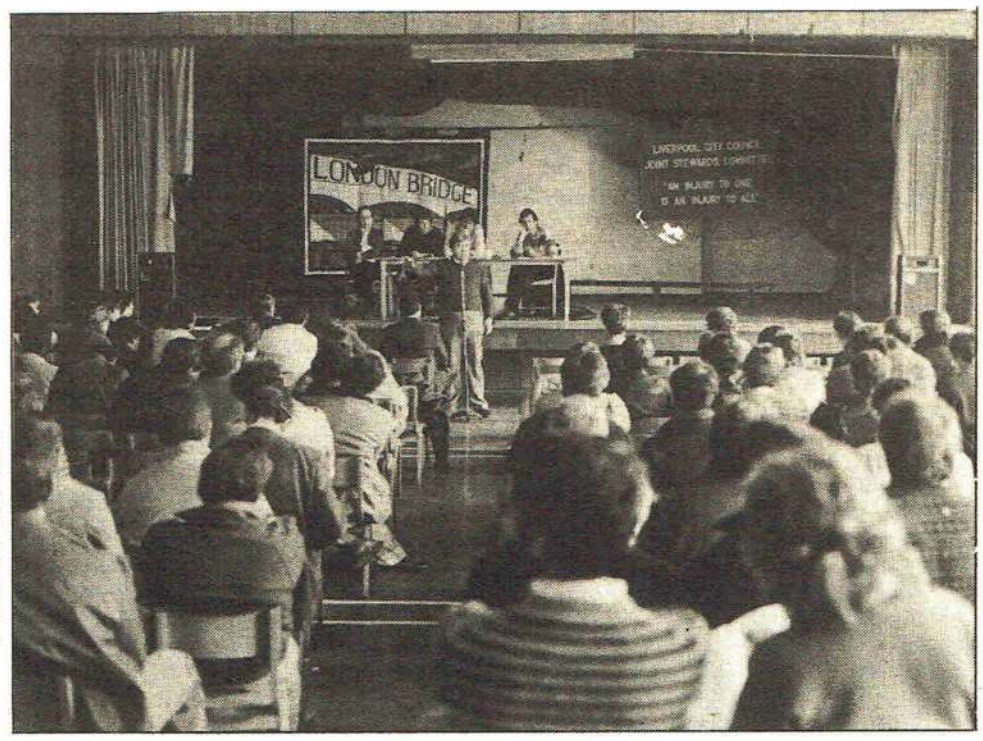


Photo: Dave Sinclair.

National Local Authority Co-ordinating conference, Liverpool, 30 March. Tommy Douras (Hackney JSSC) speaking.

Nick Toms interviewed Jim O'Brien (Chairman, National Local Authorities Co-ordinating Committee).

Q. What are your thoughts on the conference?

A. I thought it was a major success with over 40 local authorities' trade unions represented—tremendous. All credit to the Liverpool Joint Shop Stewards who have done an enormous amount of work to ensure the conference was a success.

The unanimity of the resolutions on policy and organisation put to the conference shows the strength of feeling that exists amongst local authority workers.

Q. What is the way forward now?

A. Well the foundations have been laid this weekend. If we conduct a campaign then this organisation will grow from strength to strength. We're having an emergency recall of London Bridge now on Monday to discuss the start of a programme of selective industrial action. I don't think there is any chance of what we've begun here dying away—the organisation is here to stay.

Caroline Benn praises nursery policy

CAROLINE BENN spoke in support of Liverpool's nursery schools programme when she opened a nursery unit at Rathborn School, Liverpool, 14 February, 1985.

"MOST LOCAL authorities are closing schools today. Very few are also opening schools or units, let alone five new nursery class projects—like this one—this term also another unit being built, and six more due to start within the next year.

"Nearly 6,000 children aged three and four are in nursery schools and units.

"The fact that Liverpool is promoting this programme, speaks for itself; and for the determination of Liverpool Council to pioneer in this field...

"The units being developed in Liverpool are important for several reasons, the first being that they provide a combined service for families. It is both education and a social service together. It is also education for both parents and children—both together, and also separately.

"The flexibility and potential for growth implicit in these arrangements is obvious, enhanced by another unique feature of Liverpool's scheme in this school, the presence of a Parental Support Group. There are now 30 of them in Liverpool and there's no doubt these groups will grow in number, particularly as we come to understand the need to care for the whole child at this age..."

Lessons of the GLC defeat

A GLC shop steward gives his reactions following Ken Livingstone's speech at the BLOC conference:

6 THE IMPORTANT point about his speech is that he didn't try to disguise the fact that on budget day he had two choices: to go along with rate-capping or reject any budget. The end result was cuts.

The reasons for that are important. There was no mobilisation of the workforce behind any strategy, let alone the no-rate strategy. There was no consultation with the trade unions in the crucial period prior to budget day.

We should have had a mass lobby outside the GLC because that would have an important impact on the waverers. They have got to leave the council chamber through that mass lobby afterwards and explain themselves.

On the day there were about half a dozen people.

That was because Livingstone was trying to fiddle a budget that he could get through the council and delay the actual decision time. But even if it had been on the proper date there was no organisation to actually hold a lobby.

In the crucial month before the budget there was no consultation. It was almost impossible for any trade union official to talk to the leaders of the council.

There was a massive turnout on 6 March, which was the TUC day of action and County Hall was picketed. It was pretty well solid, but one person that did cross the picket line was Reg Race—who was going to try to patch together the compromise cuts budget which Livingstone pretended was a growth budget. In fact it adhered to the rate-capping laws and was a cuts budget using reserves and various accountancy manoeuvres.

Livingstone on the platform said that he would provide all facilities to trade unions to struggle against the Tories. One example of the lack of facilities is that many GLC shop stewards were prevented from attending London Bridge meetings by the management and some of them who did attend were docked pay. 9

LIVINGSTONE'S CLAIM that the GLC Labour Group will fight on looks thin. His key new Policy and Resources Committee, set up to shift money to hard-pressed groups has now fallen under the control of the right-wing.

Livingstone was allowed to be a member, but deputy leader John McDonnell was not. Four of the five elected members were right-wingers, and the fifth member, John Carr, is not exactly noted for his ability to fight to the finish. Livingstone supporters such as Valerie Wise were not elected.

And now that he has become more closely involved with the right-wing, could it be that Livingstone's own policies are changing? The Guardian reported, 29 March, that to win over right-wingers in his campaign to be Labour candidate for Brent East, Livingstone is advocating that Parliamentary candidates should be elected by 'one member, one vote'.

Community centre—more than coffee circle

THE TORIES under Margaret Thatcher like to be know as the party of the family. On run-down estates—like the Kingsmead in Hackney with unemployment well over 30 per cent and many single-parent families on low incomes—the support given by community centres is vital.

Many of these are threatened by closure if rate-capping comes in.

Nicky Powell, a young mother who attends the post-natal group in the Wally Foster Centre explained:

"For a first-time mum, the support and advice given by the health visitor and other mums in the group helped me to adapt in the first 2-3 months. It is not just a coffee circle. We've had videos, speakers, discussions and it has helped me to get to know others in the area".

If ratecapping is carried through, those most in need will be the hardest hit—including mothers often isolated in cramped, damp flats with babies. Most don't have cars and even the poor bus service is expensive to use regularly. Hackney council claims to have women's rights high on the list of priorities, but unless they stand firm, it will be worth nothing to working class women in Hackney.

Nicky commented: "There can't be any women's liberation until there are good support services such as creches and nurseries".

By Jean Webb
(Kings Park Labour Party, Hackney South CLP)

No-rate councils approach crunch time

IN THE last week two councils outside London, Manchester and Leicester, buckled and set a rate, whilst two non-rate-capped London councils, Tower Hamlets and Newham, joined in the fight and decided not to set a rate.

As we go to press there are 12 councils, ten in London, Liverpool and Sheffield outside, which have still not set a rate.

If these councils stay firm and mount a mass campaign amongst the workforce and community they could win a famous victory. But the reports from some of the councils are not optimistic.

In some of them there are indications that there are enough Labour councillors prepared to break party policy and comply with Tory cuts to lose the vote in the council chamber.

In Haringey, Lewisham and Lambeth it is said that there are enough Labour councillors prepared to vote with the Tories or Liberal/SDP and set a legal rate. Even in Southwark, Hackney, Islington and Greenwich there are cracks developing in Labour's ranks, which could pave the way at a later date for a legal, cuts budget.

The two London boroughs which joined the no-rate camp last week are not expected to stay there long. In Tower Hamlets it was only achieved by left-wing Labour councillors voting with the Liberals against a right-wing Labour cuts budget.

At the next council meeting local Labour members are expecting that there will be a number of Liberals away so that the right-wing budget can go through, whilst Liberals proclaim they have "clean hands".

In Newham the decision not to set a rate overturned an earlier Labour Group decision to fix a 20% rate rise, and observers there expect that to be successfully re-introduced soon.

But it will not be the end of the battle. Whatever the London local councils do, for council workers there is no choice. They have to fight. And if it is to be a fight against Labour councils then that is the councillors' choice.

Dorset cleaning cuts threaten health

THE PROPOSED cuts by Tory-controlled Dorset County Council are absolutely ridiculous.

One residential home, April Court, is having its cleaning hours cut from 35 hours per week to 21½hpw.

Never before have I experienced such a catalogue of bandit cuts and the amount of despair it'll cause to thousands of loyal workers. There's absolutely no way we can have less cleaning hours. Where I work (using April Court as an example, some are far worse) the place will be filthy.

It wouldn't surprise me at all if before long we hear of cases of dysentry.

I hope this package will be thrown out by our unions and let's hope the members will come out. It's obvious now what a lying bunch of hypocrites we'reconfronting. Their redundancy notices and 'trimmer' pay packets will not be received without a struggle.

By Pat Reith
(Bournemouth GMBATU Shop Steward, Dorset County Council)

Government cuts hit cancer screening

CERVICAL CANCER is the second commonest form of cancer found in women. One out of four women with this condition die. There are 2,000 deaths a year due to it.

Malignant changes in the cells of the cervix spread locally very quickly. The bladder and rectum are soon involved and then it rapidly spreads to bone and lungs.

Lung cancer is responsible for 5% of all deaths in Britain. Bone cancer is extremely painful and difficult to prevent from spreading.

By Rosey Campbell
(Bow and Poplar LPYS and NUPE nurse)

Half the sufferers die within 1½ years of diagnosis.

If caught in time almost all women treated for cervical cancer can be restored to normal health. Successful easy treatment relies on quick action following positive diagnosis.

As part of government health cuts the national recall system of the cervical screening programme was transferred to the responsibility of the GP. However, insufficient money has been provided for the GPs and health authorities to implement the government policy of screening all sexually active women every five years.

Ideally annual cervical smear tests should be taken of all women. Women requesting this are refused. In three health authorities last year GPs attempting to perform regular smear tests were asked to stop sending samples for testing because staff could not cope with the demand.

The main aim of the government policy is to screen all women aged over 35. The mother who died recently due to cancer of the cervix in Oxfordshire was only 33. She had been given a smear test but the positive result was not followed up.



This is not an isolated case. The falldown in the system is directly due to the government cuts within the health service. Cuts in staffing levels and cuts in finances preventing the health service from having necessary equipment and carrying out research.

All women should be regularly screened for cervical cancer. More staff should be employed to cope with testing the smears.

Records of dates and results and recall dates of all smears should be computerised. Results, positive or negative, should be reported back to the woman.

Socialists must campaign through the trade unions, the Labour Party women's sections for a better organised national recall screening system for all women.



Gillick attacks womens rights

WOMEN HAVE been in the frontline of the Tories' assaults on the working class. However women workers are not only under attack economically, to be driven back "into the home" to do the jobs social services should provide.

By Linda Douglas
(LPYS National Committee, elect, South London)

The Tories are attacking the right of women to control their lives. Women in the labour movement fought hard to achieve abortion and contraception. But now the Tories, or more accurately their right wing auxillaries, are trying to undermine this.

Late last year Victoria Gillick won her appeal against West Norfolk health authority to stop them giving contraceptive advice to girls under 16, without parental knowledge or consent.

The consequences of the decision are obvious. In 1980 there were 1,800 abortions among 15 year olds and 46,000 among 16 year olds, which shows the need for 'pre-16' contraception—a fact of life which can not be wished away. The Gillick verdict will lead to more unwanted pregnancies, back street abortions and unnecessary family traumas—already there have been suicides by young girls who thought they would not be now able to get an abortion.

Gillick by the way, is no 'ordinary, concerned mother'. She is well off and can afford her ten children. She was also involved with 'Powellight' in the early 1970's, an extreme right wing group set up to support the racist sentiments of Enoch Powell, and linked to the Monday Club and groups like the National Front!

But the undermining of women's rights doesn't stop with Gillick. Her idol Enoch Powell, now an Ulster Unionist MP, has introduced his 'Protection of Unborn Children' Bill, to prevent experimentation on human embryoes.

This could have enormous repecussions for In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF), or 'test tube babies'. This treatment of infertility still has a low success rate (10%) and only further experimentation on human embryos will improve success. It is ironic that the anti-abortionists now want to stop all women having the right of motherhood!

The Powell bill says the Tory Secretary of State should approve each woman requesting IVF. Besides being a breach of medical confidentiality, it can be imagined how the Tories, would discriminate against women because of their economic and marital status or sexual orientation.

It is a fact of life that disease such as haemophilia, muscular dystrophy and some forms of cystic fibrosis are unique to humans and therefore can only be studied by scientists using human embryos. Present research may save future lives.

Scare stories

Much of the moralistic arguments on this experimentation—citing 'human cloning' and 'crossing humans with animals'—are scare stories. The real motive behind the Powell Bill is to chip away at abortion rights, by staking the claim that 'life begins at conception' and thus set the atmosphere for future attack. They know they could not get away with an outright attack on abortion rights at present.

This bill along with Gillick's ruling is perfectly in line with the Tories' aims for a return to 'Victorian values'. It is a class issue. The overwhelming burden of these decisions will fall on the shoulders of working class women. The labour movement must ensure these attacks are stopped in their tracks.

Teachers under stress

TEACHERS ARE demanding that they are paid a decent wage for the work they do. But the claim for better wages is only part of the reason for their present action.

Increased work-loads and pressures have built up discontent amongst teachers. GORDEN FEYEN from Strathclyde region explains to *Militant* what this means.

"Work for primary school teachers is more difficult than ever. The teaching methods of today have created far more demands on the teachers—made worse by the education budgets, the composite class and new teaching methods.

"Primary school teachers have to be 'multi-skilled'. They need to be a parent figure to look after children, a social worker, an author—often having to write original material to teach with.

"They have to be a policeman, looking after discipline, a technician, able to operate a computer and print material, a researcher, because of the cut-backs in research staff, and at the same time keep up with reports and assessment and developing the curriculum.

"On top of these other roles the teacher has to be—a teacher with responsibility for the care and education of the young.

"Secondary school teachers are also facing increased work-loads. The standard courses which pupils used to follow, leading to a minority elite taking external exams, are being replaced by the new Standard Grade course of three levels of syllabus. This means that teachers with third or fourth year classes have to construct their own courses from a skeleton provided.

"Staffing has not been increased to cope with this extra work-load. In addition the new courses are running in tandem with the old ones adding to the problems. All pupils are included in the new system, evolved from the Dunning report which was rightly called 'assessment for all'.



Scottish teachers protest 20 March. Photo: R Mathews (IFL)

"Unfortunately most teachers haven't been trained in the new methods of assessment. Other changes are on the way for higher grades and sixth year studies. A report is being done on education in the 10 to 14 year age group which could bring major changes in the first and second year courses.

"In some areas mentally handicapped children have been integrated in the schools. In Lothian and Grampian regions Scottish certificate of Secondary Education Mode 3 is on offer which entails large amounts of internal assessment—with the tests being devised by the teacher.

"With all these extra responsibilities it is no wonder that Scottish teachers are in a determined frame of mind. Along with our colleagues in England and Wales we are battling for the future of education.

"We must be committed to the development of education for all, call for the employment of more teachers, properly paid playground supervisers, and more ancilliary staff.

"Our present dispute is not only about us but, even more important for the future; the young today are our future tomorrow".

LPYS Conference '85



Photo: Militant

The 400-strong contingent marches into Pontypridd in support of the South Wales NUM last year.

Young miners show the way



Photo: Militant

Young Socialists march to the court in Castleford during the Fitzwilliam Nine trial, after NUM and LPYS members were arrested during a police riot in Yorkshire.



Photo: Tina Carroll

The LPYS conference last year giving a standing ovation to the miners who addressed the two and a half thousand delegates and visitors.

SINCE THE early '70s when *Militant* supporters won a majority on the National Committee of the Labour Party Young Socialists, we have emphasised the key role young workers would play in building a mass socialist youth movement.

The brilliant movement of young miners last year confirmed this. They became the driving force and backbone of the strike.

Youth today have everything to fight for. Presently 233,963 16—17 year olds are on the dole, chasing 9,700 job vacancies. Teenagers have become the new long term unemployed—a human conveyor belt which goes straight from school to the dole or a cheap labour YTS scheme.

The proposals in the recent budget show that the bosses have treated youth as the scapegoat. We must take lower wages and worse conditions—or else. The Tories have their greedy eyes on the wage levels of young workers in industry (already the lowest paid) and hope to drive them down even further to become a pool of cheap labour for the bosses to exploit.

But already this year we are showing we can fight back.

Following on from the miners' strike, 20,000 school students went on strike, organised by the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign in Glasgow, (plans of a national schools' action will be discussed at LPYS Conference. Also plans for a YTURC demo in Liverpool in June will be announced at conference).

In 1984/85 the LPYS reached a turning point. We organised mass meetings and demonstrations to give political and practical support to the miners. The YS grew from 508 branches in March '84, to 573 by March '85. We are proud that over 20 of those new branches were set up in mining areas, and hundreds of miners joined us in the dispute.

The building of a mass socialist youth movement is well underway. But this depends more than ever on the Marxist ideas of *Militant*, which have proved their worth in the heat of struggle.

The battles of the YTS trainees and school students need the support of the young workers in the trade union movement. Their fight for real jobs and a decent future can only be successful alongside the young workers.

The struggle and determination of the young miners last year will spread to the mass of youth throughout the country—the task of the LPYS is to win those thousands to socialism

HERE WE GO!

By John Hird.
(LPYS National Chairperson)

A year of supporting the NUM

DURING 1984 the LPYS came of age as a fighting organisation of young workers. We can be proud of the role we played in fighting shoulder to shoulder with the miners throughout the dispute.

Nearly £1 million was collected by individual LPYS branches in support of the miners. In Yorkshire alone, over 4,000 attended joint NUM/LPYS public meetings.

Nationally, two leaflet-runs and posters, and stickers saying: "Save the Pits, Give Youth a Future" were produced.

It would be impossible to record every activity and initiative of the LPYS during the strike—at some stages LPYS members were involved in organising at least two mass demonstrations and public meetings a week.

April 1984

The first national demonstration in support of the miners was organised by the LPYS in Mansfield. Over 3,000 miners, their wives and young people turned up. Tony Benn and Dennis Skinner spoke.

National LPYS conference

Over 100 young miners attended and stamped their identity on the conference with their songs, slogans, fighting class spirit and confidence.

June/July

Concerts organised jointly by the NUM/LPYS took place. Major successes were the 3,000-strong Liverpool concert, and those at Newcastle and Bristol, where Billy Bragg played.

August—Summer camp

Camp, like conference, was dominated by the miners' strike. In the course of the camp the South Wales NUM funds were threatened by the Tory law courts. The LPYS and young miners immediately went into action. At a day's notice several coaches took 400 YS and NUM members to Pontypridd to defend the South Wales NUM headquarters.

The reception the LPYS received as we marched in was tremendous. At an impromtu rally several LPYS members and young miners spoke.

Labour Party conference

The LPYS young miners' rally at the conference attracted over 2,000 young miners, and miners' wives. It was the second largest fringe meeting. At the conference itself LPYS members moved a successful resolution condemning the role of the police during the strike.

December

Young miners and Young Socialists arrested in an earlier police riot in the Yorkshire pit village of Fitzwilliam came to trial. A defence campaign successfully managed to get more serious charges dropped and eventually only one comrade was sent to prison. Mass meetings and marches and a speaking tour all helped to limit the convictions.

Apart from the major events listed above every LPYS branch without exception played its part in supporting the miners from start to finish. As well as hundreds of thousands of national leaflets and posters, a mass of local and regional material was produced.

The Yorkshire and Northern LPYS regions took initiatives in producing *Young Miner* bulletins.

The young miners' resolve to battle on for a year against the full force of the bosses' state was in sharp contrast to the lack of leadership shown by those at the head of the labour and trade union movement.

LPYS Conference'85

Fight for your future

IN CARDIFF in January 1985 I was one of the city's 20,256 unemployed people chasing after 108 job vacancies. At the same time there was an article in the local paper saying that the number of millionaires in Britain had doubled since 1979—the year Thatcher came to power.

By Tony Wedlake
(LPYS National Committee Wales)

The Tories can be very generous when it comes to giving away public owned assets to big business. We've seen the Tories 'piratise' British Telecoms and Amersham International (two of the biggest employers in Cardiff). Now they plan to sell off the National Bus Corporation. This will mean if you live on a profitable bus route your fare will go up, and if you live on an unprofitable route, then tough—start walking.

One of the greatest reforms won by the working class was the National Health Service. Remember Thatcher's sick joke—"the Health Service is safe with us". The fact is that the working class is not safe whilst the NHS is in the hands of the Tories.

One of the greatest struggles to defend the NHS has been that of Barking hospital workers who have been on strike for over a year against the privatisation of hospital services. This year's conference will be addressed by a striker from Barking.

But it's not enough to just attack the Tories and blame them for everything and then go home thinking that you've done a good day's work. This is what many of the present Labour Party leadership seem to think. We must put forward a socialist programme that will show working class youth that a future socialist Labour government is going to do better.

Many youth are correctly reaching revolutionary conclusions—that capitalism is so decayed that it cannot be reformed or made good. The bosses have been telling us for the past two years that the economy has been experiencing a boom, production has gone up and profits are up. That may well be the case—profits might be up, but so is unemployment, heroin addiction and ill health. Working class people have not felt the benefit of the bosses' 'boom'.

Labour's programme

The LPYS will work flat out for a Labour victory in the next election. We always have done. The dumping of this reactionary Tory government is imperative. But the lesson is clear; if the representatives of capitalism, the Tories, cannot manage the economy then how the hell can capitalism be managed by a workers' party? When Labour returns to power, if it makes only small changes in the economy, if it only tinkers with the clapped out engine of capitalism, it is doomed to failure.

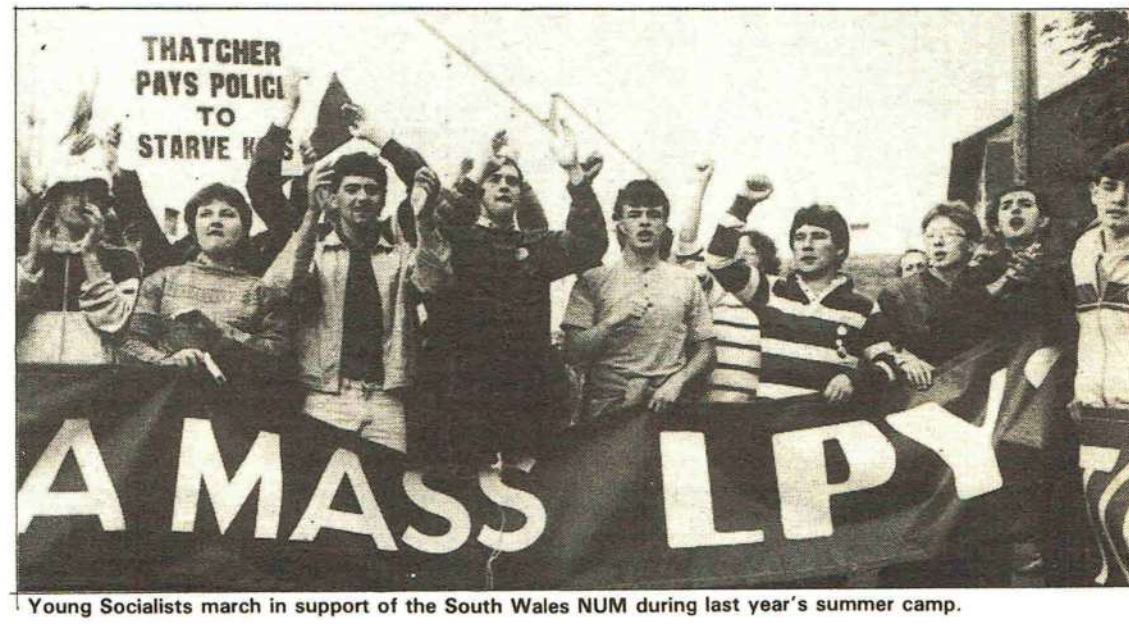


Photo: Militant

Young Socialists march in support of the South Wales NUM during last year's summer camp.

What is necessary is a clear socialist programme. A 35-hour week without loss of pay (which will create at least 1.5 million jobs), and a £100 a week minimum wage. Why should workers—who produce the wealth in society—earn poverty wages when the managing director of ICI has just been awarded a pay rise of an extra £2,000 per week?

But reforms such as these can only be secured when they rest on the firm foundation of a socialist planned economy. It is essential that a future Labour government nationalises the top 200 monopolies in Britain, who between them control 85% of the economic wealth of the country. This would ensure that the levers of economic power were taken out of the hands of the capitalist class, so the abundant wealth in society could be directed towards the benefit of all, instead of towards the profits of a few.

Nationalisation

When the LPYS talk about nationalisation, we don't mean the kind of nationalisation we have seen in the past. After all, the mining industry is nationalised but we have union-busters like MacGregor running it on behalf of the capitalist class.

What we demand is worker's control of industry. Workers in the factories and workplaces know how best to run their industries. For example if defence workers had control of their industry, would they continue to manufacture worthless weapons of destruction or would they vote to make the kidney machines and thousand of other things that society desperately needs? These goods are not produced under capitalism because greed, not need, determines what is produced.

The message from Britain's youth is clear, it's time we made the bosses pay. Its's time we had a leadership willing to fight to get the bosses out for good and build a socialist Britain where society is run on the basis of need and not profit.

Sweatshop Britain

THE TORY budget was a disaster. They want a massive expansion of YTS, extending schemes to two years. Young workers have been put in a precarious position through the unfair dismissal clauses being extended to two years—those aged around 20 are vulnerable to being sacked before they reach two years employment and replaced by 'cheaper' school leavers.

Wages Councils are to be scrapped as the Tories' assault on wages continues.

The Tories' policies are those of the sweatshop. We have plenty of these in Derby. At one I worked at, I complained when rain came through a leak in the roof onto the central lathe I was working on. A few weeks later myself and the other guy who complained were both layed off.

I got a job at a small ICI factory, but conditions were worse. It was working with clay paint—you got a respirator and a bottle of milk a day, to 'keep the dust down'. But the green clay paint got embedded in your skin. On a blind date once I took this girl to a disco pub. The disco lights made the paint stand out—the girl thought I had varicose veins!

The Tory myth goes that by keeping wages down, more jobs will be created. Well that ICI factory was shut down—yet ICI make millions in profits. Pre-tax profits last year were £1,034 million. Part of that went to give ICI chairman John Harvey Jones a wacking 68% pay rise. He now gets £287,261 a year.

This is the Tories' priority—fat profits for the rich and low pay, exploitation and dangerous working conditions for the rest of us.

By Chris Fernandez
(Youth Officer, Derby North CLP)



Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)

Youth trainees on the YTURC lobby of Parliament on 28 February.

YTURC's record

THE YOUTH Trade Union Rights Campaign was formed in 1981 to fight for the rights of youth trainees. During its three year history it has played a big part in securing better conditions for trainees and campaigning to get the labour movement to take us this issue.

Summer 1981: As trainees take part in one-day strikes breaking out in many areas, the LPYS mounts a campaign to organise YOPsters.

September 1981: The LPYS along with the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment call for the formation of YTURC.

YTURC holds its founding conference in Liverpool with 300 delegates present.

1982: In response to Tory threats to cut trainees' pay to £15 per week, YTURC calls for a mass lobby of Parliament; 3,000 attend. The Tories' plans are dropped.

YTURC supported by the LPYS, hold a demonstration in Liverpool over YTS conditions. Over 10,000 youth join the march.

Union recruitment of trainees begins to take off. The CPSA in the British Airports Authority gets pay rise and trade union conditions for trainees, as do NALGO in some local authorities.

The Labour Party conference, despite the opposition of the National Executive, backs a resolution from East Kilbride CLP which puts the demands of YTURC.

In October, the youth schemes claim their 19th victim, killed because of inadequate health and safety measures. MPs, members of YTURC and the parents of youths killed on the scheme lobby the MSC. Under pressure, the Tories make some improvements on health and safety, though they are still far from satisfactory.

YTURC holds the Young Workers' Assembly. With 2,300 young workers in attendance, half of them delegates from their trade union branches, it is the largest meeting of trade union youth ever.

1984: Despite YTURC's work being cut across by the momentous struggle of the miners, local campaigns have continued. YTURC presented a 'health and safety' charter for YTS to the TUC for support.

1985: Trainees and school students give mass backing to the YTURC campaign. Up to 5,000 trainees join a lobby of Parliament against proposals to conscript youth onto the schmes, by cutting off their supplementary benefit. With the backing of top musicians Paul Weller and Billy Bragg, a 50,000 signature petition is presented to Downing Street.

In Scotland YTURC is overwhelmed when their call for action by school students against YTS is met by the biggest school students strike in history. 20,000 school students walk out and 10,000 pack into a YTURC rally in Glasgow.



Photo: Militant

Bradford Young Socialists arrive for the YTURC lobby of Parliament.

What the Marxists stand for

OVER THE Easter weekend, *Militant* supporters in the LPYS will be spelling out policies and demands that can end the intolerable problems of capitalism faced by youth. The main demands are:

- **★ End unemployment—the right to work for all.**
- **★ Reverse the cuts—for a massive programme of public works in education, housing, the health service and public transport.**
- **★ For a 35-hour week with no loss of pay.**
- **★ For a £100 minimum wage for all.**
- **★ Trade union rights for YTS trainees.**
- **★ For decent grants for students especially FE students.**
- **★ Support for workers' struggles internationally.**
- **★ Cut the waste of arms spending—for unilateral nuclear disarmament.**
- **★ Nationalisation of the top 200 or so monopolies, including the banks and finance houses under workers control with compensation only on the basis of proven need. This would provide a firm foundation for a socialist planned economy.**

Organise against the fascists

THE FASCISTS have received a hammering since the '70s when they claimed they were Britain's "fourth party".

In elections they receive derisory votes while the fascist parties have split and factionalised.

But it would be wrong to dismiss them as irrelevant. As they lose more and more support, so they turn to terror attacks, singling out black and Asian workers. Wherever the fascists try to march they must be met head on.

The LPYS has been in the forefront of this fight. Two weeks ago in Liverpool the fascist British National Party tried to meet. Local Young Socialists joined the 200 black and white workers who turned out to stop the BNP—the fascists didn't even get off the coach!

In London on March 23, the National Front threatened to march, meeting at London Bridge. At the last minute they switched the venue to Woolwich Arsenal rail station—at 36 hours notice the Greenwich and Woolwich LPYS branches went into action.

A counter demonstration was called—3,000 leaflets were produced and 200 hand written posters put up by the LPYS. We visited colleges, stations, council depots and factories. We warned local Asian groups of the NF threat.

Thames Poly Student Union gave us free use of their printing facilities and a stewards' meeting was called, with delegates invited from each of the organisations contacted.

On the day itself, by which time rumours were flying that the NF march had been banned, 150 turned up outside Woolwich station. Police confirmed the rumours, and people began drifting away. But then a police surveillance van appeared so the demonstration was recalled. Other counter demonstrators who had been at London Bridge arrived.

Joined by local black and white youth, Woolwich Arsenal station was soon surrounded by 350 people; the NF would not be allowed to get off the train.

Faced with such a demonstration the police made sure the NF adhered to the ban, and they were directed to Dartford—the NF's 'London' march took place 20 miles outside the city!

By a Greenwich LPYS member

Scargill's message

ARTHUR Scargill, President of the NUM, has sent a message of support to LPYS conference:

"Throughout the NUM's fight against pit closures, unemployment and the decimation of mining communities, Britain's young miners have displayed a courage, strength and wisdom with which their older colleagues in the union are proud to be associated.

"The miners' fight goes on. But it is not our fight alone. Young people in the Labour Party and throughout the labour movement must stand firm alongside the mining communities.

"Our battle is only beginning, but together we will win."



Photo: Militant

Arthur Scargill.

A miner's viewpoint

MINER Richard Clarkson of the Prince of Wales NUM, explains why he supports the LPYS and *Militant*:

I couldn't understand why the Labour Party hadn't adopted the same ideas.

When the strike broke out the LPYS were the first people to start collecting money in Wakefield. The local YS branch produced *Young Miner*. It received a good response in villages like Fitzwilliam. We held a number of *Young Miner* meetings and LPYS members and *Militant* supporters helped to set up the local miners' support committee.

Many miners realise that it's not just a question of closing pits, but of an attack on the whole trade union movement. In some areas, for example Hemsworth, many miners have started joining the Labour Party.

Most of the lads who were active in the picketing are determined to get active in the union. I think after the strike the branch meetings will be more political.

Defend councils against Tory attack

IN MOST towns, especially the inner city areas, council-run facilities are often the only ones available.

In Hackney, one of the London boroughs on the rate capping hitlist, if the council carried through the Tories' cuts youth clubs and community centres would go, such as the Wally Foster centre in Homerton (where the LPYS meet) which is used by over 200 youth on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The majority of Hackney's sports centres would be hit. The GLC is to hand over the Hackney Marshes football complex (the biggest expanse of pitches in Europe) to Hackney council, but the council say they cannot afford to run it.

Facilities in Hackney are already poor—the whole borough has only one cinema, and that's council run. And this in an area with one in five out of work.

Hackney LPYS branches are holding a series of meetings in youth and community clubs. We are demanding no closures, the opening up of school facilities outside school hours, and unity with the trade unions and the council in the fightback against rate-capping.

By Simon Cole
(Hackney South and Shoreditch LPYS)

Sell *Militant*

THE MARXIST paper for Labour and Youth—that's the masthead of *Militant*. It has only been *Militant* that has consistently championed the cause of youth in the Labour Party.

The *Militant* paper has been the best fighter for full democratic rights for the LPYS to conduct their own campaigns on their own policies, with the maximum resources from the Labour Party. *Militant* has carried in its pages a fighting programme for youth, that has been taken up the LPYS, and in part by the Labour Party as well.

In each issue still at least one whole page is devoted to the problems of youth, and the fightback led by the LPYS. What other weekly has carried such extensive coverage of the conditions on YTS schemes, the struggle of the young miners or the plight of the young unemployed?

Last week the entire front page of *Militant* was given over to the rebellion among school students. We alone gave wholehearted support to their strikes and demonstrations.

But it does not leave it there. Young Socialists especially want to deepen their understanding of politics and socicalist theory. They want to read about the history of the international labour movement, and about the struggle of workers in other countries today.

Every Young Socialist should read *Militant*. But don't just read it, sell it too to your friends or to those at work or at your school or college.

An audience with Thatcher

MRS THATCHER will probably regard parliamentary Question Time as a pleasent diversion after her experience with a group of young unemployed people from Knowsley, Merseyside, the other week.

The trip was organised on the initiative of Robert Kilroy-Silk MP and paid for by the PM. The 25 who saw Mrs Thatcher took the lead from the start.

Mrs Thatcher asked to address them for about 30 minutes after which they could talk to the industrialists on hand about how to get a job.

Rita Neils from Kirkby promptly informed her they had not come to be lectured but to put their views and ask questions. She emphasised her points by thumps on the table. When she finished the others applauded.

Mrs Thatcher, clearly annoyed, had to give way. 20 year old Ian Skarretts who has had one short spell of employment since leaving school, asked her if she thought £40 for a 70 hour week (6am to 9pm, six days a week) a fair wage? Mrs Thatcher asked: "Was it YTS?". When told that it wasn't she moved straight on.

Phillip Dunford, also 20, said that he had been unemployed for four years; Thatcher talked about the proposed extension of YTS from one to two years!

She was reminded that young people wanted real jobs, that they'd had their fill of badly paid and pointless schemes. In any case, many had been too old for the Youth Opportunities Programme (the predecessor of YTS) but were too young for Community Programme jobs. Mrs Thatcher's reply? "I thought someone would say that".

After about 40 minutes of largely ignoring questions, interspersed with little lectures on the "need for an environment in which private enterprise can create real jobs", Mrs Thatcher tried to make her escape. She was pursued by 17 year old Angela Clarke and reminded that she hadn't answered any of her questions.

Angela told her that she thought her policies were rubbish and that she was anti-working class and anti-trade union. Mrs Thatcher obviously proved no match for this group of Knowsley youngsters; follow that Labour MPs!

By Jim McGinley

LPYS Conference'85

Zimbabwe, South Africa, Denmark, Chile

Zimbabwe: answering the slanders

THE OUTCRY over the detention of 15 trade unionists, ZANU activists and socialists in Zimbabwe, has led the country's Minister of Information. Nathan Shamuyarira to try to justify the repression.

His claim that those detained were "recruited and sent to Zimbabwe by the Militant Tendency to play a subversive role" and were "organising workers for a generalised insurrection" is totally unfounded. We print below part of the press release by the Zimbabwe Trade Unionists Defence Campaign.

"The sole activity (of those who were detained) has been to assist in the organisation of workers in the unions and the factory committees, and to promote socialist workers education.

All believe that the implementation of real socialist policies will be the only way to preserve the unity of the country, defend the gains of the independence struggle, solve the problems facing working people, and put an end to the economic blackmail waged against Zimbabwe by South African and Western imperialism.

They have argued that the organised workers should assert conscious leadership within the ruling ZANU (PF) party to carry out the socialist promises on which the ZANU government was elected and which the mass of workers and peasants still look to the Mugabe government to carry out.

To call this "a subversive role of destabilisation" is a shameless slander against socialists, designed to throw a smoke screen around the failure of the government to honour its promises to the masses while carrying out instead a policy of compromise with capitalism.

Thirteen of the fifteen detained have been released without any charges being preferred. The Zimbabwean government would not be able to produce a shred of credible evidence to support its claims—despite reports of the beatings and torture of the comrades under interrogation.



Robert Mugabe



Reactionary leader of Rhodesian regime before 1980, Ian Smith.

The two who are still detained, and the others still being continually harrased and intimidated by the security police, are presently prevented from giving their own complete rebuttal of the Minister of Information's statement.

Will the Zimbabwean government permit them a press conference in Harare with full guarantees of no persecution as a result? What credibility can the Minister's statement have while the government continues to prevent its prisoners from answering?

The Minister should at least have taken the trouble to check his facts. Fifteen, not 'eight', persons have been detained, and the detentions and investigations have taken place not only in Harare but also in Kwekwe.

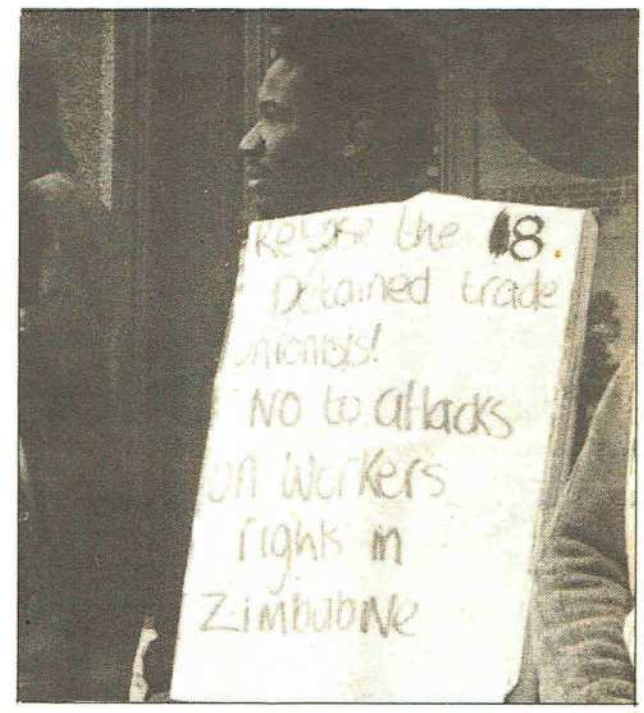
How can the minister say that those arrested "have no direct contact with the party or the trade unions"? One is the President of the General Engineering and Metal Workers' Union. Three others serve on regional executives of the engineering union. Another is a member of the Harare Municipal Workers' Union. Several are office-bearers of officially recognised workers' committees.

A number of those detained are leading office bearers in ZANU (PF) in Kwekwe. One of those arrested has been a ZANU member since he was 16, and was arrested in 1971 under the Smith regime for leading opposition to the Pearce Commission. His wife, also detained, is a ZANU (PF) District Committee member, an elected leader of 10,000 ZANU members.

How could 12 Zimbabweans, the overwhelming majority of whom have never left the country, have been sent to Zimbabwe by anyone, as the Minister claims?

The three non-Zimbabweans are co-workers of the Southern African Labour Education Project, and members of the British Labour Party. Two are exiled from South Africa as the result of persecution by the apartheid regime, and one was banned for playing a key role in the organisation of non-racial unions among black workers in Natal in the 1970's.

They gave wholehearted support to the liberation struggle against the white Rhodesian regime, always fighting against the international capitalist class and right-wing elements in the labour movement who gave underhand support to Smith and Muzorewa. They have wholeheartedly supported the British mineworkers' strike, and made every demand on the British Labour leadership to back the strike by mobilising mass action.



Outside the Zimbabwean High Commission last month.

The Minister of Information's attempt to smear these comrades with association with the Rhodesian regime or betrayal of the British miners' strike is the grossest slander. The implication that they "want to install a neo-colonial coalition of reactionary tendencies in Zimbabwe" could not be further from the truth.

This claim is in case completely contradicted by the Minister's allegation of a connection of these comrades with the "*Militant* Tendency". The attitude of those detained to the *Militant* paper is for them to say. But it is clear that they share the view that workers organisations in all countries need to be built and transformed in the struggle for socialism. It is precisely because the Zimbabwean government has drawn back from this task that it finds it necessary to persecute socialists and invent the most incredible amalgam of falsehoods to hide its shame".

Apartheid: the crime of capitalism.



Botha's government have stepped up repression.

ON 29 March the South African government banned 29 anti-apartheid organisations in Eastern Cape district, scene of the Langa massacre a week before.

The same day, sixteen members of the opposition United Democratic Front and the South African Allied Workers Union were put on trial accused of "treason".

Repression is the only desperate answer Botha has to the revolutionary anger building up amongst South Africa's black population. But repression alone cannot stem the tide of opposition given the new strength of the multi-racial unions and the deep roots of the black community organisations.

Hence the words of "reform" and condemnation of apartheid by Tories like Howe in Britain. British capitalism is still the biggest foreign investor in, and trading partner with, apartheid. At the same time, South African business interests have moved into Britain. The ruling class want stability, above all, they want their profit system to survive. But how far can reform go while maintaining capitalism?

Some forms of petty apartheid, restricting "racial mixing" may be disappearing. But the basic ills which affect blacks in South Africa are essential to big business. The lack of land for black farms is caused by the intensively capitalist agriculture much of it controlled by nation-wide or even multinational corporations.

The majority of South Africa's population are wage workers and their families. The families are frequently kept on reserves with atrocious facilities while migrant labourers are herded into barrack-like accommodation. They are "temporary" workers, there only as along as the bosses need them to extract profit from their labour power.

The bosses hope this way to stop the growth of strong unions. Even the liberal bourgeois parties want to keep this vital buttress of apartheid, it is part of capitalism in South Africa just as much as state repression. Compromising with capitalism ultimately means compromising with apartheid.

The ruling class have their plans to try to stabilise the situation. But the growth of a socialist opposition based on the working class, taking under its wing the mass movements of angry black youth and the frustrated "coloured" and Asian communities can make all these schemes redundant.

Danish workers strike

300,000 DANISH workers are presently on strike. Members of the dockworkers, transport, construction and clerical unions are protesting at the offer of a 2% pay rise.

The unions are demanding a minimum of 5% and a 35 hour week with pro-rata wage increases to benefit the low-paid. In some areas workers have been locked out.

Denmark's labour laws mean that wage negotiations are conducted centrally and both unions and individual members who refuse to recognise any agreed settlement can be fined. If there is a failure to agree, the government can impose a settlement and the Tory-led caalition intends to do this on the Sunday before Easter.

But under pressure from the organized working class, the bosses were afraid that some sections of the coalition *might* buckle allowing the Labour Party (SD) to secure a vote of No Confidence thus paving the way for a General Election which they are widely expected to win. Some individual unions have threatened a 24 Hour General Strike call should the Tories succeed in imposing a settlement.

Mass demonstrations in Copenhagen and elsewhere have shown workers' anger at rising prices, rising unemployment and cuts in the welfare state. The strike has hit fuel and food supplies as well as fodder for the Danish agricultural industry.

Anker Jorgensen, the Chairman of the Labour Party, addressed a meeting of 600 workers last week and was forced, following a speech from a Danish supporter of the Marxist paper *Socialisten*, to call tor the abolition of capitalism and the institution af a 'real' socialist government. Workers will be quick to remind him of these fine words when the SD return to power.

More than 80% of Danish workers are unionised. If the strike continues heavy responsibility will fall on the TUC (LO) to order workers out in solidarity for at least a 24-hour general strike. The L.O. has the authority but it is unclear whether they have the will.

Danish workers have keenly followed all developments in other countries such as the struggle of German metalworkers last year for a 35-hour week. In the British miners' strike they set up a network of 37 individual support groups and provided the biggest single source of international finance to the NUM per head of population. They also offered moral and physical support for miners as well as physical (blacking of ships and materials etc.).

Now is the time for British workers to repay this solidarity by sending messages of support via the address below.

Karsten Andersen, Vice-Chairman, Aarhus Dockworkers S.I.D. Mindet 18 8000 AARHUS C. Denmark

By Bob Stothard
(T&GWU)

Chile Socialist Defence Campaign

THE PINOCHET regime in Chile, installed by tanks in 1973 to crush the working class and destroy socialism is now under constant threat—from the very working class they wanted to annihilate.

Pinochet has turned to a new round of brutality, trying to drown the opposition movements in blood. The latest bulletin of the Chile Socialist Defence Campaign (CSDC) contains a wealth of new material, first hand reports from Chile showing the repression and the resistance such as the regular massive protests.

The CSDC was launched to send financial aid and build solidarity with workers in Chile. The CSDC are calling on all LPYS, Labour Party and trade union branches to buy the new bulletin and get involved in the campaign. The bulletin costs 40p plus 15p post and package from CSDC, PO Box 448 Emma Street, London E2.



Xekinima, the Marxist paper in PASOK, led the opposition to Karamanlis in the party.

The choice facing the Socialists

THE PASOK Central Committee decision not to back right-wing candidate Karamanlis for President (see last week's *Militant*) has strengthened the working class, and increased its determination for real change. Greece has entered a new phase of the revolutionary process.

Increased polarisation and instability are the prospects. The radicalisation of the working class, the youth and peasantry is bound to increase. This sends shivers of apprehension down the backs of imperialism and Stalinism internationally.

Second of two articles by John Throne

However, there is never just one side to any story. The PASOK Central Committee decision came as a complete surprise because of the part played by the leaders of both PASOK and the Communist Party.

Not only was the ruling class trying quietly to slip Karamanlis through, behind the backs of the working class, but this was also part of the plans of the PASOK leaders. In spite of the late decision of the Communist Party Central Committee to oppose Karamanlis, this party's refusal to mobilise its powerful industrial base—the CP leaders said it was not an important question—showed that the re-election of Karamanlis was also part of their view of the coming developments.

PASOK and Communist Party leaders both believe that a socialist transformation of society in Greece is not possible in the foreseeable future. They therefore seek ways to compromise with Greek capitalism.

When elected in 1981, PASOK faced the same choice as do all left governments. They could have taken over the banks and, industries, and firms which control the Greek economy and established a socialist plan of production. This would have unleashed powerful economic forces and major permanent reforms and higher living standards would have been entirely possible.

This path would of course have meant the mobilisation of the working class and peasantry, the winning over of the rank and file of the armed forces, defeat of the fascist thugs of the right, and the spreading of the socialist revolution internationally. This, the only realistic and practical alternative was rejected by both PASOK and the Communist Party.

They chose the second alternative. They left the capitalist class in control of the economy, the state and the media. As a result of course, the forces of capitalism sabotaged the economy, refused to co-operate with the government and prepared for counter-attack. As long as the decisive levers of the economy and the state apparatus are left in the hands of the ruling class, then slowly but surely pressure will be exerted on any left government to carry out the wishes of big business.

Strike movements

In PASOK's first year in office, living standards rose 6%. The sliding scale of wages was maintained. Reforms in pensions and in some laws were enacted. However by 1983 the laws of capitalism made their presence felt. The sliding scale was suspended for nine months. Laws which restricted the right to strike in the public sector were passed. Compulsory arbitration and police action to break strikes were common.

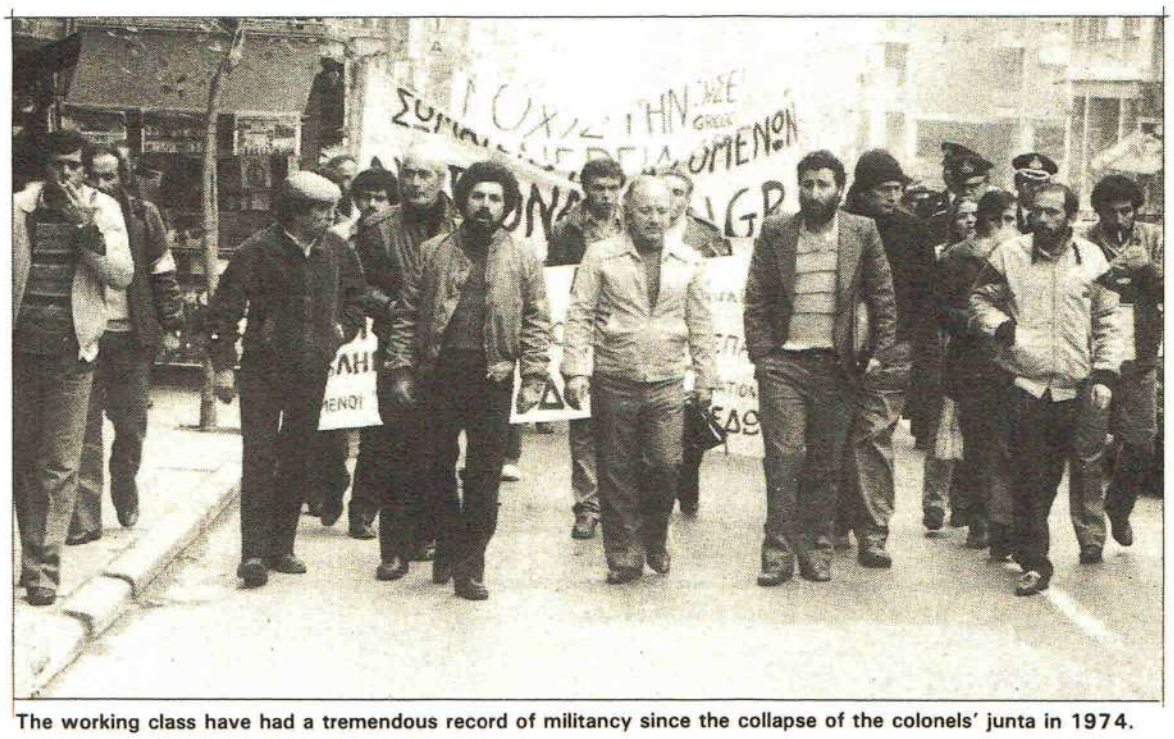
However, huge strike movements and occupations forced the re-application of the sliding scale of wages. The action of the workers was such that increases above inflation were gained on many occasions. Unemployment continued to rise, however, to a present high of around 10%. And it was in this front, of factory closures and threatened closures that the real weakness of Greek capitalism became evident.

Investment in 1984 is at the level of 1982. Greek capitalism in many areas is bankrupt. In 1976 31% of industry lost money. It lives off handouts from the state-owned banks. By 1984, 66% of industry was losing money. 80% of capital invested in industry was borrowed from the banks.

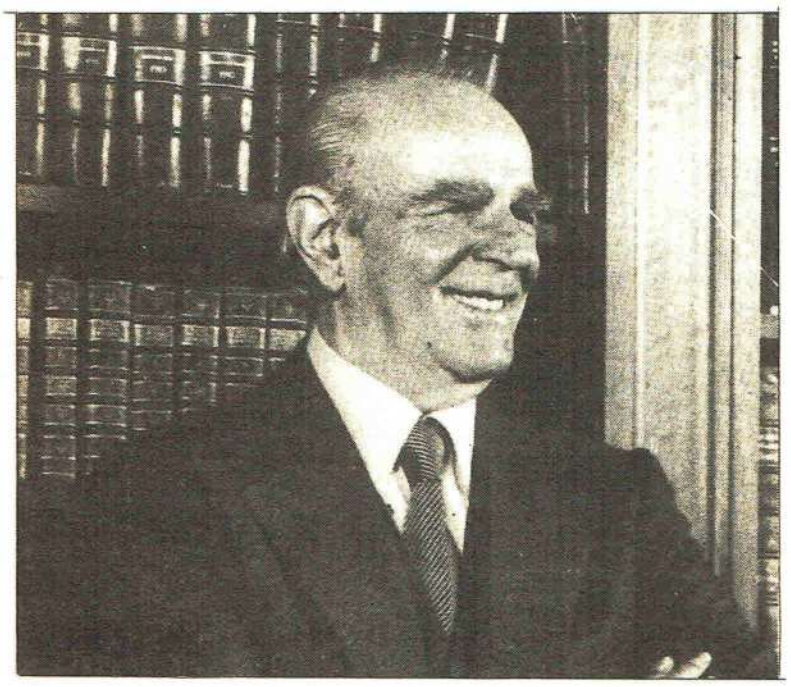
The collapse of whole swathes of industry was imminent in the past few years. The reaction would have been mass occupations. This was made clear in the first four months of 1984 when 17 different workplaces were occupied. One PASOK minister complained about workers coming from all over Greece to see him to demand nationalisation of their companies.

If the bankrupt industries had been allowed to collapse, the PASOK economics minister estimated that unemployment would have reached 35 – 40%. The working class would never have tolerated this. So the government turned the debts of the companies to the state banks into shares owned by the state banks and so effectively nationalised them.

In 1981, 6% of the capital assets were in the hands of the state. By 1984 this was 45%. What an indictment of capitalism, and what an unanswerable argument for the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy and a socialist plan.



The working class have had a tremendous record of militancy since the collapse of the colonels' junta in 1974.



Constantine Karamanlis—Greek capitalists needed his presidency

Impractical policy

Instead the government continued allowing its entirely impractical road of trying to reform and prop up capitalism. The economic crisis and the pressure of the powerful working class, looking to their government to improve their conditions, resulted in a plunge into debt. Foreign borrowing is up 2.5 times since 1981. The public sector borrowing requirement is 18% of Gross National Product.

The companies taken over are still in a state of bankruptcy, kept going only by the life support machine of the state banks, foreign borrowing and the printing press. Inflation remains over 20% a year. The government's balancing act cannot be sustained, especially given the coming world recession.

Caught between the hammer and the anvil, the government looked to a compromise in the coming presidential and general elections. The right could have the presidency and they could get early elections, which would be some advantage to PASOK. They also hoped for some changes in the constitution which would slightly weaken its Bonapartist character and the power of the president.

However, Greek capitalism is in no position to compromise. In this economic crisis they demand vicious measures against the workers. They need a right-wing president, the present constitution and a right-wing government. Papandreou was given nothing with which he could sweeten the pill of a vote for Karamanlis amongst his rank and file. Empty-handed he was being forced to confront his supporters and party members.

It is here that all the plans of the right and the PASOK leaders, and for that matter the Communist Party leaders also, came unstuck. The PASOK party members were 99% against giving any support to Karamanlis and could not be shifted. This was in spite of a lack of a lead from any section of the party or any section of the labour movement except for supporters of *Xekinhma*, the paper which is the voice of the Marxist wing of PASOK.

In spite of physical attacks on some leading supporters, arrests, expulsions from PASOK, a campaign of threats and anonymous phone calls against supporters, the Marxist tendency's opposition reflected the unflinching determination of the rank and file.

On the day of the CC decision, *Xekinhma* led a mass picket of 600 people against police obstruction outside the CC meeting. They and the Greek working class were rewarded for their opposition by a 180° turnabout by Papandreou and the PASOK Central Committee. This body announced it would oppose Karamanlis, seek a change in the constitution and put for President the former judge, Sartzetakis, who has had a record of opposition to the right-wing and the military in Greek politics, and who was tortured under the 1967/74 junta.

Papandreou baulked at the last minute, because of his inability to take his supporters with him. He feared losing the elections after voting for Karamanlis and the road being opened to the right-wing counter-offensive. So he was forced to take his present position which of course leads to the confrontation he was so at pains to avoid.

This defeat of the right's plans, important as it is, leaves no room for complacency amongst Greek workers. The forces of capitalism are fighting back. They have tried to buy right-wing members of the PASOK parliamentary party and independents in Parliament to secure the defeat of Sartzetakis. This failed. They are now refusing to recognise Sartzetakis as President and hope to exploit this issue in the coming general election

However PASOK will most likely win the next general election. The question is, what happens then? The new PASOK government will still face the same choices. If they carry on with present policies, a disastrous economic crisis will strike at their supporters' living standards and threaten to create disillusionment and division.

The forces of the right will bide their time. When they judge that they will be able to ride out the reaction they will move against the government. They will probably do this by splitting the most right-wing members of PASOK in Parliament, and bringing them together in a so-called National Government, which would in reality be a government of New Democracy. With the full backing of big business, of the Western capitalist powers, the army tops, police and media, such a government would move to reverse all the gains of the past years.

Defeat right wing plans

The conditions to split the party would be prepared by economic chaos, and if necessary the use of fascist gangs and terrorist acts as in Chile. However, given the power of the working class in Greece, any return to military rule is ruled out at this stage.

Most likely a right-wing government would play a Parliamentary Bonapartist role, ie Parliament and elections would be maintained, but with the use of the laws and courts, backed up by the police and the army and the whip of mass unemployment, living standards would be cut and democratic and trade union rights curtailed.

If, however, the PASOK leaders now take their rising support and put forward a clear socialist programme, they can win an even bigger majority than in 1981 and move to establish a socialist society in Greece and defeat all the plans of Greek capitalism.

LETTERS

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

Socialist campaign to defend political levy

Dear Comrades,

Over the next twelve months members of trade unions which hold political funds will be balloted as to whether these funds be retained or not.

No doubt this legislation is an attempt by the Tories and their class to sever the financial link between the unions and Labour Party, attempting to make the unions incapable of campaigning and fighting against government attacks.

Over 80% of the Labour Party's income comes from the trade union movement. The loss of the political levy from either the T&G or the AUEW would be an enormous setback for the Labour Party both financially and politically.

Unfortunately, there is a lot of ignorance and naïvity in the movement on this issue. Maybe this is a reflection of the campaign so far, which has been low-key and non-political.

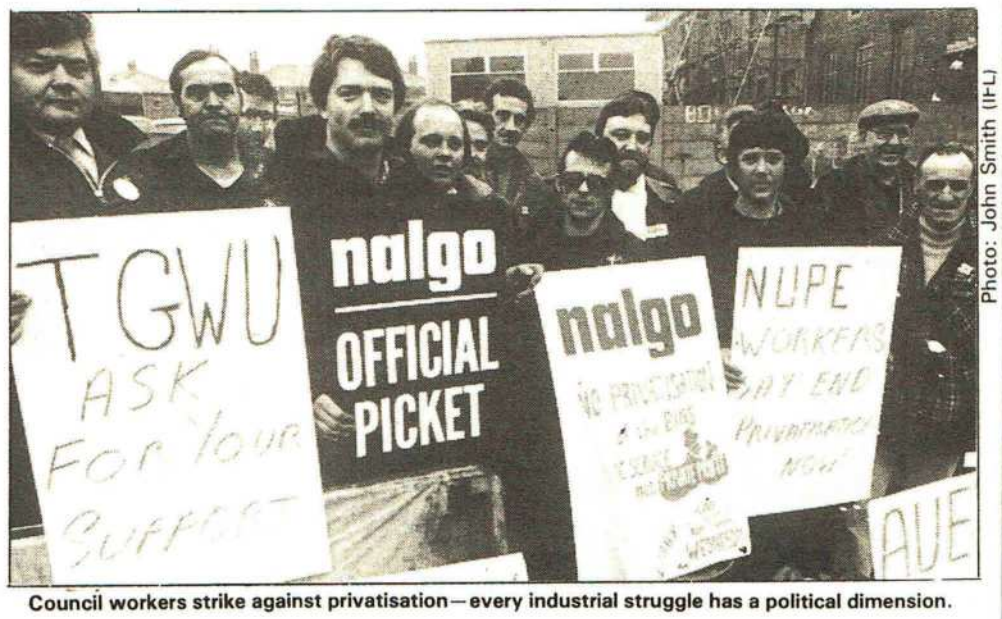


Photo: John Smith (IFL)

Council workers strike against privatisation—every industrial struggle has a political dimension.

This campaign gives us socialists a golden opportunity to explain socialist policies on the shop-floor,and to increase the membership of the Labour Party. The campaign should be treated as a general election. Many socialists look to the pages of *Militant* for guidance on major issues. The campaign on the political levy has already been mounted by the trade union movement, but unfortunately we have seen nothing in the pages of the *Militant*. Would it be possible for you to publish an article in the near future?

Yours fraternally
Gerry Taity
TGWU,
Rushcliffe CLP
Trade Union
Liaison Officer

Smear tests

Dear Comrades,

I could have cervical cancer and not know it! That is the conclusion I have drawn after recently being refused a smear test at my local family planning clinic.

Having had various coils inserted inside me for over four years I probably run a fair risk of contracting cervical cancer. Yet I was flatly told: "The regulations stipulate that we can only carry out smear tests once every five years".

The Catholic Church and anti-abortionists rant and rave about "murder of the unborn child" well what about the murders of 2,000 women a year who die of cervical cancer, of whom 90% have never had a smear test?

I think it's disgusting and well out of order that the Tory cut-backs in this vital area of the NHS mean unnecessary death for working class women.

Maggie Thatcher may be a woman but I bet you she doesn't have to wait five years before she finds out whether or not she's riddled with cancer!

Yours fraternally
Jackie Walsh
North Belfast
Labour and TU Group YS

Unfair comparison

Dear Comrades,

In the wake of the miners' strike, Neil Kinnock has been compared with Ramsey MacDonald who betrayed the Labour Party in 1931. This comparison is unfair as MacDonald opposed Britain's involvement in the First World War and as a result lost his seat in the 1918 election, after a vicious campaign against him.

Neil Kinnock has never been known to do anything which might damage his career prospects!

Yours fraternally
Cormac Kelly
Huddersfield
Labour Party

Hang 'em and flog 'em

Dear Comrades,

From time to time the SDP show their true colours, this happened recently in Stevenage. The Labour Group on the council decided (very belatedly) to give their attendance allowance for the next full council to the miners. It was raised at the council meeting and it had a strange effect, a few Liberals and even a Tory agreed to do the same! But the SDP were for once united, in fact they said: "The miners should have rings put through their noses and be dragged back to work"!

This wasn't reported by the local papers even when they all had reporters there. But it was reported to the Stevenage TUC, just after.

I think this shows what the SDP are all about and is a warning to all trade unionists and socialists.

Yours fraternally
Steve Glennon
President, Stevenage TUC

Anger over Sinn Fein invitation

Dear Comrades,

I read with considerable sadness recently in the *Irish Times* that the London Labour Party is to invite Sinn Fein speakers to address its next annual conference in 1986. The decision will do untold damage to the cause of labour in the North of Ireland. Instead of being seen as a force capable of uniting working people throughout the North against their common enemies of poverty, unemployment and the evils of capitalism, Labour will become increasingly tarnished with the sectarian nationalism of Sinn Fein.

Trendy middle class pseudo left-wingers from the comfort of their homes in Chelsea can pose as revolutionaries by associating with Sinn Fein leaders. They do not have to pay the price when knocking on doors in East Belfast or Ballymena to explain to workers that the labour movement is the only force capable of uniting the working class and breaking the insidious grip of sectarianism. Sinn Fein, whatever their intentions, however left-wing their phraseology from time to time, are, and will always be seen as a sectarian organisation by Protestant workers.

If London Labour Party members are anxious to find out about what is going on in the North they have only to invite the organisations of working people, the trade unions and those existing labour movement organisations like the Labour and Trade Union Group who are fighting against sectarianism and for socialism. They would be only too delighted to enlighten them.

For 'socialists' it would seem to be a much more logical first step.

Yours fraternally
East Belfast socialist
(They do exist!)

LEFT and RIGHT

A likely story

Labour's trade spokesman John Smith held a photo-call for the press at Parliament recently. However, it was decided to use Roy Hattersley's office for the session. But alterations to Mr Hattersley's office had to be made. According to the *Times* diary (15 February): "A dart board was removed from the wall and the rubber mat beneath it rolled up. Also removed was a wastepaper basket containing two copies of *Beano*."

No choice for job seeker Billy

Last week *Militant* reported how unemployed Billy Pickersgill paraded around Liverpool with a 'Please give me a job' billboard in the desperate search for work. Since then the DHSS have threatened to cut his unemployment benefit for six weeks. The reason? A firm offered Billy a job erecting traffic control equipment, for £80 a week. But Billy would have to start the next day, bringing his own tools—which he couldn't afford. What's more, the job would have meant being away from home six days a week, away from his wife and baby daughter. He was forced to turn it down—so the firm reported him to the DHSS.

Student leader's own goal

Phil Woolas, President of the National Union of Students, supporter of Neil Kinnock and vehement opponent of *Militant*, said at NUS conference that the right-wing Federation of Conservative Students had "as much to do with the majority of Conservative students as Millwall fans have to do with football." If he ever comes to London looking for a Parliamentary seat, he should only seek nominations from parties north of the river.

Review: Munch and the workers

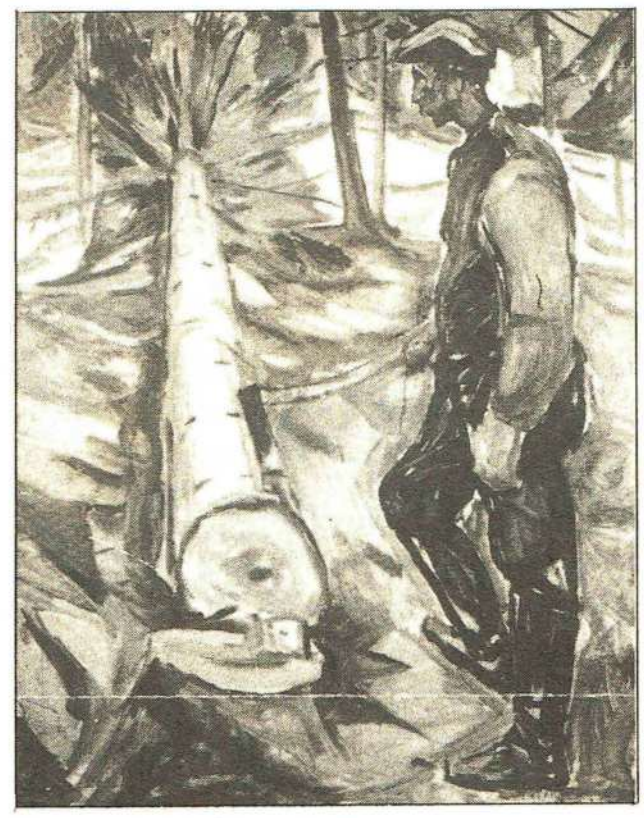
A RECENT exhibition of the Norwegian painter Edvard Munch (Barbican Centre until 8 April), called 'Munch and the Workers' shows a major radical aspect of his work that is not well known.

Munch, who's work covers the turn of the century, is famous for his tortuous death like images such as "The Scream". Paintings expressed his deep emotional reaction to the world around him, and he was labelled an 'expressionist' painter.

But from the outset he was interested in showing the lives of working people. He was born into a middle class family but brought up in a working class district of Christiana (now Oslo) where he made sketches of people around him.

Munch never had any political allegiances but despised the 'acceptable' bourgeois standards in art. His ideas and openess of his work quickly brought him into conflict with the conservative trustees of art at the time.

An exhibition in Munich in 1892 caused a scandal. Later exhibitions were derided by critics and the pompous art-going public. Munch had to struggle for any kind of recognition—a factor which may have contributed to a nervous breakdown in 1908.



The Lumberjack by Edvard Munch.

Munch resented the manufacture of art purely for the market, art which is "influenced by the worst moneyed clique, namely the bourgeoisie". He claimed that pictures in frames were an "art-dealers' art"...Now it is the time of the workers. Do you suppose that art should again become the property of everyone and resume it's rightful place on the spacious walls of public buildings?"

Scenes of workers began to occupy more of his work from 1910 onwards. He saw the arrival of the working class as a new era—a modern age. Scenes of workers trudging home from the factory. "Worn out people" as one critic said at the time.

Portraits had a grimness and harrowed look through years of hard work. Labourers working, dark figures against a backdrop of snow was a common theme. Arched backs and men with pick axes and shovels, showing dynamism and movement, but always the impression of hard work. One large canvass, 'Workers in snow' shows a central figure, a labourer with a shovel over his shoulder and clenched fist down by his side.

Later works are filled with scenes showing the 'creativity' of jobs, such as those on building sites. Every figure is intent on carrying out the tasks of their trade. Building and creating new things.

Munch's preoccupation with workers, although not politically conscious, reflected the increasing prominence of the working class in Europe in the early years of the century. In Norway labourers represented a militant section of the burgeoning labour movement.

It is ironic that Munch's hatred of bourgeois standards and his struggle for recognition is still reflected today in that his most radical side has been submerged by the more 'popular' image. This exhibition has been a welcome redress.

By Ben Eastop

Four weeks to go

YES! It's Easter. Remember all those chocolate eggs and rabbits. Talking of White Rabbits, time does fly doesn't it! Only four weeks to get your area back on target.

You may not be able to pull money out of a hat but you have got time to organise for end of quarter events, jumble sales, rabbit stew socials (apologies to vegans), sponsored runs or hops. Organise it now!

Most areas can give themselves a pat on the back as they are doing much better this quarter than at the same period last quarter. Don't slacken your efforts now. Go flying past your target!

The best way to raise your target, though, is just by asking. One waterworker in London who was giving £1 each week to the miners' hardship fund has now asked if he can give that to the fighting fund.

Growing support

More workers than ever now see the need for building our support in the labour and trade union movement.

Take John Keenan, for example, from Golborne NUM branch in the North Western Area who gave £10. "This reader" wrote our Manchester supporters, "has been out on strike for over 12 months and still hasn't received a full week's wage. He made a donation even though, like the rest of the striking miners he is still deep in debt."

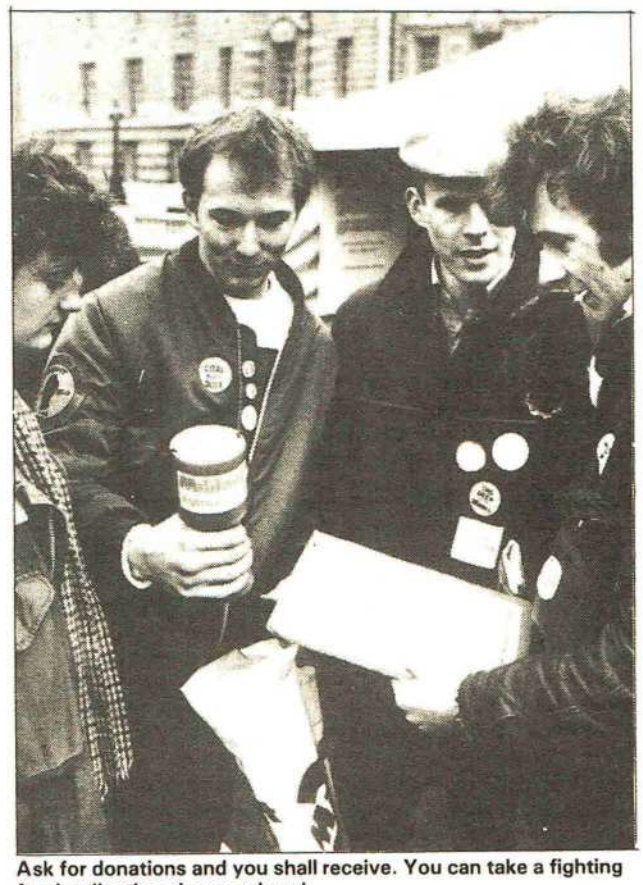
Our thanks go out to everyone who sends us money but special thanks must go to those readers on strike and those who are unemployed who increasingly support our paper.

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	1161		2900
East Midlands	1150		2800
Humberside	722		1850
London East	992		3250
London West	613		2150
London South East	938		2000
London South West	587		1600
Lancashire	451		1100
Manchester	813		2750
Merseyside	1416		6000
Northern	805		4900
Scotland East	722		3000
Scotland West	1088		3800
Southern	1217		5000
South West	818		2000
Wales East	217		2450
Wales West	307		2150
West Midlands	1261		4400
Yorkshire	1632		5900
Others	1662		10000
Total received	18569		70000

This week: £2130

Pete Seals, AUEW £1; Les NUPE 50p; Malc Dewby UCATT 50p; Mansfield reader £5; Bidworth reader £2; D Taylor £20; Gary, Chris and Martin from Scunthorpe LPYS £1.59; £2 from John Quinton, Range Rover car worker, Solihull. Sponsored hair cut raised £2.50; Mr A Troke Southwark councillor £15; Patricia Cortesi, Ventnor £1; Charlie Allor, a pensioner from Ryde gave 75p; Ian Williams, Shanklin 25p; car boot sale, Herts £11.20; Ammanford readers' meeting raised £205.11; British Gas Easington workers collection £11.02; tea and coffee sales £9.40; rattling tins and a Billy Bragg concert raised £20.86; J Richardson 50p; B and J Ford 50p, E Jackson 50p; D and G McDonagh, Oldham £25, Tony Orham £26; Collections, donations, etc at the BLOC rally raised £207.47.

By Ruth Campbell



Ask for donations and you shall receive. You can take a fighting fund collecting tin anywhere!

Well worth the sacrifice

BUILDING support for Marxist ideas means proving in practice what we say.

Too often, in the past, people have joined the Labour movement promising the workers everything but then failing to deliver the goods and often living in a style totally alien to the working class.

Frank Chapple is now proud to boast that "I wouldn't miss a banquet at Buckingham Palace, eating soup from a golden plate on a silver place mat".

Labour MP John Silkin, has been involved in a multi-million pound struggle to take over the ownership of the Wembley Stadium. How can people like him know what it means to be unemployed or low paid?

Workers will listen to speeches and debates with avid interest—but they want to see results and promises kept. That is why the slogan for "a workers M.P. on a workers wage" has gone down so well. Representatives in Parliament or the Trade Unions who are not prepared to keep the same living standards as the workers they represent will soon lose touch with workers' experiences.

Many of our readers are showing how serious they are in changing society. Not only do we have the correct ideas, but many of our supporters are making sacrifices to build a Marxist Daily for the future.

Campaigns

Our campaign for a week's income from our readers is a blow to our enemies who claim we are losing support. The response so far proves that we are not only prepared to sactifice a little bit now, but that we will be the most determined fighters for socialism in the future.

We have had a further £4,228 donated this week. Tony Mulhearn, and T Carrol from Merseyside and Dave Brown from Bristol have all donated £100 and a group of supporters in the South Clyde area have donated £545 between them. A bank worker from Walthamstow, Shirley Trail has donated her wages of £105 and Reg Sidebottom, a SE Lancs TASS member has sent us £150. As important to us are the donations from the unemployed and low paid. Brendan Kelly from Bristol has sent £63 and an unemployed supporter in Leicester has sent his dole cheque for £27.

If anyone doubts the seriousness of *Militant* supporters to change sociery, look at our determination to get a Marxist Daily—and then make sure you send in your week's income in. It's worth the sacrifice for a daily workers' paper.

Marxist Daily Building Fund 1985

	£		£
Eastern	1985	Scotland West	2029
East Midlands	2451	Southern	2265
Humberside	1408	South West	611
London East	2562	Wales East	1420
London West	3490	Wales West	1326
London South East	1709	West Midlands	1491
London South West	1453	Yorkshire	976
Lancashire	308	National	1292
Manchester	1199		
Merseyside	2913	Total	34816
Northern	1993		
Scotland East	1935	This week:	4228

MILITANT MAY SALES CAMPAIGN
Covering issues 3 May and 10 May.

Sellers material available

Buy *Militant* leaflets. Buy *Militant* poster
Special letter for newsagents, asking them to stock *Militant*.

Order from: Circulation Department, 3–13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB.

ads Militant

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

"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, 31 Balmoral Road, Fairfield, Liverpool, L6 8NB.

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.

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.

PENRHIWCEIBER: Marxist Discussion Group meets every Monday 7.30pm at the Osborne Hotel, Penrhiwceiber. 1st April—"Which way forward for Labour?"; 15 April—"History of the South Wales Miners Federation". For more details call at 25 Railway Terrace, Penrhiwceiber, or phone Ed Gullyford on Pontypridd 492915.

CONGRATULATIONS to Halo and Lynne on their wedding on Saturday 30 March from all comrades in Hammersmith and Fulham.

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.

PECKHAM LPYS, Under workers' control and management sends fraternal greets to LPYS National Conference—forward to socialism.

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

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*.

General amnesty NOW

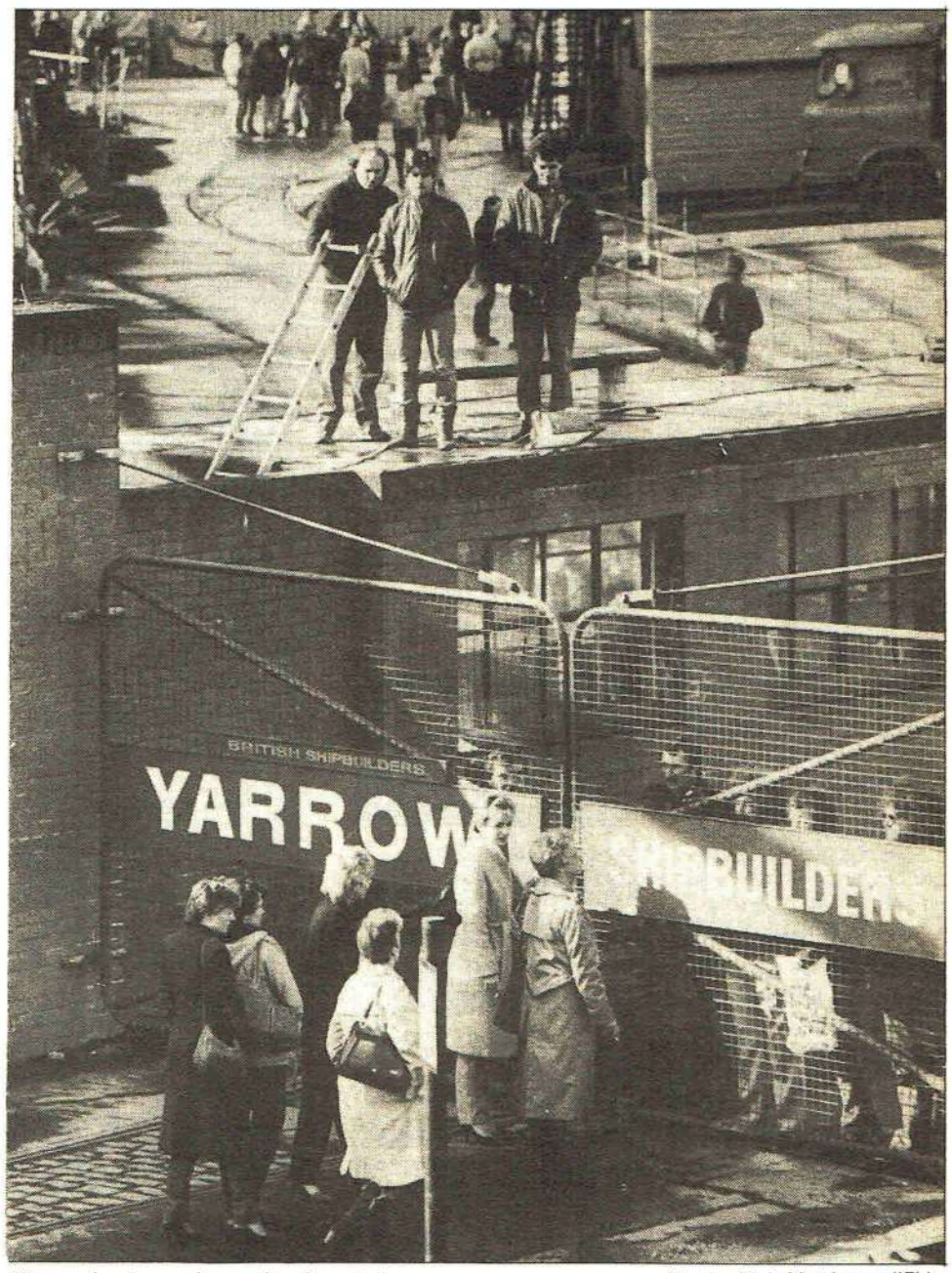


Birkenhead: Monday, 15 April. Speaker: John Pickard. TGWU Offices, Transport House, Berner Street (off Cleveland Street), 7.30 pm.
Wrexham: Tuesday, 16 April. Speaker: John Pickard. The Library Arts Centre, Rhosddu Road, Wrexham. 7.30 pm.
Bootle: Wednesday 17 April. Speaker: John Pickard.
St Helens: Thursday 18 April. Bold Miners' Institute, Fleet Lane, Parr, 7.30 pm. Speakers: John Pickard, Terry Fields MP, Chris Herriot (Victimised miner).
Newham: Tuesday 16 April. Speaker: Lynn Walsh. The Lister Room, East Ham Town Hall, Barking Road, London E6. 7.45 pm.
Greenwich: Tuesday 16 April. Speaker: Brian Ingham. Boyle House, Woolwich Road, Charlton. 7.45 pm.
Islington: Wednesday 17 April. Speaker: Peter Taaffe. Islington Central Library, Fieldway Crescent, Holloway Road. 7.30 pm.
Acton: Wednesday 17 April. Speaker: Clare Doyle. Acton Town Hall, 7.30pm.
Ashington: , Northumberland: Speakers Brian Ingham, Malcolm McKenna (Sacked Miner, Bates Colliery). Wednesday 17 April, Leisure Centre, Ashington.
Durham: Speaker: Brian Ingham. Thursday 18 April. Venue and NUM speaker to be announced.
South London: Thursday 18 April. Speaker: Rob Sewell. Penrose Hall, Penrose Street (off Walworth Road). 7.45 pm.
Bristol: Tuesday 23 April. Speaker: Keith Dickinson. Shepherds Hall, Old Market, Bristol.
Plymouth: Wednesday 24 April. Speaker: Keith Dickinson.
Dalkeith: Monday 29 April. Speakers: Bob Wylie and Tam Durie (sacked SCEBTA member, Monktonhall). Woodburn Community Centre, Dalkeith. 7.30 pm.
Fife: Tuesday 30 April. Speaker: Bob Wylie.
Liverpool: Wednesday 1 May. Speaker: John Pickard. AUEW Buildings, Mount Pleasant. 7.30 pm.
Wakefield: Friday 10 May. 7.30 pm. Speaker: Peter Taaffe.
Welsh Labour Party Conference: Friday 17 May, Llandudno.

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Yarrow sit-in

"We can take this mob on"



The yard gates under workers' control

Photo: Rick Matthews (IFL)

THE WORKERS of Yarrow's on the Clyde occupied their shipyard on the evening of 26 March. Specialising in frigates for the British navy, Yarrow's has a long history of making money. In the past two or three years they have made £11m – £12m profit.

The yard was nationalised in 1977 by the Labour government, but on Monday 25 March was sold off to GEC, the giant electronics and electrical company, for a song—£34 million to be exact. The workers are pressing for negotiations with the new management for better wages and conditions.

HUGH WATSON, a shop steward at Yarrow's spoke, in a personal capacity, to Bob Wylie about what has being going on.

THE MASS meeting on Tuesday was serious. People knew what they were about. The whole workforce of about 3,500 were there. The stewards' recommendation was put that we occupy the yard until agreement on wages and conditions was secured with GEC.

Huge cheer

The usual people argued against the action—you know the "wait and see" brigade, anything but action. But this time everyone seemed to have the attitude of "Oh no, here they go again".

The vote went 2 – 1 in favour of the occupation. It was brilliant. A huge cheer went round the yard where the meeting was held.

About 700-800 stayed behind right there and then. The joiners and shipwrights got stuck in shoring up doors and entrances all over the place. They shored up the revolving door to the office block. Then they put up the banner in the glass window. It said "unity is strength". Everybody was over the moon.

They moved the "Iron Fairies", the shipyard cranes, to block the gates. The young ones who never speak at the meetings have been the solid core of the occupation. They are fed up with their lot. They've had enough.

At four o'clock on Wednesday morning I was talking to this bloke; he was giggling. I asked him what was up with him. He said: "It's great. All the taboos are out the window now. There's a mob down the other end playing football. Four o'clock in the morning, I don't believe it."

On Wednesday morning it was brilliant. Everybody was queuing up for a bird's eye view, to see the expression on the managing director's face when he tried to get in. He and the other four directors didn't get in, but the workers who had turned up for work did.

Enthusiasm

There were about 300 or 400 workers milling about outside and the ones inside started shouting "C'mon, c'mon in". They did. There must have been a thousand in by the end of the day.

I know for a fact that there were people who came on Wednesday morning to see what was going on. They were violently opposed to the occupation. They voted against it man. But they got infected by the enthusiasm. They were a right few, I'm telling you, came in the morning to complain and ended up staying the night. Great.

A few of the boys who buy the *Militant* were talking to me about it all. They were right into it. The feeling seemed to be. "Well we have been downtrodden for years, but if the miners can stay out for a year, we can take this mob on".

Then there was the mass meeting on Friday. GEC have agreed to meet us but not while the yard is occupied. But five of the convenors have been suspended, so the vote was to stay in until the suspensions were lifted and a time for the meeting set.

There were more than 2,000 at the meeting. Six or seven voted against the motion. There was a huge roar went up. I saw one bloke in tears. People were walking about shaking hands, grinning from ear to ear. It was brilliant.

"All the way now"

The vote surprised me, I must admit. I thought we might be on a hiding to nothing. There have been sharp changes before in the yard, maybe this time as well. But I doubt it. It looks solid.

At the meeting there was a bloke spoke. He is quiet, never says much. He said: "Well I voted against the occupation but when I saw the managing director getting turned back on TV I thought, this can work, I'm going down there. We should go all the way now". The place went up when he finished.

Then a young bloke spoke, one of the ones who never say anything. "This is it. Let's get stuck in together". There was never going to be any problem with the vote from then on in.

Oh aye, unity is strength and all the taboos are out of the window.

Privatised yard goes bust

THE SOUTH Shields ship-repair yard of Redheads is bankrupt. 18 months ago it was sold by British Shipbuilders, as a 'loss-maker', to a private consortium of 80 former management and employees who sank their redundancy payments into the venture.

Now it has been declared insolvent. The yard closed on Friday 15 March, 1985. Several local firms are owed money. The workers who gambled with their redundancy cash have lost it. The Tories have declared they are "sorry".

The Tories, led by Minister Norman Lamont, made a lot of ballyhoo and claimed the chronic unemployment of the North East could be solved by this type of 'daring' enterprise. In the first year Redheads broke even and the Tories were even more ecstatic: "Look what can be done when the dead hand of the trade unions have no influence!" they cried.

For some it really seemed as it private enterprise instead of public ownership in the ship-repair industry was the answer. Now Redheads have lost money on their last four contracts and are £250,000 in debt. Unable to get a hearing from commercial banks and money lenders they have had to plead for assistance from the Tory government.

True to form, this has been refused and the consortium told: "In any business venture there is an element of risk: hard luck!"

What more could Redheads have done? It is understood that until last December there were no safety reps or trade union bargaining procedure in the yard. Men arriving for work would not know whether they were to be welding, painting, fitting-out or sweeping up. Workers were employed for periods of three weeks at a time or a couple of days, depending on the work situation at the time.

Wages were below the trade union rate, which led to blacking of any of their sub-contract work on the Tyne and Wear nationalised yards.

Safety standards were reported by Tyneside trade unionists in the know as negligible. There was, for instance, no extraction for welders, even in the worst of conditions.

In every sphere Redheads has put into practice what the Tories preach and still the yard has run into trouble. Whilst having some sympathy for the men who may have lost their invested redundancy pay, workers in the organised shipyards are jubilant that their case has been proved at the expense of the Tories: trade unions cannot be held responsible for the downturn in the shipbuilding industry. That has come about through the complete failure of British capitalism to re-invest in new machinery and modernisation and because of the world-wide capitalist recession.

By Bob Stothard

Press unions pact vital

THE ANNUAL Delegate Meeting of the National Union of Journalists was informed of a new attack upon members of the NUJ at Portsmouth.

The employers at the *Portsmouth News* have announced that they are not going to reinstate any of the Portsmouth journalists sacked as a result of the dispute that is taking place there. The National Graphical Association has signed a new technology agrement with the employers and NUJ members are on strike over this. The NGA has continued to cross picket lines.

In another related dispute in Wolverhampton, on the *Express and Star*, the NUJ has agreed to sign a new technology agreement without the NGA's support and are crossing the NGA's picket lines. This dangerous confrontation between the two unions is now being exploited by the employers.

At the conference the National Executive, supported by the delegates, agreed that while they wished to avoid a confrontation with the NGA, if there was no agreement with them in the next two weeks then the NUJ would proceed to sign new technology agreements on their own.

New technology

Many delegates attempted to oppose this position by calling for unity between the unions, agreement to share out jobs in the new technology area of subediting and compositing, leading to joint representation for these new jobs. But conference continued to hold to the view that only the NUJ should represent trade unionists in this new technology area.

It now appears that a damaging confrontation and war between the NUJ and NGA in provincial newspapers can only be avoided if there is an agreement reached within the next few weeks. Otherwise the employers will again take advantage of the situation and impose agreements which will mean the loss of jobs for both unions throughout the industry. It is clear that if amalgamation had been supported by the NUJ and NGA recently then this dangerous split would have been avoided. This question was not discussed at the NUJ conference.

A new, fighting leadership is needed for the NUJ to establish a programme for the future, moving towards joint agreement on technology with the NGA and eventual amalgamation, alongside a real programme of achieving democratic control of the press. There is an urgent need for the development of a broad left based around these policies.

By a *Militant* reporter

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

NUT conference - escalate action

THE TEACHERS' pay dispute continues with, further rounds of three day strikes in selected areas and the withdrawal of good will—the teacher equivalent of a work to rule.

THE NUT was instructed by the courts in one area to hold a ballot to legalise action, so the union decided to hold a country-wide ballot to defuse what might have otherwise become a distraction from the main issue. The result was an uncompromising 78% in favour of industrial action.

Certain local education authorities have been docking pay from teachers refusing to cover for absent colleagues or refusing to attend meetings outside school hours. In Croydon the rate is £4.52 off for every refusal to cover and £2 for every meeting missed—grossly unfair as some schools have more meetings than others and it can be you that's asked to cover on the whim of the head.

These actions, far from weakening the resolve of the teachers, have caused great anger, because previously these duties have been regarded as entirely voluntary. Indeed there has been a strengthening of determination not to give in and I have heard many teachers say that they will never go back to doing voluntary duties (particularly lunch time supervision).

Sir Keith Joseph's insistence that we are to be assessed regularly and paid according to our performance has added insult to injury, because we know that no fair and unbiased assessment is possible without massive expenditure, which obviously this government is not going to make.

'Bonus' decisions

Anyway, how do you compare the results of someone teaching 'A' levels with the results of someone who teaches the severly mentally and physically handicapped? No, we know it will be left up to the heads to decide who'll get the 'bonus' payments, so the only people to benefit will be the creeps and the toadies (who never take industrial action!)

What we want now is a determined lead from the union hierarchy and an escalation of action after the Easter break. Undoubtedly there will be pressure put on them by the rank and file at the NUT conference over Easter—we must ensure that the union leaders do not feel that once the conference is over they can creep away and stitch up an unsatisfactory deal with the employers and forget about further action until we meet the same (or worse) problems this time next year.

By Helen Mullineux
(Newham NUT)



Photo: John Smith (IFL)

Manchester teachers during their three day strike.

IN LEICESTER over 95% of NUT members voted in favour of continuing our industrial action. Only 43 members voted 'no'!

The high handed attitude of management and the government and the use of legal apparatus has strengthened the feelings. "Moderates" are becoming "militant"

In Leicester over 44,000 national leaflets have been distributed and in addition some of the schools on 3 day strikes have printed their own bi-lingual leaflets and have organised public meetings.

However the NUT National Executive must allow us to step up our action. So far only 15 Leicester City schools have been hit. The growing mood of NUT members is for strike action and that it must be taken as soon as we return from the Easter break.

One NUT member who voted "no" in the ballot told me that he would definely vote 'yes' to strike action since that action is effective. Non union members have also said that they would consider joining the NUT if took "proper, serious" action!

We knew this would be a long drawn out dispute. The way to win is by stepping up the action, including a 24 hour national stoppage.

By Don Finlay
(Leicester NUT Conference delegate)

Support NALGO left

NALGO MEMBERS are currently balloting to elect the National Executive Council for the forthcoming year.

The past year in NALGO has provided many examples of the weakness of the current NEC. At conference in June, two NEC members, the general secretary and health service officer, recieved votes of censure from the delegates, dissatisfied with their weak positions over such issues as the NGA dispute and Liverpool City Council campaign.

Since conference, little has changed. The right-wing attempted to overturn NALGO's support for the miners, in accordance with the mandate they received at the June conference. When they were subsequently defeated on this issue at a special conference, the NEC nonetheless ceased further cash donations to the NUM.

Resolutions from the NEC to this year's conference make no reference to support for Labour councils which are forced to pass deficit budgets, despite the fact that this policy was approved by conference last year, and the NEC have even toyed with the idea of witch-hunting Marxists in NALGO under the guise of investigating Freemasonry.

Need for change

There is growing support for a change. Several districts including the North West, Metropolitan, Eastern, East Midlands and the North East have Broad Left candidates standing in the ballots. Some are already on the NEC, like Angela Donnesthorpe, in East Midlands. All are committed to fighting to defend the jobs and conditions of NALGO members which are under attack from the Tory government.

Every service in which NALGO organises is under attack and threatened with cutbacks and privatisation. Never has the need been greater to elect a fighting leadership. NALGO Members must therefore reject the Tory candidates who hide behind such terms as 'moderate' and 'non-political', refusing even to be honest about their policies, and vote for left candidates committed to radical militant polices in defence of the public services and their workers.

By Roger Bannister
(Secretary Knowsley branch)

Fight for left victory in AUEW

CHANGING THE leadership of the AUEW has never been more essential. The right-wing leadership of Duffy and Laird has been disastrous for engineering workers.

Closures and mass redundancies have taken place under the Tories without any fightback whatever being organised by the AUEW leadership. One-third of engineering jobs have been lost since Thatcher came to power.

Many rank and file members and activists were incensed at the decision of the executive to ballot members on whether to accept Tory money for holding ballots within the union, part of the legislation under the Tories' 1980 Employment Act.

The executive sent out circulars with the ballot papers strongly recommending acceptance of this 'Judas' money—against the policy of the National Committee which is to oppose the Tories' anti-trade union legislation. Without any explanation of the issues involved or any discussion by the National Committee, this undoubtedly had some effect on the ballot result going in favour.

In contrast, sickness and superannuation benefits which directly affect the members have been abolished under the present leadership without any ballot or consultation with the members.



Photo: Mick Carroll

John Tocher

The AUEW Broad Left has the opportunity to reach the new young activists with its candidate for national president, John Tocher.

This campaign is an opportunity for the left in the AUEW to meet the right wing head on and reclaim the leadership of our union. A determined campaign in every factory and workshop must be waged. The Broad Left in the districts and divisions must draw up plans for speaking tours by John Tocher, getting the left's programme across. You can be only too sure that the right wing will get support from the big guns of Fleet Street.

A good example of how campaigns can be organised comes from the AUEW Broad Left in Wales. They have organised a three-day speaking tour of workplaces and meetings, culminating in a South Wales BLOC conference at which John Tocher will be a major speaker.

Plans are also underway for a similar tour to be arranged in the Bradford area.

Such campaigning work ensures support in terms of votes but also helps in building a strong base for the Broad Lefts amongst the rank and file.

The Broad Left in the AUEW can rid their union of an outdated leader in Terry Duffy, but also build for itself the support and respect of the membership.

By Mick Barwood
(BLOC National Committee)

Save Battersea bus garage

FIVE BUS garages are to be closed by London Regional Transport. Management disclosed that Battersea would close in November '85. This aroused anger in the workforce, who called a strike for the next day. Two mass meetings voted unanimously to stay on strike all day.

The T&G rep at Battersea, Paddy Borke said: "We are not losing jobs, as we have been offered transfers, but we must fight to keep jobs in this area. We are now the biggest employer here with 250 jobs. Local shops will lose our custom and, most important, the people who live in Battersea will have a reduced bus service. We have to fight to keep the garage open, and need the help of the Labour Party and Young Socialists to get support from local people".

Wandsworth garage is one of the garages that would receive transfers from Battersea in the event of its closure. Ron Young, T&G chair, commented, "The workers here are well aware that Battersea's fight is our fight too. We need to protect services. Transfers to here will cause overcrowding. Bus routes transferred to here will make our schedules even tighter. We need to protect and improve services. We have told Battersea we support them 100% in the fight. We realise that these five garages are only the start. If they capitulate without a fight, it will only give impetus to Tory plans to cut LRT and privatise routes."

Battersea bus workers have started to fight, because they are determined to save their garage. An expansion of bus services, cheaper fares, more jobs and a better service to the public is what busworkers demand.

By Duncan Comrie

Militant

Fight rate-capping
Page 5
Zimbabwe, South Africa
Page 10

Postal workers
Stand up to management attacks



Postal workers built up a proud tradition of fighting for workers' interests as seen in their support for Grunwick workers in 1977. Now the fight is for their own future.

Mount Pleasant

THE POST Office took out an injunction against the postal workers' union, the UCW, this week for not complying with union laws and holding a ballot.

By Chris Whale
(UCW, North London, personal capacity)

On Monday 1 April, postal workers at Europe's biggest sorting office, Mount Pleasant, London with over 3,000 workers, had walked out in protest at management's suspension of four workers refusing to operate a new sorting machine, Optical Character Recognition (OCR).

This machine had been blacked by the union as from the previous midnight. Last year management and the union agreed that OCR should only go on trial until 31 March 1985 and then be subject to negotiation over any extension.

Last month's union delegate conference decisively rejected both the Post Office's attempt to take on another 12,000 part-timers and the extension of new technology. Our union saw these moves as a clear attack on the jobs and living standards of all postal workers.

Post Office management clearly deliberately provoked Monday's confrontation, first by trying to force workers to operate OCR without union agreement, secondly by the High Court injunction. The workers, particularly the younger ones, were angry and determined at Monday's mass meeting.

Unfortunately, this was not matched by the union leadership; the EC official, instead of mapping out a clear plan of action, told everyone; "go home, don't talk to the press, and watch the TV for further reports". The vast majority of the 10.p.m. night shift refused to return to work after pickets had explained the issues.

But now the leadership have sown confusion with Tuffin's remarks about recommending a ballot and asking for six weeks to persuade UCW conference to drop its opposition to OCR. Mount Pleasant returned to work and are balloting next week. In the meantime they have been instructed to operate the new machines!

Cosy talks won't stop the attacks.The union must show willing to fight. After the miners' strike the ruling class have decided to go for the jugulars of all unions. Management and the Tories want a weakened UCW so they can push through the end of the Post Office monopoly and privatisation. The leaders must show the determination of Mount Pleasant, Stockport and Maidstone where postal workers are fighting the attacks.

No private deals over new technology, part-timers or Crown Office closures! New technology should not be used to reduce the workforce but as an aid to recruit more **full-time** workers off the dole queue, reducing the working week and increasing the basic pay of postal workers so that they aren't forced to work overtime.

A full campaign taking out the problems to meetings in every area must be started. All postal workers must understand what is at stake in the battles ahead.

Amnesty for all sacked miners

THE NATIONAL Coal Board are in a vindictive mood. After the magnificent struggle by the miners they want revenge on the communities who fought their plans so bravely. They also want to destroy militant trade unionism.

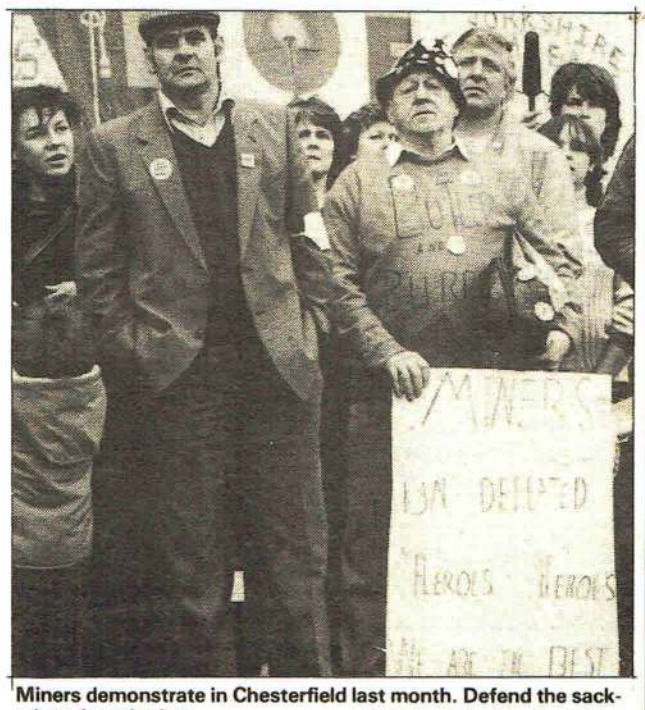
Their victimisation of striking miners has not let up since the strike ended a month ago. The story of the Yorkshire miner imprisoned and sacked for breaking one window (see page three) shows the depths to which they will sink.

But the miners are not prepared to tolerate this treatment. All the press stories have played up the setbacks in ballots. The reports on page three from the Midlands Area show a number of left victories in an area which overwhelmingly was back at work before the end of the dispute nationally.

For instance, strike supporters won 10 out of 12 places on the NUM branch committee at Keresley Colliery near Coventry. They included sacked miner Colin Ward. His election shows the latent sympathy and support for victimised mineworkers.

The miners are not prepared to be ground down. These victories must show the NUM leaders the potential for a massive campaign against sackings. The call for an amnesty must not only carry on, it must be stepped up.

Get your union branch, shop stewards' committee, Labour Party or YS branch to support the Miners' Amnesty Campaign, set up by rank and file miners to fight victimisation. See page three for details.



Miners demonstrate in Chesterfield last month. Defend the sacked trade unionists. Photo: John Harris (IFL)

Stockport

STOCKPORT POSTAL workers came out on strike for the second time in eight months last Sunday, provoked by the withdrawal of bonus payments with effect from 15 February.

By David Wood
(Edgeley Labour Party)

The bonus scheme has been in operation for two years and its withdrawal was decided without negotiations with the union. On 16 February, 16 new full-time employees were taken on, which the union welcomed. The management guaranteed that the bonus would not be affected. Last week the union received a letter withdrawing it.

The union agreed on a 48-hour strike with effect from Sunday midnight with over 90% in favour.

On Monday, Alan Johnson of the UCW executive came to negotiate. Management, faced with the strike escalating throughout Greater Manchester, finally conceded all the union demands and guaranteed a return to the previous status quo. Faced with action at Mount Pleasant and Stockport, management clearly backed-down rather than risk the strike possibly escalating to national level.

The fight in Stockport is not over, however. Management are preparing to take on seven part-time workers at the expense of three of the recently employed full-timers. They would work a 17½ hour week with no holiday or sick pay. The August strike and the current dispute shows the likely response. As one Stockport UCW member said: "Just let them try it on, they won't know what's hit them".



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