

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 687
17 February 1984

20p

Clydeside, Newcastle, Liverpool...

Stop closures! Stop cuts!

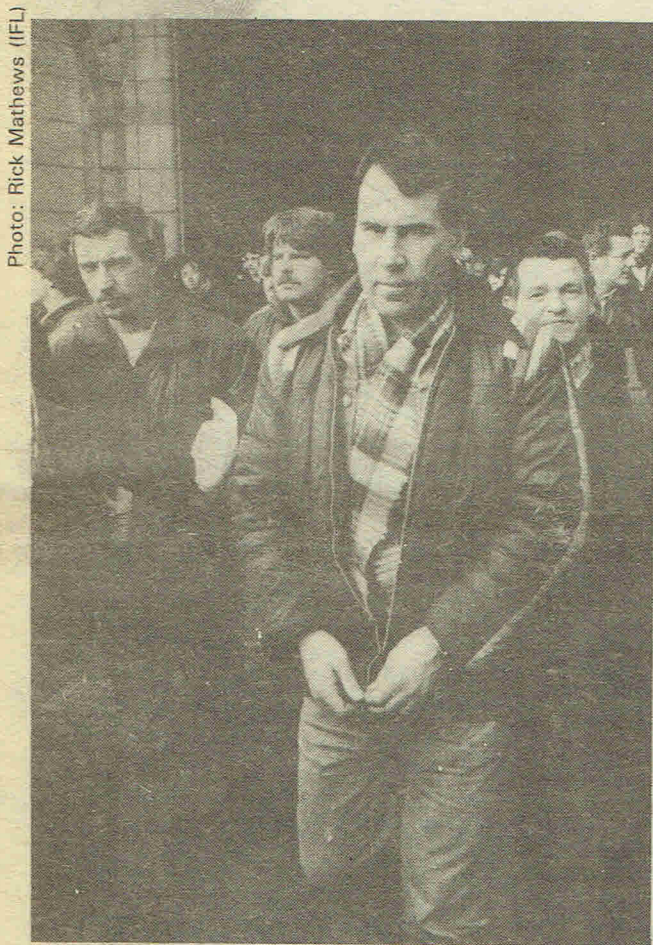


Photo: Rick Mathews (FL)

Scott Lithgow workers leaving the mass meeting at Greenock Town Hall 20 January.

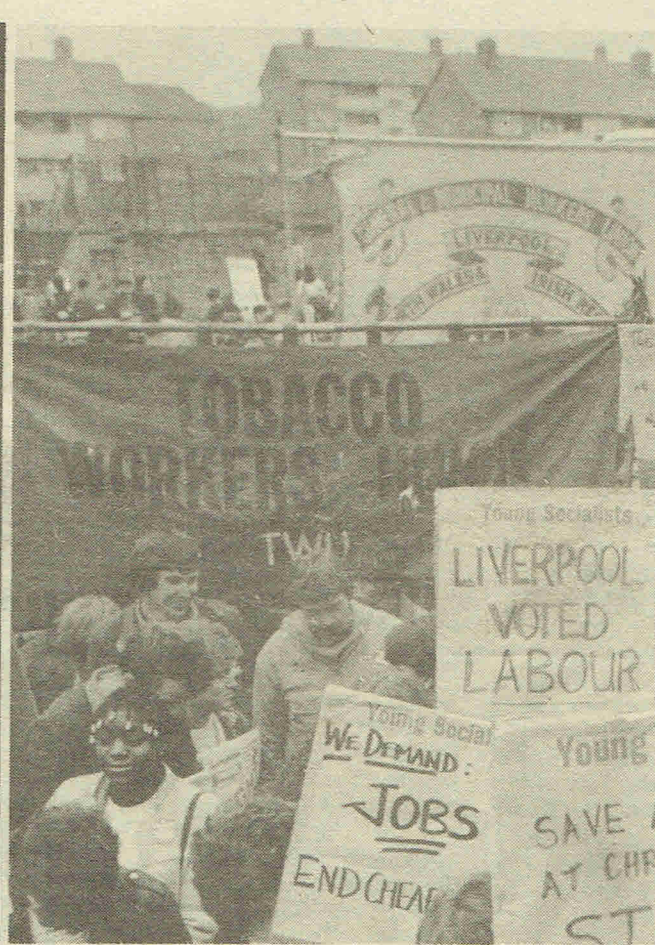


Photo: Militant

BAT workers join the march to save jobs last November.

On Clydeside, Merseyside and Tyneside, workers are taking action to stop the Tories and the bosses destroying jobs and cutting services.

In Clydeside, Thatcher's cynical deal at Scott Lithgow, giving Trafalgar House a real money spinning prize while threatening thousands of jobs has provoked anger—and action.

Clydeside

The attempted railroading of Scott Lithgow workers into the employment (or more accurately unemployment) of Trafalgar House was countered by a walk out of all 4,500 workers last week.

At a mass meeting the next day they voted unanimously to return to work but warned that no deals would be acceptable without consultation and their agreement.

Even the best offers with any of the buyers would involve a thousand redundancies. These must be opposed and the shop stewards' com-

mittee must prepare to fight back in occupation now.

The mood of bitterness against closures in the West of Scotland needs to be transformed into action.

It must be taken up by the STUC and the stewards representing all the threatened workplaces brought together to discuss specific plans of opposition involving the communities and industrial action by the workers themselves—and by other sections.

In Port Glasgow where unemployment has reached 45% the mood for a generalised stoppage exists. It must be built on.

Newcastle

There has also been a 24 hour strike over rail cuts after subsidies were cut by the Labour regional council

in Strathclyde. (See page 14). Many shop stewards are now considering regional strikes to protest at job losses.

The same is true in Newcastle, where unemployment has been rife for twenty years. Local authority unions NUPE and NUT are calling a strike on 7 March, while GMBATU have called a day of action, after the first compulsory redundancies were introduced by the local Labour council.

Liverpool

In Liverpool the axe hangs over BAT jobs, a thousand of them. Industry has been crippled. But Liverpool's Labour council are not cutting services. They are fighting to create them, and mobilising support from the labour movement for a one day stoppage on 29 March against Tory attempts to attack the council.

These are important and welcome initiatives. It is high time the union and Labour Party leaderships took a leaf out of these workers books.

The TUC leaders cannot divert the Tories from their plans by sipping Thatcher's tea. Any cup the Tories give us will be poisoned.

Nationwide action

There is a crying need for national action by the labour movement, for a start a clear commitment from the TUC to support all workers in struggle with the Tories. A 24 hour general strike could act as a focus for all the disputes and fights round the country. It should be used to explain what is causing the massive attacks on our livelihoods and preparing action.

Workers are refusing to let the Tories grind us into the mud. Organise the fight back-starting now.

More on Scott Lithgow—see back page.

BAT fight—page 15

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BLOC
BROAD LEFT ORGANISING COMMITTEE

National
Delegate
Conference

Saturday 24 March
11 am—5.30 pm at Octagon
Centre, Western Bank,
Sheffield 10

Sessions to be opened by David Blunkett, Leader of Sheffield Council and LP NEC, and Joan Maynard MP.
Main speaker: Tony Benn.

Any bona-fide trade union body is welcome to send up to five delegates. For credentials and further information contact: George Williamson, Organising Secretary, 11 Sutton Place, London E9 6EH.

TRAVEL FROM LONDON

Reserve seats on 07:45 St Pancras to Sheffield for only £12.50 return (normally £15.00). Train leaves Sheffield 19:25. Bookings must be made in advance. Cheques payable to "BLOC (London Organising Committee)". Send to W Boyle, c/o 59 Offenbach House, Roman Road, London E2.

A turning point for the unions

THE BRITISH economy is supposedly going through a short boom. But that hasn't stopped the avalanche of redundancies threatened by the employers and the Tory government.

It also hasn't stopped attacks on wages, conditions and union rights. Trade unionists are being forced into battle to keep their heads above water and to get back what the Tories have taken over the past few years.

Fighting lead

A strong fighting trade union movement prepared to take on the Tories has never been more important. That is why the initiative taken by the Broad Left Organising Committee (BLOC) in holding a conference on 24 March has been so welcomed by union activists.

The conference gives a chance for union branches, shop stewards committee, regional organisations and other bona fide trade union bodies to argue out the best way to transform the unions.

I asked George Williamson, the organising secretary of BLOC about the response so far. He said, "it's really picking up well, from many different areas of the country and many different unions."

"Among the latest

organisations to send delegates are:

TGWU 9/515 branch Sheffield, TGWU scaffolders Southampton, TGWU 1/55 branch London, NUPE South Manchester Hospitals, NUPE Birmingham Monyhull Hospital Catering, NUPE Birmingham local government, UCW two branches in Hull, UCW Derby and district, COHSE 221 branch Leeds Eastern, COHSE Ormskirk Hospital, NUR Finsbury Party No 5, NSMM Warrington, UCATT Manchester No 3, Rotherham Boilermakers No 1 (GMBATU), ASTMS South Yorkshire Health Service. Blackpool and Stevenage Trades Councils are also sending delegates.

"This shows the interest we've already aroused" George said, "I would ask any trade unionist who hasn't got his or her organisation to send delegates to raise the question right now. This could be a real turning point for the trade union movement."

By Bill Boyle

"AFTER THE attack on union rights at GCHQ, the morale and mood of trade unionists there is high.

"What is needed to win is immediate action beginning on 28 February with the one day strike for the whole of the civil service.

"There should be no talks to the Tories about a 'no disruption' clause. That is capitulating to an enemy which is already

on the run. This is a dispute we can win.

"Disputes like this show the importance of a fighting trade union leadership. I welcome the Broad Left Organising Committee conference as an essential step to that aim."

Kevin Roddy, CPSA NEC member, past president and Broad Left candidate for presidency 1984.

Funeral in Moscow Bells toll for bureaucracy

HEADS OF state, prime ministers, generals, dukes, bureaucrats and millionaires were all present at the funeral of Yuri Andropov. Every one of the Eastern European Stalinist bureaucracies were represented, as were the governments of all the major capitalist powers of the West. The only ones without a *bona fide* representative at the ceremony were the workers, Russian or otherwise.

But like Banquo's Ghost, the Russian workers were present in one sense: in the nightmares and fears of the bureaucracy around Chernenko. The shroud of mystery around Andropov's year-long illness, the anxiety at the final announcement of his death, the hurried conclave of Politbureau members to appoint his successor, the secrecy—above all the thick veil of secrecy—all these point to their fear of any open discussion of the political and economic implications of the succession, and any involvement by the working class in the affairs of state.

Behind the careful manoeuvres of the leading Russian bureaucrats lies a deep and intractable economic crisis. The Bureaucracy has felt the ground shift beneath its feet as it has become increasingly incapable of developing the economy and moving society forward.

The planned, state-owned economy is the only gain of the October Revolution that has remained intact to this day. But after 1923, with the revolution isolated in a backward, devastated country, a bureaucracy was able to consolidate itself, one characterised by its inefficiency, mismanagement, bloated privileges and the suppression of all the democratic rights of the workers.

Plan of production

The existence of a plan of production, *despite* the bureaucracy, meant that the economy of the USSR was able to develop at a huge rate—from the early 1920s to the present day, at a rate unmatched by capitalist countries. As Trotsky explained, after his own expulsion from Stalinised Russia, the superiority of a planned economy was written, not in academic or theoretical terms, but in the language of steel, railroads and cement.

But whereas the Bureaucracy was a *relative* fetter on production in the past—in the sense that the economy went ahead, although at a far greater cost than would have been necessary in a state with workers' democracy—as it developed the forces of production, the Bureaucracy became an *absolute* fetter.

It is one matter for a privileged caste to manage a backward, isolated economy by the methods of command and compulsion. But it is another question entirely to use such methods in a modern economy as Russia now is, where each industrial sector has developed tens of thousands of different products, processes and techniques, with highly complex interrelationships between them and other sectors. The more complex has become the economy, the more the Kremlin Bureaucracy have become an obstacle to its further development.

This explains the fear of the



WHAT CAN THESE STUPID WORKERS BE THINKING OF? THAT GRAVE'S BIG ENOUGH FOR THE ENTIRE LEADERSHIP

Bureaucracy around Chernenko: they have no independent relationship to the means of production, and can only maintain their position by fraud and repression. But whereas in the past the Bureaucracy could achieve a measure of stability by the growth in production and living standards, they are increasingly unable to develop the economy as in the past.

Economic figures indicate a slowing down of the rate of economic growth throughout the 1970s, as the mismanagement of the Bureaucracy has taken a greater toll. Despite massive investment in agriculture, for example—now 27 per cent of all investment, and planned to rise to 33 per cent—about a third of the total crop is lost through waste and mis-planning.

The economy can produce 550,000 tractors, but each year almost the same number break down. Although more than 80 per cent more acreage is used for agriculture as compared to the USA, only about 70 per cent of the crop is produced annually.

The only way this could be changed so it would make a fundamental difference—and it is something quite beyond the bureaucracy itself to achieve—would be *political revolution*, that is the overthrow of the bureaucracy giving the workers control of the state and the economy.

For Marxists, workers' control and management in a state-owned economy is not a sentimental question—it is a vital necessity for the development of the economy. The active involvement of all workers in planning and management is as necessary for the modern Russian economy as oxygen is to a living body.

The Bureaucracy have been looking over their shoulders during the 'leadership crisis', for fear

that the workers will raise their own independent voice. Andropov was not as long in power as was Stalin, but the Kremlin are painfully aware that the latter's death in 1953 provoked a wave of workers' opposition throughout Eastern Europe.

The careful selection of Chernenko—an old man who himself cannot have a long period of office ahead—reflects their desire not to break the continuity. The appointment of a 'young' man, like Romanov (61) or Gorbachev (52) would have appeared too sudden and dramatic a change from the past, perhaps provoking demands for reform from within the Bureaucracy, and subsequently from the working-class.

Russian working class

The appointment of Konstatin Chernenko, therefore, represents no fundamental departure from the regime of Andropov, or Brezhnev, if it comes to that. In the longer run, however, he will have a rockier ride than these two as the economy fails to match the aspirations of the workers.

The Russian working class is the strongest in the world: highly cultured, concentrated in workplaces sometimes of over 100,000, and with the magnificent traditions of 1905 and 1917. They may have been barred from the funeral of Yuri Andropov, but in the longer run they will have the final say.

They will not only be present, they will be the organisers of the funeral of the bureaucracy itself and when that day comes, the bureaucrats, dukes, millionaires and capitalists will stay away—because a Russian working class in power would spell the end for all the Stalinist bureaucracies, and the capitalist system in the West.

Stop Margate witch hunt

RANK AND file members of Thanet North Labour Party are angry that right wingers in Margate look set to go ahead with an 'enquiry' into local *Militant* supporters.

The row started when I moved into a new ward, the Park LP branch, and recruited 15 new members to the party (see *Militant* 681). Yet incredibly I was criticised for carrying out an "unauthorised recruitment campaign", and accused of trying to take over the ward. Recruiting new members is now a crime it seems!

No evidence has yet been produced by officers of the party, despite repeated demands. Instead the Executive Committee has arranged a meeting to look into "undisclosed evidence". It has not even been disclosed who exactly is being investigated, but it is believed three prominent Labour Party members are at the top of the list.

These include: myself—a Labour Party member for

ten years, seven years on the EC, a council candidate on three occasions and Political Education Officer for three years; John Nicholson—a member for six years, two years vice-chairman of Thanet West LP, two years a Youth Officer, a ward chairman for five years and GMC delegate for five years; and Jimmy Haddow—four years a party member, chairman of the LPYS for two years and an active fund raiser for the Labour Party.

We are calling on all people in Kent opposed to witch-hunts to lobby outside the 'enquiry' meeting on 28 February, 7 pm at 42 Hawley Street, Margate, to protest at this witch-hunt. We also appeal to all wards, CLPs, and trade unions to protest to the chairman of Thanet North CLP (at the above address).

Please send copies of any such resolutions to: Flat 2, 4 Arundel Road, Cliftonville, Kent.

By Barry Lewis

Workers oppose Yeovil ban

THE YEOVIL Labour Institute has imposed a ban on *Militant*, stopping its sale on the premises.

This follows a decision of Yeovil Trades Council—who meet on the premises—to invite a speaker from *Militant* to address its meeting.

The Institute, which is run mainly by right wingers (including four JPs!) say they are carrying out Labour NEC policy, and have told the Trades Council that to hear a *Militant* speaker would be 'ill advised' and they would not grant facilities for the meeting.

This has disgusted many

delegates as in the past we have invited Tories and Liberals to speak and nothing has been said. Many feel the right wing have lost the political arguments and are resorting to Stalinist tactics.

Nevertheless, we have started the fightback and are determined Marxism will have the right to be heard, and we still plan to hold a meeting with a speaker from *Militant*.

By John Grana
(Yeovil Trades Council, personal capacity)

Tories slap down Panorama

THE TORY leaders' response to BBC's *Panorama* programme about racism in the Tory party has become quite hysterical and menacing.

Tory party chairman Selwyn Gummer has threatened "very serious action" being taken against the BBC. On Monday he and the Tory Chief Whip held a two-hour meeting with the BBC's Director General, Alistair Milne. The Tories have demanded action to prevent repetition.

You have to admire their nerve. The BBC is no friend of the labour movement. Its hierarchy is embedded in the values of the establishment. Bias against socialists and workers who take industrial action is commonplace. Yet *one* programme dares to criticise the Tories and the Tory leadership goes beserk.

Firstly they did not want the BBC to discuss the issue at all. Then when *Panorama* decided to transmit, using the Young Conservatives exposé of racism within the Tory party, all kinds of pressure was exerted on party members, especially MPs, advising them not to appear. Even the censored version of the Young Conservatives'



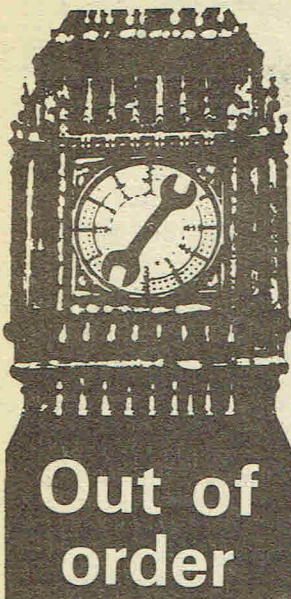
Harvey Proctor, one of the Tory MPs exposed in *Panorama*.

report was not issued to the press until 5.30 pm on Saturday night, too late for the Sunday papers and too early to be of much interest for the dailies.

Clearly the new Thatcherite leadership cannot take any criticism. They had always considered the media to be safe. Press owners have been ennobled and given honours in recognition for their behaviour. Now as one TV programme steps out of line all kinds of threats are left hanging in the air.

In 1980 the Tories established the Broadcasting Complaints Commission. But they've not taken their grievances there. Thatcherite Tories prefer to use the weapons of threat and fear to silence opponents.

By Colin Barber



Out of order

THE government spends the equivalent of £16 per family in Britain on arms expenditure every week. Government spending on Civil Defence however, works out at only 86p per person a year. Obviously the Tories don't take the survival of Britain's population very seriously—they're more interested in the nuclear hardware. Of course, the Tories and their rich friends have their own personal fall-out shelters ready and waiting for them. The rest of us can go and fry.

In the early hours of 8 February, the four minute warning siren went off in my constituency of Coventry South-East. A policeman at the Little Park Street station set it off accidentally. (let's hope the USAAF at Greenham Common don't make the same kind of mistake).

One Coventry fireman later asked me what are you supposed to do in four minutes. Well, you're meant to whitewash the windows, fill up black plastic bags with rubble, find a screwdriver and take the doors off their hinges and build a nice little shelter, complete with a stockpile of baked beans and buckets of water to keep you going for six weeks; or so the government Civil Defence handbook tells you.

It doesn't quite explain how your DIY shelter will protect you from a 50 magaton blast. And it doesn't mention the fact that should a nuclear bomb fall on just one major city, there wouldn't be enough hospital beds in the whole of the country to deal with the expected volume of casualties.

The eerie warning wall that spread its message of doom across Coventry reminded us all that the threat of nuclear annihilation is real. Twice this century the capitalist class have been prepared to take the road to world war in order to defend their system and as a solution to the crisis they faced. Once again, world capitalism is stumbling into economic crisis. We must not allow them to take that path again, this time ending the threat of war forever through transforming society worldwide.

By Dave Nellist MP



Young Socialists on the YTURC march as it passes through Birmingham City Centre.

Birmingham demo success

THE YOUTH Trade Union Rights Campaign took to the streets of Birmingham on Saturday in a successful 300-strong march. Supported by West Midlands LPYS branches, the demonstration against Tory attacks on youth attracted many young workers into the ranks of Labour's youth section.

A typical example was Kay and her friend from the Frankley estate on the edge of the city. She said the march had inspired her to set up an LPYS branch on her estate hopefully within the next week. Similarly, student Adam Gingley was passing by when he saw the march and joined the LPYS there and then.

Not everyone on the march was of LPYS age. Alf from Kings Heath, who is

By Richard Hudson
(Solihull LPYS)

& Dermot Carney
(Erdington LPYS)

blind and unemployed, is 63 but still joined the march. As he put it; "Age, and for that matter race and sex, doesn't matter—the system hits us all. I am on this march to show my disgust."

New recruits

At the following rally, speakers Dave Nellist MP and Nick Toms, national secretary of YTURC hit out at the Tories' policies.

● Birmingham LPYS branches worked flat out to build support for the YTURC march and in so doing recruited many new members to the YS. A typical day for the Young Socialists consisted of an early morning leaflet and paper sale outside a factory, leafletting the dole queues until midday and then a street meeting in the 'Bullring' where shoppers and unemployed congregate. In the evenings, squads of YS members canvassed the Nechell's estate, where the march was to finish with a rally.

The direct result of this hard work—200 names and addresses of young workers interested in the ideas of the LPYS. (Further report—page 5)

YS regions surge forward

OVER LAST weekend (11-12 February) most regions of the LPYS held their area conferences. The hall mark of all these meetings was that they were larger than ever before, predominantly made up of young workers at their first major labour movement event.

● **Northern.** Held in Durham, there were delegations from 21 LPYS branches with over 50 visitors. The debates had an industrial slant, with guest speakers from the USDAW Broad Left and NUPE. The 'Gargleblaster Disco' provided the entertainment on Saturday night.

● **South West.** 120 attended the conference at

Weston-super-mare, many for the first time. On Saturday there were discussions on YTS and South Africa, followed by an excellent play written and performed by Plymouth and Devon LPYS—Scottish LPYS branches watch out at this year's national conference! The Saturday disco was a great success, and on the Sunday session, the feature film *Missing* helped introduce the subject of Chile for the final debate.

● **Eastern.** Over a hundred attended with lots of new faces, mainly from newly set-up branches such as St Neots and Great Yarmouth. Although there was no opposition to the Marxist views

put forward, interesting discussions followed on YTS and housing with Young Socialists relating their everyday experiences.

● **London.** Just under 400 attended the first day of the London conference. Besides the many debates guest speakers added to the discussions. Ken Livingstone and Jock Campbell of the POEU contributed, and there was much applause for the president of the South African mineworkers' union, Arthur Latham, chairman of the London Labour Party also addressed the conference, stating he was against witch-hunts and praised the work of the LPYS.

(More reports—see page 5)

MP takes up SA miners' plight

DAVE NELLIST MP has been asked by the Parliamentary Human Rights Group to introduce a motion of protest over the high accident rate of black miners in South Africa.

The motion which has gained the backing of 56 other MPs including former Labour leader Michael Foot, reads:

"This house notes with grave concern that the item on ITN's *News at One*

programme on Tuesday, 7 February, showing the high death and injury rate amongst black South African mineworkers, and calls for an urgent investigation into the Health and Safety policies of, and the wages paid by, British companies and their subsidiaries in the South African mining industry."

Dave Nellist said: "On average 1,000 miners are killed each year in South

Africa—compared to 38 deaths in the mining industry in Britain. The government is duty-bound to investigate the role that British companies are playing in South Africa in the light of these facts."

He is to question government ministers about the need for a full investigation into the safety record of British mining companies operating in South Africa.

Unity-Austin Mitchell style

WITH THE Chesterfield by-election now underway, Labour Party members will have been aghast to see the insulting comments in an article by right wing Labour MP Austin Mitchell.

His tirade against Tony Benn appeared, very appropriately, in the *Sun* on 13 February—who the hell does Mitchell think he is, writing for this rabid anti-Labour rag, especially during a crucial by-election?

The hacks at the *Sun* must have been beside themselves with delight, when this vicious little piece arrived on their desks—here was a Labour MP doing their dirty work for them.

Benn attacked

If you look at the article carefully you may find some praise for Benn. But most of it is an hysterical attack, not only on Benn but the democratically chosen policies of the labour movement.

Mitchell starts off; "I won't be welcoming Tony Benn back to the House of Commons with a garland of flowers and a kiss on the cheeks. But he will be back." He goes on; "Yet life's been pleasant without him. Who

can relish the prospect of those staring eyes stalking the corridors looking for signs of sell-out and rummaging through the cupboards to fish out all those inconvenient policies we've hidden away in his absence."

He blames Tony Benn for the election defeat too; "...the man who helped turn our 1983 election from a defeat into a disaster by lumbering us with a manifesto, attitudes and behaviour that no party in its right mind would be seen dead with."

When he talks about "us" and "we", Mitchell means the small right wing clique in the Parliamentary Labour Party.

It was these individual right wingers who helped Labour lose the general election, when their contempt for Labour's policies turned to open sabotage. It was the right-wing's policies of attacking workers' living standards and cutting back social services that lost the election in 1979.

Mitchell appears determined to repeat this performance in the Chesterfield by-election. He obviously thinks himself far too important for the new mood for unity within the Labour Party to apply to him. With friends like this 'Labour' MP, who needs *Sun* editorials?

By Bob Wade

Rising anger over Wakefield cutbacks

THE WAKEFIELD District Labour Party last week passed a motion of 'no confidence' in its own Labour Group.

This incredible situation has arisen over the massive package of cuts introduced by the group in November last year (see *Militant* 682) and their decision to ignore the instruction of the DLP to reconsider them.

No confidence vote

The major issues of contention are the closure of two day-nurseries and the council's decision to take twelve people (including four Labour councillors) to court in order to secure their removal from the nurseries which are being occupied.

Two recent District Labour Party meetings have highlighted the anger felt in the local labour movement at the council. Indeed after the vote of 'no confidence' one leading councillor stormed red faced from the meeting only returning after words of consolation by one of the four councillors taken to court.

However at the council meeting the next day the Labour Group showed its total disregard for the views of the DLP by confirming its earlier decisions.

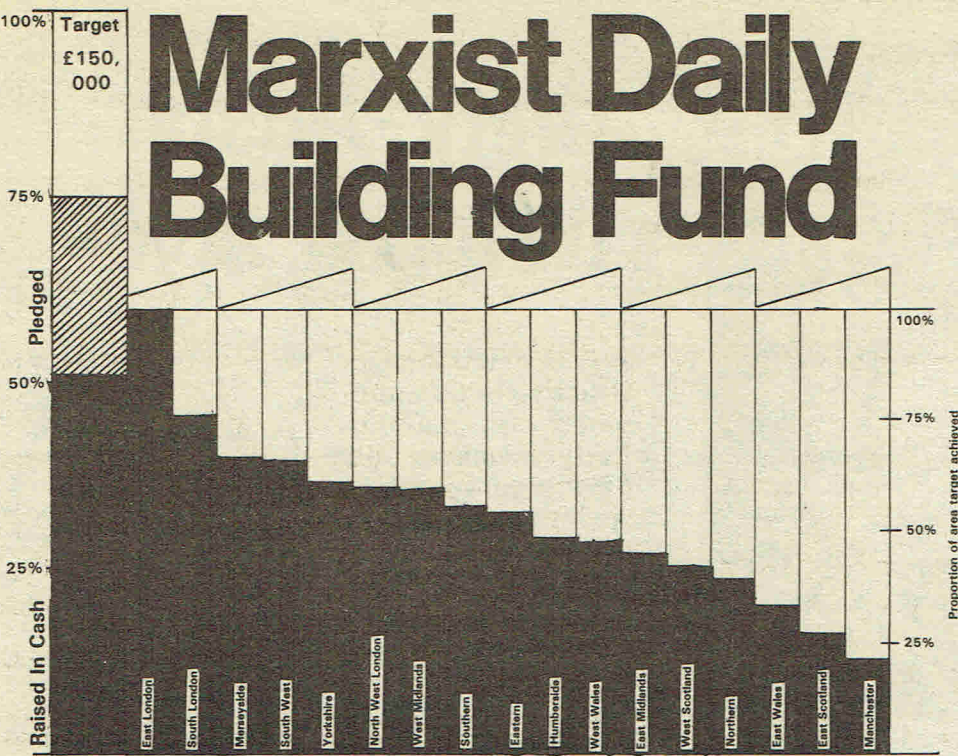
Unfortunately, the main campaign of the left in the area has been around the

single issue of the nurseries which—although very important—are only part of a whole package of cuts including old people's homes and savage attacks on the education services. The local LPYS and *Militant* supporters have consistently opposed all cuts and rate rises as being another Tory attack on the living standards of working people.

Accusations of 'wrecking' and 'splitting' the party have flown from left to right with the real issues being lost by the right wing who dominate the council. They fail to see that the unemployed, the old, children and the youth who will have their futures destroyed because they have been robbed of their basic right to a decent education, are the real issues at stake.

Contrary to the smoke screen thrown up by the right wing, Marxists and the left in general do not attend the District Labour Party meetings with the aim of causing splits. Indeed nothing would give us greater pleasure than to be able to applaud the council for fighting the Tories. Instead our councillors seem determined to do the Tories' dirty work for the them—we demand that the Wakefield Metropolitan District Council stands up and fights the Tories alongside the class that they are supposed to represent.

By Mick Richardson
(Wakefield LPYS)



SUPPORT FOR a daily Marxist paper continues to be shown in the most concrete way. Thousands of pounds have been received this week taking the total to £80,391.

We have had an enquiry about the fund from Nigeria. With the crisis affecting every area of the world workers can see the importance of having daily reports and analysis of international events from their point of view. It is up to all our readers to make sure the ideas of genuine Marxism reach those workers who have not yet heard them.

The first step towards this will be to meet the target of £150,000 for the Building Fund. But even this will not be enough to obtain the sort of premises we need. We really need to go well past that figure and given the sacrifice we have had so far that should not be impossible.

While the Marxist move-

ment prepares for a daily paper we can see the profits made by the capitalist papers. Reed International is planning a £100 Stock Exchange flotation of Mirror Group Newspapers. With so much money involved it is not surprising that these papers support the present system and distort reports of industrial struggles.

Workers' paper

To have a paper that will truthfully report the problems and struggles of the working class requires a paper based on the support of workers themselves. We can never expect a fair deal from the Tory press. The sooner we got our daily the better.

Our Thanks

Our thanks to those who have contributed this week including a couple in Newcastle who have given £1,000. Donations of £100 have come from John Byrne, Manchester; Mick Murphy, Staffordshire; J & J Crewick, Wirral; Jim Greer, Edinburgh; Paul Kannich, Woolwich. £200 came from Audrey and Keith Mitchell, Essex and Dave Brown, Bristol, sent £250. A cheque from South Yorkshire for £815 has arrived along with £307 from Leicester and another £250 from Sussex.

As you will see from the chart some areas have some way to go but the amounts coming in now from all areas suggest that every reader is determined that the necessary money is raised.

By Nick Wrack

FIGHTING FUND This week **£1,587**

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 7 April
Eastern	301		2500
East Midlands	368		2900
Humberside	200		1500
London East	631		3250
London West	221		2050
London South	327		2650
Manchester & Lancs	275		3520
Merseyside	458		4000
Northern	427		3350
Scotland East	233		2150
Scotland West	239		3000
Southern	507		4300
South West	171		2000
Wales East	405		1880
Wales West	424		1650
West Midlands	407		3500
Yorkshire	643		4100
Others	105		2000
Total received	6342		50,000

HERE'S A practical guide for some fund raising ideas that ever area can take up.

Rattling tins—every comrade should have one. In Leicester one comrade used to get all the sales—and it wasn't because he could shout the loudest—he was the only one with a tin! The other comrades got fed up losing their sales so now they've all got tins. Have you got one?

Hit lists—a list of supporters and organisations that can be approached for donations—have raised as much as £100 for one area. Start yours NOW so that you can see every supporter in this quarter.

Appeal sheets—can be used with hit lists. There is no alternative to simply asking for a donation—£10, £5, £1 or 50p regularly for the paper.

Organise a limited draw. Buy a book or a bottle of whisky, sell 50 tickets at 50p each, only 12 tickets need to be sold to cover to the cost of the prize! With the prospect of winning that much higher tickets are easy to sell—every comrade could sell at least five.

Socials are good and enjoyable fund raisers. Hold a Pancake Evening—pancakes are cheap and easy to make, charge 50p a plateful! From here a Video Night or

Spaghetti/Curry Night or Home Brew social should be easy—make sure tickets are printed so every comrade can help raise money.

There are many other initiatives that areas can try—and don't forget to send us details. But remember finance should be a reflection of our strength—therefore donations from within the labour and trade union movement and from individuals are still the most important as they reflect the commitment to build for a socialist future.

By Kim Waddington

ADS

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

Accommodation

ROOM to let, all in, £20 per week. In Tooting Broadway. Contact Box 3, *Militant* Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

For Sale

MILITANT STICKERS. Still available. 200 for £2.30; 500 for £5.60; 1,000 for £11.00. Contact: *Militant* Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

"Militant Turn left for workers unity and socialism"

T-shirts—£3.50—white, yellow, navy black. Sweatshirts—£6.75—grey, pale-blue, navy, dark green.

Small 32"-34" chest medium 34"-36" large 36"-38" extra large 40-42" All proceeds to *Militant* Fighting Fund. All cheques and postal orders with size and colour preference to R. Harris, 2 Duker Brow, Blackburn, Lancs.

CALLING ALL Marxist athletes. Have you past the finishing post for your pledge for the Building Fund? No? Then start training for the *Militant* Marathon! Join this fund raising event to be held in early spring. Contact Paul Henry, c/o 10 Kensington Road, Chorlton, Manchester.

SRI LANKA: The tasks today. New pamphlet from the Nava Samaja Party (UK Branch). Obtainable from World Socialist Books (see address below). Price 75p plus 10p postage.

SPONSORED RUN: There will be a sponsored run in support of the Tyneside Seven, arrested at Warrington on the NGA picket line. Date: Sunday, 26 February.

The run will be 12 miles from Jarrow to Chester-le-Street, on the route of the Jarrow March. All donations to: Days of Hope Bookshop, 115 Westgate Road, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear.

FOR HANDICAPPED READERS

Cassette tapes with two issues of *Militant* (one each side). Available fortnightly. £3.50 per quarter, £13 for year. Write to: *Militant* Tapes, 26 Aston Terrace, Harehills, Leeds 8, or phone (0527) 73795.

Free! Free! Free!

World Socialist Books

BOOKLIST 1984

HUNDREDS of books and pamphlets available by Marx, Lenin, Engels, Trotsky, Luxemburg, Connolly, Plekhanov, Grant, Cannon, Gramsci and many others. Writings on economics, philosophy, politics, science, war and peace, nuclear weapons, socialism, women, international developments, etc. Send for your copy of our new booklist. Available (free) from World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Militant

MEETINGS

For events in your area contact your local *Militant* seller.

THANET: *Militant* Readers' Meetings are held on alternative Monday evenings. For further details phone (0843) 291293.

HARTLEPOOL: Marxist discussion groups. Held weekly. Ring Malcolm Fallow, Peterlee 867789.

BLACKBURN: Thursday 15 March at 7.30 pm, at King George's Hall. Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, *Militant*), Terry Fields MP. Note new date.

WARMINSTER: Speaker: Keith Dickinson. (*Militant* Editorial Board) on Thursday 16 February at 7.30 pm at Dewey House.

HULL: "TUC—Abdication of Leadership" Thursday 23 February 7.30pm, Spring Bank Community Centre Hull. Speakers: Jeff Price USDAW (Broad Left), Steve Cawkwell, Sec. Humberside CPSA (Broad Left).

HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING. Thursday 1 March, 7.30 pm at: 'The Jolly Farmers', Market Place, Houghton-le-Spring. Further details phone: (0783) 653994.

STIRLING: Thursday 9 February, 7.30pm, Cowane Centre. "Scottish Labour History—the lessons for today." Thursday 23rd February 7.30pm, Cowane Centre, "Britain—Reagan's Back Yard?"

BIRMINGHAM AUEW Broad Left meeting at 12.00 prompt. Saturday, 3 March at White Lion, Queensway, Horsefair. All members welcome.

SOUTHWARK: "No to council cuts. Save jobs. Save services." Tuesday 6 March at 7.30 pm. Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor: *Militant*), Derek Hatton (Deputy Leader, Liverpool Council). Chair: Brian Kelly (Southwark Councillor). At North Peckham Civic Centre (corner Old Kent Road/Peckham Park Road).

Even fake sales get publicity

WHETHER TRUE or not the newscutting (right) shows that our sellers are on the alert to increase their sales at ever opportunity!

School students in Withington are selling 20 each week and in Broadheath local LPYS supporters have set up a factory sale and on their first visit sold nine papers. Each week our sellers organise sales at dole offices, factories, estates, streets and colleges.

Contrast this with the recent announcement that plans for a labour movement newspaper have been dropped by the TUC! Despite the success of *New Socialist* the Labour leaders seem afraid to boldly campaign for a workers' paper amongst the rank and

file. Of the £6,700,000 needed, only 15% was pledged for the new TUC paper. Our readers know we are not so easily put off in our quest for a more frequent paper.

Workers' support

It is not money that ultimately sustains a workers' paper it is support amongst the working class itself. Were the Labour leaders to launch a serious campaign for a paper they would be avalanched with support for the movement. Don't despair, help to build a more frequent *Militant*!

Militant demo

Central TV were filming the pilot of a new comedy series, in the middle of Nottingham. The series, called the *Tolpudle Inheritance*, is about the goings-on in an imaginary union and stars Brian Blessed.

A large group of actors holding banners and placards were holding a mock demo in the middle of the street, when a bloke turned up and tried to sell them copies of *Militant*.

— from the National Union of Journalists paper, *Journalist*, January 1984.

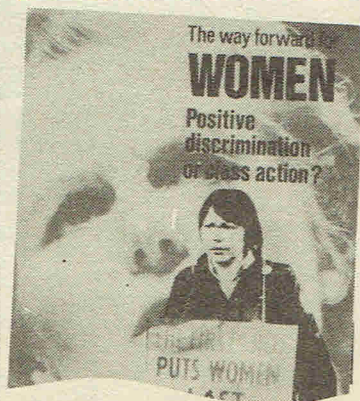
Take out an order now, contact *Militant* Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or telephone 01-986 3828.

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The jobless generation

THE LATEST unemployment figures show yet another increase. A further 120,000 have been thrown onto the dole.

In Scotland, five years of Tory government have meant the widescale destruction of Scottish industry. Closures at Talbot and the Invergordon smelter have devastated whole towns, while threatened redundancies at Polmaise Colliery, Scott Lithgow and British Leyland have put communities in the affected areas at risk.

Nowhere is the despair and isolation of youth more apparent than in the large housing estates (or 'schemes') of Glasgow. Youth unemployment runs at an estimated 70% in Strathclyde.

Schemes such as Drumchapel, on the outskirts of Glasgow, have between 60 and 70% of young people under 25 unemployed.

Job applications seem pointless to many of these disillusioned teenagers; "At first you think you'll get a job but as time goes on, you just get more and more depressed," said one youth. He told how he had applied for around one hundred jobs in the past year alone.

"I've given up"

On the other side of the city the same gloomy picture is painted for the youth of Easterhouse. With a population of 40,000, Easterhouse has an estimated unemployment level of 60%. The only jobs on offer to young people on this estate are Youth Training Schemes.

Jim O'Neill has been unemployed for 3½ years; "I spent six months on a YOP scheme, but since then I've been on the dole. I have tried for hundreds of jobs but they say there is nothing for me. I have really given up hope of ever getting a job."

High levels of unemployment are not just confined to the city of Glasgow; the once prosperous new towns of Cumbernauld and Irvine

are also experiencing the effects of Thatcher's government. Over the last few years these towns have been rocked by closures and redundancies, to the extent that unemployment in Irvine has risen from 4% eight years ago to 23% today.

The social outcome of these statistics has been disastrous. Petty crime has soared to an unprecedented level. Heroin is sold openly on the streets of the housing schemes. Many of the youth, in order to support the habit, converge on the shopping centre on a Saturday afternoon for shoplifting sprees.

Gang warfare back

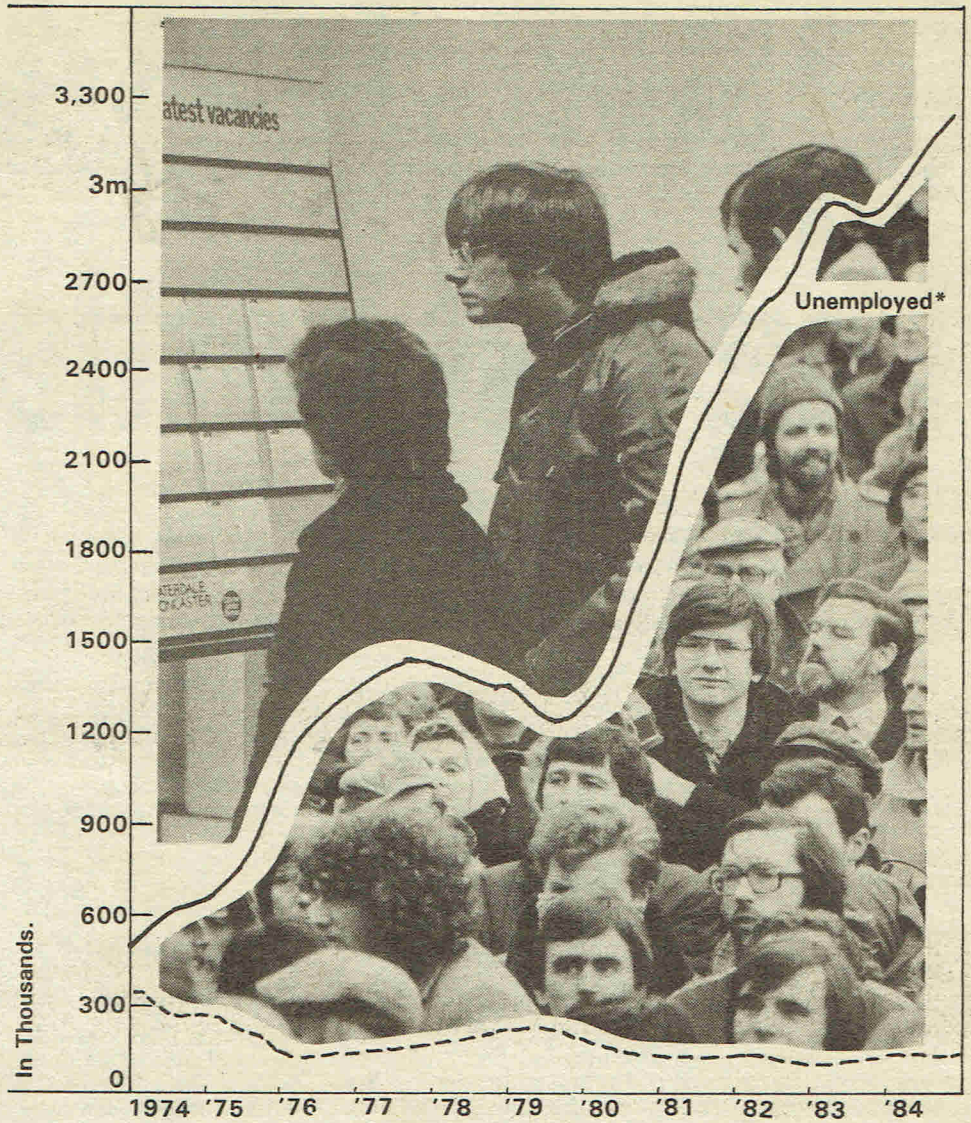
There has also been a resurgence of street violence and gang warfare, which was synonymous with Glasgow in past years. Muggings, stabbings and drunken brawls are an everyday occurrence.

In the late sixties when Glasgow went through a similar violent period, the only answer the city fathers could provide was an appeal to singer Frankie Vaughan to use his influence in order to quell the disturbances.

Today appeals to all the entertainers they could muster will not solve the miseries of youth unemployment and urban deprivation in Strathclyde.

The Labour Party Young Socialists must make an intervention by campaigning around the issues which directly affect the youth of the housing schemes—highlighting that the only way to fight the miseries of the dole, drug addiction and the thuggery is by a recognition that the causes lie with the present system.

By Stevie Lees
(Springburn LPYS)



A victim of the dole

THE GRIM monotony of life on the dole has taken its toll amongst many young workers. Of the number of men who attempt suicide, more than half are unemployed.

Before Christmas 23 year old Gary Keeley joined this list of statistics. In seven years he had never had regular work. His suicide note to his mother shows how Gary was finally broken by life on the dole:

"Forgive me for the selfish thing I am about to

do. Its a cruel thing to do to somebody who has been the best mother anyone could wish for.

"I'm sorry I haven't got the guts to do anything else, but I have lost all my fight and will to live. What little pride I had in myself has been slowly eroded over the last two years."

At Gary's inquest the coroner was moved to comment, "Unemployment cannot be excluded as the main reason for prompting this tragedy."

No proper job

On Merseyside, tragic suicides are becoming

regular reading in the *Liverpool Echo*. Last year two Widnes teenagers, unemployed for years, gassed themselves in a car. In Birkenhead a youth threw himself off a towerblock.

Gary's mother commented, "It must have been eating away at him. He had never had a proper job and looking back on the things he said he must have lost all hope. Gary isn't the first who has killed himself because he had no hope and he won't be the last. Maybe someone will start taking notice".

By Richard Knights.

YS around the country



NORTH WEST Region LPYS held their largest and most successful conference ever with the debates ranging from unemployment, YTS schemes, Northern Ireland to the Middle East. Shop stewards from Morris's, John West Foods, Beauty Care and Merseyside Foods made appeals to the conference to support their strikes against Thatcherite managements. Money and moral support was given to these workers in struggle.

The development of the LPYS in the region was best summed up by regional Labour Party official Frank Aveyard, who retires this year, who said, "When I first came to the North West 12 years ago there were 25 people and six resolutions at the YS con-

ferences at the YS conference. This year there are over 200 here with over 30 resolutions."

THE BUILD up to the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign demonstration held in Birmingham on Saturday (17 February) helped boost membership for Birmingham LPYS branches, who campaigned in support of the march. Throughout the build-up over 200 names were collected from young workers interested in joining the LPYS—20 of these from one street meeting. Also, a successful lunch time meeting was held at the Matthew Bolton FE College where over 25 attended, called jointly by YTURC and the college's Student Union.

WHY I JOINED THE



THIS WEEK Lindsay Common of Gedley LPYS in Nottingham, and Steve Kendall of Hackney North LPYS, East London, describe how they joined up with Labour's youth wing.

Lindsay: It's not much fun being on the dole for two years, especially after you've been to college for a couple of years to try and 'better' yourself. It was while unemployed during Christmas Eve 1982, some friends of mine began discussing unemployment and said how Thatcher would get all things going again (they were drunk at the time!).

Suddenly all the days of '78 came back to me—the Anti-Nazi League and all that—and I began to trust upon them all the socialist ideas that were stored up inside me from years gone by. Eventually they said I was pathetic and told me to shut up, but they could not hold down the spirit that had risen up inside me.

Later on in the year a mate of mine in the Labour Party

asked me if I could go out leafletting with him one day. While leafletting I met a Militant supporter and was told he believed in similar things to me, eg Marxism.

Get active

Curious to find out more the next time I saw him I said I wanted to get more involved—the witch-hunt was in full swing and I supported Militant, the 'bad guys' according to the Tory press. He said I should get active with the LPYS.

I was hesitant at first because I was suspicious that all left groups—thanks to the propaganda of the Tory press—were a load of middle class musseli freaks.

Good role

However, I soon found that nothing could be further from the truth. Today in complete contrast, I think the LPYS is a working class movement which plays a massive role in turning young workers to socialism.

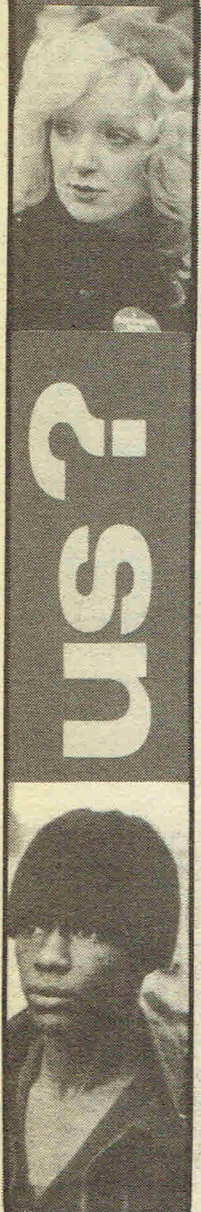
Steve: I've been involved in a local community centre, and I've seen how people from rich backgrounds just used working class people as 'volunteers' to do their grafting—slave labour. It's made me more aware about politics.

I don't believe all I read in the papers or see on the television. It's not right that a newspaper can be bought for cash and then contains the ideas of the person that owns it. Something has to be done about that.

I've just been evicted from my flat. I couldn't get by on my dole money, I had to use my rent money to live. So I was evicted for rent arrears. Under the new system, my rent would have been paid direct, so I wouldn't have been evicted—but I couldn't afford to live. The way things are now, you can't win."

Have you recently joined the Labour Party Young Socialists? What made you join? Write to Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

us? about what





GEORGE ORWELL 1984

The last battle

IT IS ironic that Orwell's two best known books, "Animal Farm" and "Nineteen Eighty-Four", which warn darkly against totalitarianism, and Stalinism in particular, have been so widely misunderstood.

Especially in countries like the USA, where Orwell's life-long socialist affiliations are not so well known, they have been mis-read as anti-socialist.

It would be completely wrong to judge, on their own, either Orwell's politics or his art on the basis of these two books, written towards the end of his life. He underwent a clear development in his views and his work, with a rise and fall, politically, from early days of discovery, through days of hope and struggle until the final days of near despair—though he remained a socialist until his death.

The Spanish War left George Orwell with a shrapnel wound in the throat and a deep hatred of Stalinism. It was as if Orwell, the writer who fought fascism with deeds, not only words, expected crimes and abominations from Nazis and Falangists, but was appalled by the double standards and uncritical pro-Stalin naivety of the "trendies" of his day. He refused to pass over in silence the deeds of the GPU agents who imprisoned, tortured and executed his POUM comrades and their Anarchist allies in Spain.

Turning point

1939 was a real turning point for him. The signing of the Hitler-Stalin Pact deepened his opposition to Stalinism, and the attack on totalitarianism now dominated his work.

"Nineteen Eighty-four", was written when his health was already irretrievably breaking down in 1947/48. He died in 1950. Some critics have called it the work of a broken man, but Orwell originally conceived it in 1943. His illness may explain the black pessimism of the book, but not the origin of its central theme.

Nineteen Eighty-Four reflects Orwell's flawed analysis of totalitarianism especially the model of Stalinist Russia. "Big Brother" the dictator even physically resembles Stalin. The mysterious revolutionary, Goldstein, who has been disgraced and expelled from the country after a revolution is a clear caricature of Trotsky (as is Snowball in *Animal Farm*).

Warning not prophecy

The book reflects Orwell's revulsion of totalitarianism, but he always insisted that it was a "warning" and not a "prediction" of what socialism would mean. He adamantly maintained, especially to his US audiences where he was consciously misinterpreted, that it was not an attack upon socialism as such or the British labour movement.

However, Orwell's lack of understanding of the specific economic and social factors that led to the degeneration of the Russian revolution left a gap that the right wing would enter—pointing to 1984 as the "inevitable"

BRIAN ANDREWS concludes our series on Orwell with an examination of the novel '1984' and Orwell's attack on totalitarianism.

development in a socialist society.

Orwell's weakness lies in a "moral" rather than a clear political rejection of totalitarianism, leading to a confusion and mixing up of Stalinism and Fascism—a fault common to most so-called sociologists of today.

Fundamental weakness

In fact, as Trotsky himself conceded, in relation to the political apparatus—secret police, torture, repression, etc—there was nothing to distinguish Stalinism from Nazi Germany; but they were nevertheless fundamentally different, the former resting upon a planned, state-owned economy, historically progressive despite the bureaucracy, and the latter resting upon capitalism, historically bankrupt.

The basic, fundamental weakness, which comes through especially strongly in 1984 is that he had no confidence in the ability of the working class to overthrow the Stalinism of "Big Brother". Trotsky, who participated in the Russian Revolution and who was able to see and analyse its later degeneration, never lost his faith in the ability of the Russian workers (the "proles" in 1984) to carry through a political revolution, to cast off the bureaucracy and re-establish the workers' democracy of the revolution period. Orwell's book, on the contrary, exudes pessimism.



Scene from the film of 1984.

Yet more than any other modern work of literature, 1984 has left its mark not only on its millions of readers, but on the living language which Orwell loved so much. Phrases and constructions from the book have entered the everyday speech of the world political debate.

The date "1984" has taken on a general meaning along with the phrase, "Big Brother is watching you" as cyphers of the police state. The use of "-wise" as a word-ending to form adverbs has passed from 'Orwell's' Newspeak into modern English; "double-think", "thoughtcrime" and "thought police" are part of the political vocabulary of the real world in the real 1984.

Orwell's legacy

Orwell leaves a legacy to today's socialists in his insistence on trying to express the goals of socialism in everyday terms in keeping with the traditions of the ordinary English people he wanted to identify with so closely.

It is not surprising that Orwell, an isolated individual, wrote as he did. What is so remarkable is that this man, with his alien class background, experienced and understood so much.

Books by George Orwell

- Animal Farm £1.00
- Burmese Days £1.75
- Down and Out in Paris and London £1.75
- Homage to Catalonia £1.95
- Lion and the Unicorn £1.25
- 1984 £1.95
- Road to Wigan Pier £1.60
- Complete Novels £4.95

Please add 25p postage for each title—orders over £10 post free. *Animal Farm*, *Burmese days*, and *1984* are in the *Complete Novels* also: — *Crick—George Orwell: a life* £2.95 from: World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.



Armageddon-out-of here

Does the Pope know something we don't. The Vatican has just inaugurated a nuclear-bomb proof underground shelter. The "Pope-Bunker" will house over one million books, ancient documents and works of art. But we must hope that, if future generations are going to be around to appreciate such culture, membership of the bunker is not confined to officials of the Catholic church.

Good news week

Never let it be said that *Militant* is all 'doom and gloom'. This week we bring you good news via the London School of Economics Circular for Staff and Students. They report that "for the first time in three years there are signs there is growth in the employment market."

Unfortunately there is some bad news to go with it. In the first place it's only for graduates. Secondly, according to the LSE circular the main growth areas are: "Retailing and 'fast foods', oil and chemical industries and fast moving consumer goods. The Army and the RAF are also expected to recruit more graduates in 1984." So if you've got a degree in "nuclear Big Macs", Thatcher's Britain is just for you.

Arrested because of photo

A policeman admitted in court that he probably would not have arrested a picket outside the Warrington print works last year if he had not been photographed at the time. PC Anthony Deakin told the magistrates, "I had hold of him when I had my photograph taken. I had to justify my action." Printer Neil Burke pleaded not guilty to using threatening behaviour. But he was found guilty and fined £50 with £30 costs. PC Deakin explained: "When I had my photograph taken I had to justify my action. It is probably true that I would not have arrested him, but I am not saying it was not necessary to arrest him. It was really necessary to arrest everyone on the picket line".

Reviews ● Reviews ● Reviews ● Reviews ●

'Gorky Park'— first class thriller

THIS EXCELLENT new film is a sort of Smiley's People set in Russia. Its background is political corruption and the all-embracing effects of the black market within Soviet society.

It begins with the discovery of three mutilated corpses in Moscow's Gorky Park and involves Special Investigator Renko (William Hurt) in his battle with the KGB to uncover the events surrounding the murders. The film exposes the disillusionment with the Soviet leadership, especially during one scene when the pathologist wishes he was cutting up a party official instead of an ordinary citizen.

Also weaved into the story is a complex plot involving American policemen in Russia (possible defectors include Renko's girlfriend) and reveals the link between a highly lucrative trade in sable furs and big pay-offs to the bureaucracy.

Superb novel

I'd recommend this film for all socialists (apart from the dreadful music) although it poses no solution. It is also an excellent incentive to read Martin Cruz-Smith's superb novel.

DAVE EVANS (Caerphilly LPYS) review the new film *Gorky Park*

'El Dorado'

THIS NEW play is part of the GLC's "London against Racism" campaign. I hope the rest of the campaign is more successful.

After the curtain had risen on the impressive interior of a Guyanese mansion, designed on a slant to create a feeling of spaciousness, the best part of the play was over.

The story revolves round Gregory, who is returning home to find 'his roots' after qualifying as a doctor in London. El Dorado is the house of a self-made black man, who married a white woman, Jessica. She is now a widow, presiding over two daughters (one demented over a lost love) a son who is the bane of her life, and a rebellious son-in-law; all of them live in the biggest house in town, which Jessica feels is the only thing which separates her from "the barbarians out there".

But Gregory has discovered that there used to

be slaves kept under the floorboards and so decides that he must set up a practice in Brixton. Racial tensions are discussed in the context of middle class blacks facing up to their blackness.

Gregory finally returns to London, but only after a long speech on how he needs an "outlet for his blackness", and how the CIA and the old Tarzan movies are all tied up in subjugating black people.

The idea of "El Dorado" is good, but it does not work as a play.

LIZ WINTER reviews *El Dorado*, now showing at the Theatre Royal, Stratford, London

MI5: long-running Whitehall farce

“NATIONAL SECURITY”, according to the Tory government, is threatened by trade union membership at the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) in Cheltenham, the hub of Britain's electronic eavesdropping network. Even Tory MPs were surprised—some of them even shocked—when the Foreign Secretary sprang the ban on Parliament (25 January).

Lamely trying to justify this arbitrary attempt to suspend a basic democratic right for GCHQ workers (in return for a £1,000-a-piece bribe), Sir Geoffrey Howe resorted to the hoary old gambit: “national security”. This is always invoked on such occasions as the ultimate “argument” to silence questions and rebuff all opposition.

Britain's secret services have long been an open book as far as Soviet intelligence chiefs are concerned. In fact, in the light of a whole series of scandals it looks as though at various times the Kremlin was actually running them by remote control.

After Burgess and Maclean, Philby, the “Hollis affair”, and Anthony Blunt, and after Prime (and most probably others unknown) at GCHQ itself, the official fetish with secrecy appears ludicrous. The espionage establishment of the British state is actually secret only from the people whom, officially, it is supposed to be protecting and who, as taxpayers, foot the undisclosed but undoubtedly enormous bill.

The reality is that the elaborate apparatus of electronic surveillance, telephone tapping, mail opening, and old fashioned snooping is aimed as much, if not more, against opponents and potential opponents of the system at home as against any foreign enemy.

This has always been understood by Marxists. But we now have sober confirmation from the second volume of Nigel West's history of MI5, now out in paperback, *A Matter of Trust: MI5 1945-1972*, Coronet Books, £1.95).

No big new scandals are revealed, though there is a lot of fresh detail. Evidently with the help of MI5 “insiders”, West covers the major post-war security fiascos

in the context of a coherent narrative history of MI5.

Unlike Andrew Boyle's *Climate of Treason* which exposed Blunt, however, this book is not concerned with the conditions which provided recruits for Soviet intelligence from among the privileged youth of the ruling class. The people who let the side down were not poorly paid CPSA members, but high-flying careerists from Eton and Cambridge.

Originally, they probably acted for ideological reasons. Opposed to fascism in the 1930s, they were attracted by the “socialism” being carried out from above by the bureaucratic elite in Russia. Once they became agents, however, they were trapped—until their paymasters had finished with them or they were exposed.

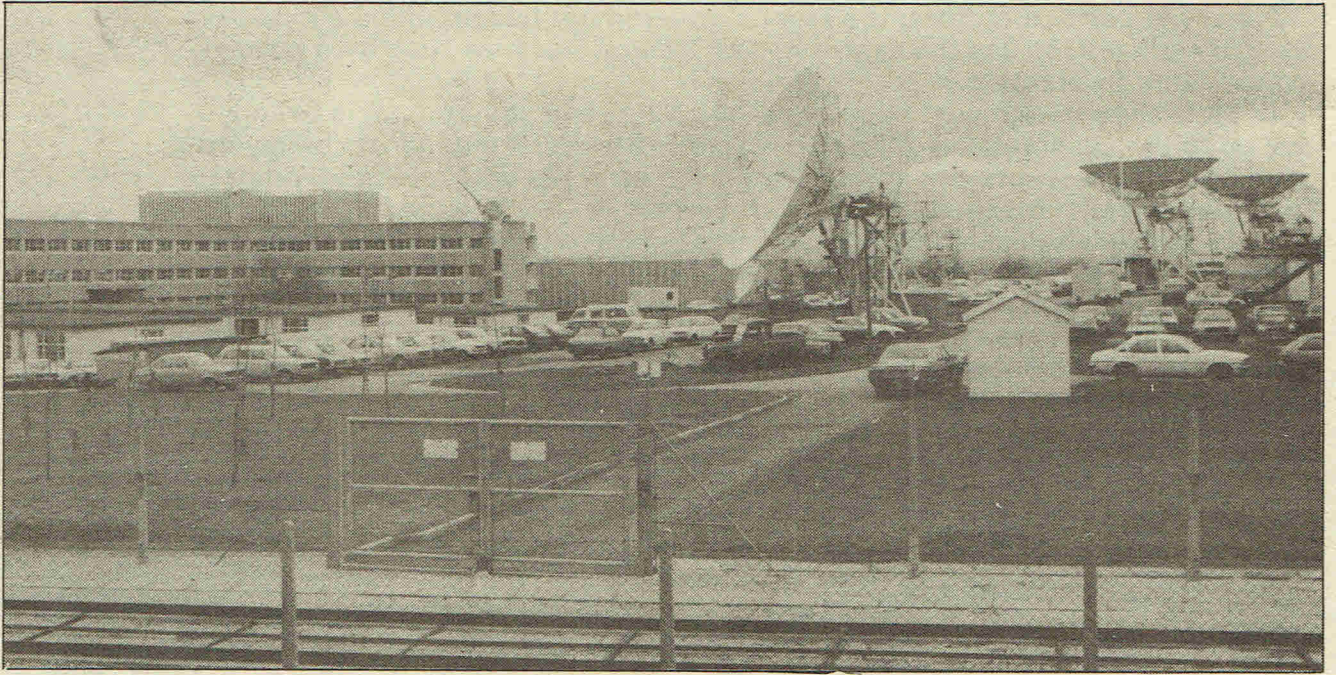
But West concentrates on the inner history of MI5, and he provides material for a devastating indictment of those responsible for the security services.

Fake successes

There was undoubtedly systematic, long-term penetration of MI5 by the Kremlin's agents. There was also disruptive manipulation of MI5 by the people it was supposed to be countering.

Even MI5's famous “successes”, like the arrest of the Krogers and Gordon Lonsdale, were probably hollow. Almost certainly, they and others were secondary, expendable agents who were deliberately exposed as “decoys” to protect other more important agents. The only unqualified successes were a handful of amateurs, mere pawns in the game.

MI5's big success (like those of the CIA) came, in any case, from high-ranking Soviet defectors. According to West, even some of these were probably “plants”.



Up until recently it was an offence to even mention the existence of GCHQ (above). But whilst it was a secret in Britain, evidence suggests that the Kremlin was almost running Britain's intelligence services by remote control. Photo: John Harris (IFL)

Every time, the defectors' stories of traitors and moles threw the Western intelligence agencies into turmoil. MI5 was not merely kept busy with mole-hunting within its own ranks—it actually spent years and years investigating its own directors and deputy-directors, like Sir Roger Hollis and Graham Mitchell.

Why was West given inside help to compile this catalogue of blunders? Secrecy and old-boy-network loyalties have not guaranteed success. Apparently, some former MI5 officers believe that only open recognition of MI5's disastrous record and thorough internal reform can produce a viable counter-espionage service.

West is, in effect, their mouthpiece. Not surprisingly, he avoids posing any fundamental questions. Why the obsessive secrecy when the Kremlin apparently knows everything? What are the real aims and objectives of the secret security services? What methods do they use, particularly in relation to the labour movement in Britain?

West himself remains tight-lipped about MI5's operations against the labour movement. This is the responsibility of “F Division”, formerly “Political Parties” now “Domestic Subversion”.

He notes in passing that this Division generates the majority of MI5's massive files. He refers, without elaboration, to F Division's “deep-cover penetration agents” and to the “current penetration of the Communist Party of Great Britain and, latterly, other potentially subversive groups.”

In spite of mounting evidence of the growing scale of these activities, West

ready to turn a blind eye to some embarrassing disclosures about past blunders in relation to foreign rivals. But not for a moment will they allow any exposure of their much more important—and sinister—role against their class adversaries at home.

Thatcher, Howe and other spokesmen of the ruling class claim that the secret security services are vital to the defence of “free society”, “democracy as we know it”,

defend the interests of the ruling class, based on the wealth and power of a small handful, against the real forces of democracy embodied in the labour movement. That is why Thatcher cannot tolerate trade unions at GCHQ.

In answer to this the labour movement must not only defend trade union rights for all workers employed by the state, but must organise its own independent, thorough-going enquiry into the activities of the secret security services.

Labour's NEC held a half-hearted, little-heard-of enquiry before the last election. What we need is a campaign to explain the threat posed by the state in the coming period of crisis, and then an enquiry would get the resources and backing necessary to expose the real role and activities of the secret services.

By Lynn Walsh

Special Branch raid

SEVEN YEARS ago the Labour government unsuccessfully prosecuted journalist Duncan Campbell in ‘the ABC trial’ for writing about GCHQ Cheltenham. Last week the Special Branch was at it again. At the weekend they raided his home and seized several documents.

The raid came after Campbell had been admitted to Bart's hospital with facial injuries following a bike accident. For 48 hours the police kept documents carried in the bike's panniers including Campbell's contacts book. Then they raided. Ten Special Branch officers searched for six hours whilst Campbell looked on. Afterwards Scotland Yard said they were “preparing a report for the Director of Public Prosecutions”.

makes no attempt to examine them. He confirms that MI5, under Sir Martin Furnival Jones, did investigate reported preparations for a coup against the Labour government of Harold Wilson in 1968, but gives no details of their conclusions.

The intelligence chiefs are

etc. Yet these services can only defend democracy if they are freed from any kind of democratic accountability and if they are allowed to use undemocratic methods!

Real purpose

This makes clear the real purpose of these agencies: to

CHELtenham MILITANT READERS' MEETING
“GCHQ
—Defend the Unions”
Speaker: Kevin Roddy
(CPSA National Executive, personal capacity)
On MONDAY 20 February
AT 8.00 pm
at Fountain Inn,
North Place, Cheltenham.

Civil Rights torn up

WHEN THE Tories banned trade unions at Cheltenham they did far more than end the right to strike. Also under threat are civil rights laid down by the Equal Pay Act, Sex Discrimination Act, Employment Protection Acts and Race Relations Act.

Lost rights

Some of the rights which GCHQ employees will not now enjoy are; the right to pay statements, guaranteed payment for days when their employer cannot provide them with work, sick pay, time off for trade union work, time off for public duty (magistrate, councillor, etc) paid time off for ante-natal care, maternity pay, right to return to work after pregnancy, right to a written

statement of dismissal and the right to remain in work after taking strike action.

When Howe announced the banning of trade unions, he did so by saying that employees' rights under the Employment Protection Acts would no longer apply at GCHQ. But if these rights are withdrawn, especially the right to go to an industrial tribunal, then what rights remain for GCHQ staff under the other Acts listed above? Because all of these Acts give people the right to appeal to Industrial Tribunals.

Equal Pay Act

The Equal Pay Act, for example, does not allow or provide for a minister to exclude certain workers from its provisions on the grounds of national security.

The Sex Discrimination

and Race Relations Acts do allow the minister the right to block complaints to industrial tribunals if national security is threatened. But the Equal Pay Act does not even allow ministers the right to issue certificates preventing tribunals hearing cases “on the grounds of national security”.

The effect of Thatcher's ban on union members' ability to go to an industrial tribunal prevents them claiming compensation of up to £31,850. Alongside this, the proposed £1,000 bribe looks like a paltry sum indeed.

But the Tories' problems are not confined to the national arena. They are now walking through an international legal minefield. Their actions contravene two international agreements—the European Social Charter and the International Labour

Convention no 151.

The Charter was ratified in 1962. The ILO convention was ratified in March 1980 and came into force in March 1981. Under both of these conventions the only restricted groups were the armed forces and the police.

International law

The Tories have shown that the law of the land is no obstacle when it comes to the emasculation of the labour movement, and that is precisely the path which they are, rather ineptly, treading. In their wake they leave a salad of torn up international and domestic law.

What is clear about the whole saga, is that, behind the smokescreen of ‘national security’ the Tories are quite prepared to tear up national and international law in an attempt to remove reforms won through years of struggle, and end the basic trade union rights.

By Bill Boyle



GCHQ staff protest meeting 2 February.

Photo: John Harris (IFL)

THE FORTUNES of the French Left government, and in particular its economic policies, have a great significance for the British labour movement. The programme put forward by the victorious Socialist Party in 1981 was broadly the same as the 'Alternative Economic Strategy' of the Labour Left, relying on reflationary policies to 'create jobs' and growth.

For these Lefts, therefore, the French government has provided a model — an 'experiment' to use the expression of *Tribune* — of how their own policies would work in practice.

But it is clear from recent events that the Mitterand government is failing to live up to the expectations of French workers. Steelworkers, miners, shipyard workers, civil servants and farmers are all in struggle with the government, principally over the serious threat to their jobs.

Even the Communist-led CGT trade union federation, despite the Communist Party being in the government, has been forced to organise a "week of action" involving strikes of from 2 to 24 hours.

Phillipe Rolande, our correspondent in Paris, analyses in this article the background to the French situation and the reasons for the retreat of the Mitterand government.

Mitterand retreat

IN 1981, the working men and women of France scored a decisive victory over the capitalist class and its political representatives. Reeling from the defeat, the right was deeply divided, demoralised and completely lacked credibility.

Neither the loyal support of the capitalist media and press, nor the constitution of the Fifth Republic, specially designed to help the right stay in power, proved capable of preventing the victory of the left.

Leaving aside the elections which took place during the Portuguese revolution (1975), the left wing vote in France in 1981 was, at the time, the biggest ever in history. It was the expression of a mighty social movement, wherein the working class, pulling behind it a large section of the middle class and the rural population, was striving towards the "fundamental transformation of society" of which the Socialist and Communist leaders spoke.

This much, at least, was understood by the leader at the time of the employers' federation CNPF, who described the new government as being "an echo of 1968". But today, less than three years later, the tide of events would seem to have taken a turn.

Redundancies

After an initial period of social reform, the left government bowed to the pressure of big business, and is now trying to solve the crisis by means of a deflationary policy, which in everyday language means trying to restore the profitability of industry at the expense of jobs, living standards, the welfare state and the past gains of the labour movement.

In coal, steel, shipping, automobiles, the very pillars of the French economy, workers face massive redundancies and closures as a result of the so-called governmental "plan", in which any enterprise which does not fit in with the money-making schemes of the employers "grand patronat" becomes a candidate for amputation or dismantlement.

In spite of the forced optimism of the government ministers, the economic situation is getting worse. Unemployment is rising (and much more than the official figures!). Prices are running ahead of wages.

Millions of people are now reliving the nightmare that their forefathers knew in the great depression of 1929-33. Of course, the hardest hit are the youth, women, the sick, and the elderly. Disillusionment is setting in.

Grim warning

A whole series of catastrophic by-elections confirm the basic trends. Many unemployed and youth abstain. The middle layers are drifting back to the right. These election results have raised the confidence of the right and raise the sombre perspective of a new right wing government in the future, with all that would mean for working people.

The events of May and June 1983, when the students and police of the extreme right came onto the streets, were a symptom of the changed national atmosphere.



Riot police break up a steelworkers' protest in Paris in 1979, under Giscard d'Estaing's Presidency. The 'Left' government of Mitterand is fast exhausting the patience and support of the workers who brought it to power. Photo: John Sturrock (Report).

As a reflection of this process, the so-called 'moderate' unions are pushing ahead of the two biggest union confederations, the communist CGT and the Socialist CFDT, these last being seen as defenders of the left and its policies in power.

Racism, too, has raised its ugly head. The growth of the extreme right, and the close links between it and the main conservative party the RPR, represent a grim warning for the labour movement.

Capitalist crisis

In such a period, active members of the labour movement must arm themselves with a clear understanding of the reasons for the present situation, and what needs to be done to take the movement forward. They must also be able to offer a perspective to the movement, showing the most likely course of events in the months and years that lie ahead, so as to overcome any possible confusion, demoralisation and disorientation on the part of the active layers of the working class.

Events in France are unfolding with, in the background, the total incapacity of the capitalists to further develop the means of production. They are driving society backwards. The crisis of French capitalism is an integral part of the profound crisis of the capitalism system on a world scale.

At the source of this crisis is private ownership of the means of production and the economic anarchy which results from it, and also the contradiction between the international character of the world economy, which requires international planning and co-ordination, and the continued existence of the nation state.

There can be no solution to the crisis on the basis of capitalism.

In the first months of its existence, the left government carried out a programme of much-needed social reform, increases in the

minimum wage and allowances, the 39-hour week, retirement at 60, the fifth week of paid holiday and new rights for the trade unions. Virtually the whole of banking and the credit system is now in the hands of the state, and six monopolies were also nationalised.

However, the nationalisations left the capitalists with a large majority of the economy (68%) still under their direct control. The dreams of the Socialist and Communist leaders that the public sector could somehow become a "motor" for the development of the economy as a whole have come to nothing. It is the very opposite which is happening.

The deindustrialisation being carried out by the capitalists is dragging the public sector down with it. The decline in production, the fall in investments, the closures, inevitably mean less demand for coal, steel, chemicals, and transport.

Under these conditions, it is impossible to plan the economy in the interest of the population as a whole. It remains the plaything of a handful of monopolists.

The period of economic growth, when the capitalists could afford to grant certain concessions under pressure from the labour movement is now definitely at an end. In the desperate struggle for markets, the bosses can only maintain profits on the basis of cheaper labour. They are obliged to attack all the hard won gains of the labour movement.

The sharp rise in inflation and unemployment, the fall in produc-

tion and investments, the flight of capital, the speculation against the Franc in order to force its devaluation, thereby reducing wages, represented a powerful ultimatum to the new Government.

As in 1936, the bosses used their enormous power to force the Left Government onto the road of counter reform.

Transformation

The only way to overcome this pressure would have been to turn to the youth, to the workers, to all those who suffer from the domination of the big monopolies and explain the role of big business in preventing and sabotaging Government projects for social reform. In this way, the Government could have gained massive support for the socialist nationalisation of these big monopolies.

Now more than ever, any programme of social reform must be

had no such perspective. The architects of Government policy completely accept the domination of the capitalists and the speculators.

Faced with the total opposition of the employers, the Government decided, as General Secretary Jospin put it, to abandon the "cynical illusions" of reformism, not, however, in order to carry out a genuine Socialist policy, but to adopt a policy of counter-reform.

The so-called "Delors Plan", named after the right wing Finance Minister, is nothing but the same old capitalist soup, warmed up and served out again under the name of 'Socialism'.

Industry, living standards, health and education, jobs and welfare are all to be sacrificed on the altar of profit.

The present policy means that the first Left Government for almost a quarter of a century will pass from the scene having presided over a fall in the living standards, a possible doubling of unemployment, and the further deindustrialisation of France. Not a single one of the basic problems facing working people will have been solved.

Safety valve

A future Right-wing Government would unleash a terrible vengeance upon the working people. Such a Government would be a direct consequence of present Government policy.

And yet it seemed, for a time that the working class was prepared to make the sacrifices demanded of them. The workers are very loyal to the organisations they have built up over decades, and will make enormous sacrifices if they think it will improve the situation.

The Socialist Party alone, however, could never have gained this acceptance of their policy. The role of the "Communist" Party, the PCF, in containing the movement, was decisive, as was that of



Mitterand reviews a military parade—his government has retained France's independent nuclear capacity.

linked directly to the socialist transformation of society. Otherwise whatever reforms are won will inevitably be undermined by the bosses and the crisis of their system.

But the Socialist Party leadership

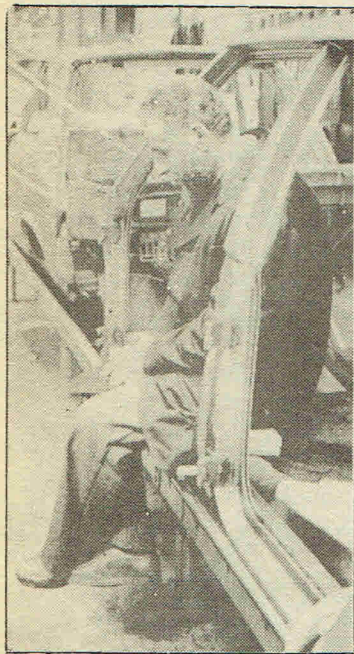
Grand's



Mitterrand and Marchais, Socialist and Communist Party leaders.



Renault workers demonstrate against the Government's 'austerity' programme.



A Talbot assembly workers at Poissy waits for the results of a meeting during the recent occupation.

THE RICH GET RICHER

- ★ 110,000 people possess 15,000bn francs, equivalent to one-and-a-half times the national budget.
- ★ 200,000 families (1% of the total) have an annual revenue each of 1m francs. This number of families possess 50% of all shares, 20% of all non-agricultural capital, 21% of all rented houses and offices and 19% of all development land.
- ★ The top 10% of the population own 51% of all personal wealth. The bottom 50% of the population own 4%.
- ★ The richest 1% of the population are richer now than in 1981.
- ★ The government of Giscard d'Estaing borrowed 6bn franc from the capitalists in 1973 and agreed to pay it back in gold-indexed payments over many years. In the ten years since, up to 1983, 22bn francs have been paid back. by 1988 40bn will have been paid back and by the end of the agreement 64bn.
- ★ In 1983 alone the Mitterrand/Mauroy government gave 100bn francs to big business to encourage investment, yet in that year total investment fell by 8%.

By Phillippe Rolande

(Sources: Recent official government study on revenues and prices; OECD, French Press.)

the CGT and the CFDT. According to the economic journal *Les Echos* Henri Krasucki is known in some circles as "the best minister in the government". Henri Krasucki is leader of the CGT and, of course, not in the government. And this is not for nothing. Using verbal opposition as a safety valve, the fundamental role of the CGT leadership has been to restrain the rank and file of the union from taking action which would upset the schemes of the government. The CFDT too have been zealous in defending cuts in living standards to an extent which embarrassed even the government itself. Now, however, following its defeat in the Social Security elections, this union has turned to the left.

Workers who previously had reluctantly bowed their heads, have forced its leaders to respond and attack the government, if only for failing to consult them on its plans for re-structuring industry.

The fund of credit extended to the government because of its early reforms is rapidly being used up, now that the real consequences of government policy is being brought home to the workers.

Miners' strike

Sensing the growing restlessness of the movement, and the growing discontent within the parties of the left, Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy and the PS leadership were conscious of the need to "talk left" at the PS Congress at Bourg-en-Bresse. Mauroy laid great emphasis on the supposed "temporary" character of the policy of austerity, promising a new series of social reforms in the coming period.

But the effect of the growing pressure from the rank and file unions, above all from from the

CGT, is most clearly shown by the behaviour of the PCF leadership.

The miners' strikes in Lorraine and other regions on the 10 and 14 November last year, involving some 30,000 workers, against pit closures, provoked the resignation of Georges Valban, president of the French state-owned coal board and a member of the PCF Central Committee. The movement took place at a time when the number of strikes was 60% higher than for the same quarter of 1982.

Feeling the pressure from the moment, the PCF leadership began to distance themselves from the Socialists. The Socialist leadership took fright. They were afraid that the radical speeches of the PCF leaders would spark off a mobilisation of the workers, and succeeded in pressurising the PCF leaders into retreat.

But whatever agreements have been patched up for the movement, these events show the general processes which are taking place. Under the impact of the crisis and the incessant pressure upon living standards, the workers will be forced to struggle in defence of jobs and wages.

Demagogic campaign

These struggles in turn, will have a profound effect upon the trade unions and on the PS, and PCF. The ranks of these organisations will be radicalised under the pressure of the workers' movement.

In other words, **the development of the class struggle will begin a process of the transformation of the trade unions, of the PS, and of the PCF.** In fact, this process is already underway.

It is probable, although not certain that the PCF leaders, under pressure to break with the policy of counter-reform, will leave the government at a certain stage. They will then probably lead a demagogic "left" campaign against the Socialists as they did from 1977 to 1981:—

"We tried to convince the Socialists of the falseness of their policies" they will say, "but they would not listen. Now enough is enough. Only the PCF really represents the interests of the working class".

By this tactic, the PCF leaders will be trying to avoid the political consequences of their present policy, by throwing the whole responsibility for the failure of the left onto the socialists. **In reality, without the support of the PCF, the present policy of counter-reform would be impossible.**

In the event of a defeat for the left in 1986, the PS will be thrown into turmoil. The present leadership will quite rightly be held responsible for the debacle. On the basis of events, a mass left could rapidly develop within the party.

Under a future right wing government, the whip of the reaction will lead to a further radicalisation of the mass organisations. The workers, and above all the youth, will be looking for a



A meeting of Talbot car workers hear a report of CGT union negotiation during a dispute over redundancies.

solution. It is the duty of Marxists to help these activists find their way to Marxism.

Coming to power at a time of acute capitalist crisis a future right wing government would move to slash living standards, to attack the hard-won rights and conditions of the working people. Having shown how "socialism does not work" (when in reality it is reformism that will have failed) the bosses will not be talking of a "social compromise" (as the PS leaders do).

But the right wing programme could not be put into effect without meeting massive resistance from organised labour, which would raise the perspective of a movement similar to that of 1968.

In the struggles that lie ahead, the perspectives and programme of Marxism will be a vital necessity if the workers' movement is to avoid the sombre future that capitalism is preparing for it. Nothing can be solved on the basis of capitalism. That is the lesson of the course of the events since 1981.


The workers and the youth must show a way out. The workers' movement is the most powerful force in society. The trade unions, the PCF and the PS will draw around them tens of millions of workers in the struggle to prevent a return to the conditions of the 1930s.

Nationalisation

These workers will be looking for a solution to the crisis of the bosses' system. The programme for the socialist transformation of society, for the nationalisation under democratic control and management of the giant capitalist monopolies, is the only one that can answer their aspirations.


The workers' organisations must be won to this programme. That is the only way forward for the French working class.

By Phillippe Rolande (Paris)



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ET LE MOUVEMENT OUVRIER



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Spain

USSR

Spanish workers strike back

HALF A million workers took strike action and 100,000 participated in demonstrations throughout Spain at the beginning of the month.

Gijon in Asturias, Puerto Real in Cadiz, Vigo and El Ferrol in Galicia, Sagunto in Valencia, Getafe in Madrid, and later the whole of the Basque country saw strikes and mass opposition to the "restructuring" plans of the PSOE government.

By Pedro Rodriguez
(in Madrid)

Two nights before, the entire population of El Ferrol turned off their lights in protest at reconversion measures for the shipbuilding industry which would mean the closure of the Astano shipyard, while 15,000 demonstrated in El Ferrol and 10,000 in Vigo on the same day.

A few weeks ago workers from the Vulcano factory in Vigo organised a mass sit down on the railway lines and came within inches of being run over by a train. The workers from another factory, Ascon, occupied Vigo Town Hall. They followed massive demonstrations last year.

This time, 60,000 struck in Gijon. 20,000 demonstrated in Valencia while in nearby Sagunto the town was brought to a standstill. 30,000 demonstrated in a mass meeting in nearby Gatafe and this town (in Madrid's "red belt") was once again brought to a standstill in protest at closures and redundancies in factories like John Deere and Kelvinator.

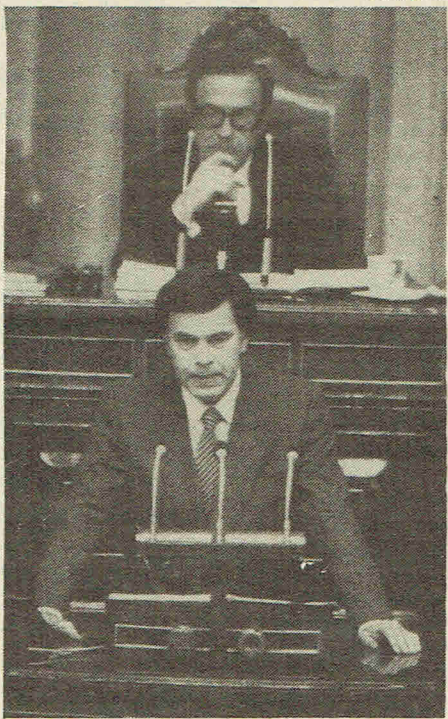
In Huelva thousands of workers cut the main road linking the town to Seville and demonstrated in the city centre. Industry in Cadiz was also halted and a thousand workers concentrated outside the regional government building.

Thousands demonstrated in Bilbao in the Basque area. Whereas the union federation UGT (associated with the Socialist Party) did not support the demonstrations in other parts of Spain, they seconded the action in the Basque country.

Rural workers protest

Parallel to this wave in the towns, the "jornaleros" or land workers of Andalucia stepped up their activity, organising strikes in about 100 different towns, occupations of town halls, Seville Cathedral (which enters its second week's occupation) some big landed estates etc, in protest at the PSOE government's new measures on unemployment subsidies.

Navarra was also the scene of a general strike a few days previously in protest at proposals to close the Potasas mines which employ 1,500 workers. Alava, the other Basque province which wrote itself into history in the struggles against the



Felipe Gonzales, the PSOE Prime Minister.

Franco governments, also had its general strike against the closure of Aceriales where 1,800 workers are affected.

The struggles are so widespread that they clearly raise the question of which direction the PSOE government takes. The bankers and monopolies are at present satisfied enough with the actions of this government but the working class is suffering the consequences.

The socialist government must break its ties with big business and fight to change society

No government up to now has ever dared such widespread assaults on the basic interests of the working class. While millions of pesetas are being spent to save the banks that are in crisis (as well as the companies in Rumasa), only to

give them back to private enterprise, the working class feel cuts in the buying power of wages, mass redundancies, cuts in pensions and work contracts which permit bosses to make a worker redundant whenever they like.

The employers encouraged by the actions of the PSOE government have themselves become emboldened. While inflation was 12.5% last year they are offering a maximum of 6.5% based on the mythical inflation rate of 8% for the coming year. Negotiations for the national wage agreement have broken down for the first time since 1977. A whole series of struggles are likely.

Felipe Gonzalez government was elected on a programme of creating 800,000 jobs in four years, defending the buying power of salaries, extending the range of unemployment benefit and purging the reactionary elements from the state apparatus. But the leadership have accommodated themselves to trying to solve the problems on a capitalist basis without changing the fundamental control of the state apparatus.

The Economics Minister, Miguel Boyer, has been annoyed by these strikes. He said "in spite of the social costs, this year will be the year of the industrial reconversion".

The hopes which ten million workers had when they voted PSOE are being changed into bitter frustration. Workers are looking for an answer. Without the nationalisation of the banks and big monopolies, the creation of 800,000 jobs will stay a dream.

The socialist government has to break its ties with big business and lead the working class in decisive action to change Spanish society.



Yuri Andropov.

Andropov's grim tradition

YURI ANDROPOV, the president of the USSR, who died on 9 February was a direct descendant of all the bureaucratic leaders who have leeches off the planned economy since the death of Lenin.

His rise to eminence was typical of many Stalinist leaders. At the age of 22 he became the full time paid secretary of the Komsomol (Young Communists) in a large shipyard. In 1938 at the height of Stalin's purge he became, at 24, regional Komsomol secretary and by 1940 he was in charge of youth for the Karelio-Finnish republic.

His rapid rise here was mainly because many youth leaders in Moscow, the Ukraine and other areas were removed in a wave of terror directed from the Kremlin. After the war, having become a full party bureaucrat, he was promoted to ambassador to Hungary in 1954 whose leaders were then directly under the control of the Russian bureaucracy.

While Andropov was ambassador in Budapest, the then Russian leader Khrushchev made his famous "de-Stalinisation" speech. The bureaucracy realised that a modern technological economy could not be run efficiently in an atmosphere of fear and that the pressure of a large and growing working class would lead to explosions, unless reforms were made.

They intended merely to curb the worst excesses of Stalin's personal dictatorship. It was not designed to give power to the working class who were a threat to the entire officialdom.

But workers in Hungary wanted real change; a return to the demands made by Lenin in 1917. They intended to make Hungary a real workers' democracy. They demanded the election and accountability of all officials, that no bureaucrat should receive more than the average wage of a skilled worker, no standing army but an armed people and the rotation of tasks so that no separate bureaucracy could develop. They also called for more than one party to end the totalitarianism which was eating away all the political gains of the planned economy.

These Marxist demands threatened the Stalinist leaderships throughout Russia and Eastern Europe. Andropov's role as ambassador was to try to persuade some of the liberal Stalinists who had arisen to capitulate so as to "prevent bloodshed". It took ten days for 6,000 tanks to crush working class resistance in Budapest.

Andropov, like other "reforming" bureaucrats has always tried to temper repression with concessions to the less hide-bound Stalinists. Here he helped launch Janos Kadar into the leadership in Hungary and to prop up the government with mild reforms.

This policy was also seen in his period from 1967 to 1982 as head of the state security police, the KGB. There was no return to the death camps of the Stalin era. They were



Stalin, the usurper of workers' power.

There will be a full analysis of present day Russian economy and society in a future issue of *Militant*

more "liberal" in dealing with artistic heresies and minor criticisms.

But Andropov and the rest of the ruling Politburo vowed to stop the "dissident" movement. Although the movement was very mixed in its aims, it raised a number of basic criticisms of Stalinism and more importantly still, it reflected the growing discontent of the working class which was the main worry of the bureaucracy.

Andropov reputedly made the KGB more efficient—more professional at planting evidence, more likely to give dissidents the "option" to give up their opposition. He also perfected the habit of incarcerating sane oppositionists in psychiatric institutions.

For instance Pyotr Grigorenko, a Red Army general, exposed the devastation caused by Stalin's military policies in the early years of World War II. He campaigned for the rights of the Crimean Tatars (expelled from their homeland by Stalin) to return. He had attacked the privileges and unchecked power of the leadership and accused the KGB of being as much the enemy of the people as under Stalin. This obvious madman was sent to a lunatic asylum.

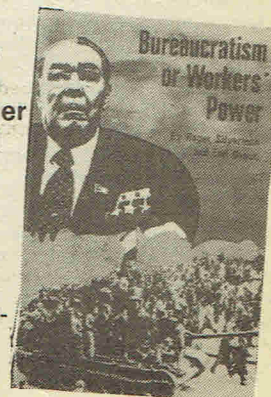
Andropov's rise to party leader and later president reflected the need to tackle grave problems, like corruption (the KGB under Andropov had acted against individual cases of corruption and black marketeering), declining economic performance, and the crippling cost of armaments.

The Western press say Andropov did not have time to make many reforms. But neither Andropov nor his successor Chernenko could solve the problems of Stalinism; both were totally committed to the rule of the bureaucratic caste.

The demands of the Hungarian workers are as relevant to Russia and Eastern Europe after Andropov's death as they were in 1956. The bureaucracy are as uncontrolled by the working class as ever; the farcical elections due in the USSR in March are the nearest approach to democratic accountability! Corruption and inequality are probably worse than ever.

It will take the fresh air of workers' democracy to end the waste and corruption of Stalinism and free the planned economy from the chains of totalitarianism and bureaucratic mismanagement.

Read: **Bureaucratism or workers' power** by Roger Silverman and Ted Grant. Price 60p (+ 15p post & packing) from *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.



Pakistan, USA, El Salvador

Build a socialist opposition

MORE THAN one thousand people were killed, thousands injured and thousands more imprisoned by the Zia dictatorship in Pakistan during the recent upheavals in Sind.

The military police dictatorship used helicopters with guns to attack unarmed mass processions after all other forms of state repression had been checked by the mass movements.

Heroic struggle

The heroism of the people showed how absurd are the claims for stability in this ugly outgrowth of capitalism. The ruling class base their claim on the isolation of the big protests. Apart from a general strike in Quetta, a few scattered mass actions mainly by the middle strata of society in the frontier and Punjab provinces, the movement could not gain mass active support outside Sind.

Sitting on time bomb

While the bodies were being buried in Sind, it was the scepticism of leaders of the unions and of the Pakistan Peoples Party in other provinces which resulted in a false feeling of impotence. Many activists at present feel demoralised.

But the ruling class realise they are still sitting on a time bomb; they are feverishly trying to negotiate with 'reliable' opposition politicians. After all overflowing prisons, big police patrols on the streets and continual arrests and torture are not symptoms of a stable society!

Why was the mass movement unable to overthrow the hated dictatorship? The working class leaders were

taken unawares by developments but the material reasons for the upsurge had been steadily building up. A leadership in Sind which was at least prepared to act, encouraged the masses to take dramatic action. In certain parts of the province the central state apparatus was suspended in mid air for a while, unable to exercise its authority.

The combination of class exploitation and nationalistic oppression by the Punjabi/Muhajir dominated ruling class lay at the root of the uprising. They still exist in Sind and in other provinces. The other provinces did not rise up on this occasion.

Zia's unholy alliance

Zia's regime is not secure. It is supported by an unholy alliance of interests huddled together for mutual comfort, the capitalists, the army officers and bureaucracy (given free land by Zia) the judges and to a certain extent the urban and rural middle classes. They prefer the status quo.

The heavily CIA-funded Jamaat-i-Islami, an obscurantist orthodox religious group/party, reaches tentacles down into the working class through trade unions and student bodies. It has a narrow base but is tightly organised and has disproportionate influence in the Punjabi unions.

The real threat to Zia

They act as informers to the state, along with other intelligence agencies. They are trained for sabotage of political opponents and young militants are exterminated under the auspices of Jamaat.

Pakistan is important for western capitalist interests. CIA personnel have been transferred from Cairo to Islamabad to bolster Zia. Government accusations of incursions from Afghanistan show one reason for concern, but the biggest threat is internal, hence the killings, subjugation of rights, the tortures all to prevent explosions from the people suffer-



General Zia.

ing socio-economic oppression, made worse by a pay-freeze, redundancies etc.

Remittances from workers in the West and in Saudi Arabia exceed the country's total exports and capitalist powers pour money into

Pakistan. But the economy does not grow and living standards go only one way—down. The land question gets worse as does national oppression; communal violence has cost many lives. Corruption, bribery and crime are booming and the masses long for a change.

Need for a programme

The material base for Zia's overthrow is there, but the dictatorship cannot be overthrown by the charisma of political leaders alone. It needs a programme and a leadership as in 1968-69 when the masses fought and overthrew the Ayub Khan dictatorship with a definite socialist programme.

Many of the leaders of parties like the PPP are ignorant of the realities of life for the masses and can not see the impossibility of ruling with the existing structure.

The 31 point programme of the alliance, the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) offers a complete safeguard to private investment and the capitalist class in order to gain the support of the so-called "national" or "progressive bourgeoisie" for the democratic "phase".

But capitalism in Pakistan has abandoned democracy precisely to protect its interests. For "democracy" to be more than just a short burst of civilian rule between dictatorships, the opposition must mobilise the masses to a fight for socialism.

The middle class political leaders, whose emotions ebb and flow like the tides may remain pessimistic. The workers and the majority of the population cannot afford the luxury of scepticism.

The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), one of the members of MRD is, despite its drawbacks, once more reflecting the mood of the masses. Activists in the PPP and the unions must raise a clear banner to fight for the immediate overthrow of the dictatorship. It must proclaim the right of self determination of all oppressed nationalities.

The demands must include full trade union freedoms and the right to strike, the linking of wages with prices and the end of all discrimination on basis of religion, nationality, culture, sex, etc.

We must call for a) the punishment of military officers responsible for the dictatorship, the end of all officers' privileges and the election of officers.

Revolutionary assembly

b) Nationalisation of land without compensation, to be distributed by committees of workers and peasants and c) the ending of laws leading to inequality for women.

There must be a fight for a revolutionary assembly of genuine representatives of workers and peasants, one of whose major tasks would be for the nationalisation of the major industrial monopolies under the democratic control and management of the workers.

The fire must not be extinguished, we have no option but to fight.

By a Pakistani Socialist

"The Struggle". Voice of socialists in the Pakistan Peoples Party and labour movement.

Details from The Struggle, PO Box 71780, 1008 DG Amsterdam, Netherlands.

El Salvador: "How our union survives"

GERADO ANAYA, is a trade unionist from El Salvador touring Britain to win solidarity with workers there. He is a leading member of the Printers' Union affiliated to the FSR Union Federation on whose executive he sits.

The FSR supports the "Revolutionary Democratic Front", a political alliance opposed to the current El Salvador regime.

Gerado spoke to *Militant* in Coventry.

Since he arrived in Britain, the fifteen FSR Executive members still in El Salvador were arrested when armed police attacked their congress.

They face two alternatives, either remaining locked up in the concentration camp-like prison where they will be tortured and the three women among them will probably be raped. Or they will be freed and assassinated by the "security forces" like 54,000 others in the last three years.

Fight continues

Nevertheless, Gerado intends to go back to El Salvador and continue the fight. He explained how his union was built. "We started in 1960.

Our union was destroyed three times by the bosses. In 1979 we finally got organised and I was elected General Secretary.

Assassination

"The next day the organising group were sacked and workers demanded a strike. We had to organise carefully against army repression—our boss had to stay with us throughout the thirty days the strike lasted. We eventually won our demands. But immediately three organisers were assassinated by the National Guard at the factory gate."

In 1980 Gerado was imprisoned for twenty days by the National Guard. "I was tortured and still have a scar burnt across my stomach. Three factories struck for my release which saved me from death. But the death squads pursued me, forcing me to

leave my wife and four children.

"The general strikes of 1978, 1979 and 1980 were the most beautiful time of my life when the five trade union federations in El Salvador united in the CUS—the first step to one trade union. We practically had the political triumph, it only remained to win the military triumph."

New Society

"Repression has been more brutal since. Many union leaders have been assassinated and 40% of factories shut down. Despite this, last September public sector housing workers struck for nearly forty days. 32 workplaces stopped even though their general secretary was imprisoned."

"The FMLN is winning the war. The military struggle could be won in the '80s but US help to the government has made it impossible so far."

We asked what sort of government should follow. "A democratic government to look after the exploited sections. 85% of society is working class and peasants, the majority labourers on the land who work only two months a year."

"The working class should have direct participation in government, we're the only ones who know what we need. Many have nowhere to live, many are illiterate, we have no health service. With the support of the workers of the world we must build a new society."

Death on the picket line

ON THURSDAY, 19 January, Greg Goobnic was standing picket duty for his union, the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) at the union oil refinery in Rodeo, California.

Repeated complaints had been made about trucks barrelling in and out of the refinery without giving the pickets time to move out of the way. After prolonged negotiations, supposedly an "agreement" had been reached on the matter that afternoon.

Manslaughter charge

Around 6pm twenty-year-old Greg was on the picket line when a large tractor trailer truck in off the road, flying towards the entrance gates on the wrong side of the driveway. Greg's picket partner had time to scramble out of the way.

Greg didn't. His skull was smashed, his body flung thirty feet down the driveway, and his brains literally splattered all over. Despite the fact that the driver was obviously trying to kill somebody, he was arrested

and charged with "manslaughter" (unintentional murder).

Who was Greg Goobnic? According to his fellow workers, Greg hadn't even really wanted to join the union when he first came to work at Standard. He had worked there for roughly two years, and was known to have an extremely good work record. His father had offered to send him to college, but Greg had insisted on working his way through.

Standard profits

He had well absorbed the attitude of many American workers that you have to work hard to deserve a decent life—and that, if you do you can "get ahead". This is what society (American capitalism) taught him, and this is the thanks it gave him for believing them.

Meanwhile the president of Standard reportedly made

several million dollars in the last year alone! How could he possibly have produced enough to deserve even one hundredth of that? And the thanks he gives the workers out of whose labor he made those millions is the demand to cut wages of new recruits by up to 40%!

Shut down refinery!

Already bitter over this outrageous demand, anger has doubled since Greg's death. A mass march is planned with hopes to get participation from the ranks of the rest of organised labour in the Bay Area of San Francisco.

Coming on the heels of the Greyhound strike, and the death of a Greyhound picket in Ohio recently, the leadership of organised labour in the Bay area needs to mobilise its many thousands, including general work stoppages, with the goal of shutting down the refinery completely.

John Reimann
(Carpenters Local 36, San Francisco)

Letters

Write to *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Civil defence in Southwark

Dear Comrades,

In the late autumn of 1983 this government imposed upon local authorities new draconian measures on civil defence with harsh legal penalties for non-compliance.

Their introduction has to be seen as part of the build-up of nuclear weapons and the introduction of Cruise missiles. The government is trying to peddle the illusion that with civil defence, human life in Britain will survive after a nuclear holocaust. In Southwark, according to a previous government civil defence exercise ("Square Leg"), virtually all the population would die from a nuclear explosion's effects (the blast, fire and radiation).

With these salutary facts in mind, Southwark Council has decided not to play a part in this government's exercise of deception. We will not co-operate with the war planning or take part in civil defence exercises.

Obviously this council is still fully committed to aid in civil emergencies, such as possible spillages of nuclear waste.

At present other local authorities are considering ways of opposing the civil defence regulations.

Certain local authorities consider the best way to oppose them is through "creative co-operation", in

other words, taking the government's money and participating in civil defence in such a way as to show the stupidity of civil defence.

I do not think the general public will understand "the subtleties" of this form of opposition. They may even criticise the council for taking away council workers from their normal duties, effectively reducing its services, because of civil defence exercises which they do not believe in!

What if individual council workers, because of their conscience or their trade unions' policy, refused to co-operate? Will local authorities accept the legal dictates from central government and force council workers to participate? A form a creative coercion!

Southwark fully understands the possible implications of its action. Town hall unions as well as local CND groups, support our action, which in our opinion will highlight opposition to the civil defence regulations in the eyes of the general public much more effectively. We accept that Southwark cannot tackle this government alone. If the 150 or so Nuclear Free Zone authorities stood together as they did against this government's ill-fated "Hard Rock" civil defence exercise, we can do it again!

Andrew Troke
Councillor,
London Borough
of Southwark
(Personal capacity)

Prestige in orbit

Dear Militant,

If the people aren't being asked to tighten their belts even more for the sake of massive arms expenditure then, in America, they're expected to be happily patriotic about seeing their national wealth launched into space.

Even the loss of £53 million worth of communication satellite during the latest Space Shuttle mission was little more than losing the button of a shirt by the standards of space travel budgets.

But here on planet Earth, the working classes are losing more than space-age hardware; the poor and the unemployed are losing benefits, trade unionists are losing their right to organise, the sick and disabled are losing the kind of caring health service they need, the young are losing the chance of a full education, a job and a future of any kind, and the list goes on.

Yet space projects, we are assured, are for the advancement of mankind. More like



Reagan—backs prestige projects—attacks the poor and unemployed.

ly just another market for the capitalists. What's the Space Shuttle but prestige in orbit?

As socialists we believe that we should feed the hungry and create a more humane world down here before reaching for the stars, as we should, with a clear conscience.

However, it is tempting to believe that if Reagan and Thatcher had been aboard the lost satellite that would have been money well spent.

Yours
Rich and Jenny
York Labour Party

Asbestos suffering

Dear Comrades,

The article in issue 682 (Cancer—the hidden killer at work) shows the callous approach adopted by big business towards workers. The fact that asbestos workers are more prone to cancer was proved recently in my family.

My wife's uncle died on 2 January after suffering for six months. He'd worked in

an asbestos factory for six years, but had left over 20 years ago.

Alternatives can be produced but the capitalists' profit margin would suffer. Unfortunately former asbestos workers and their families are suffering today to maintain their greed.

Yours fraternally
John White
Barking

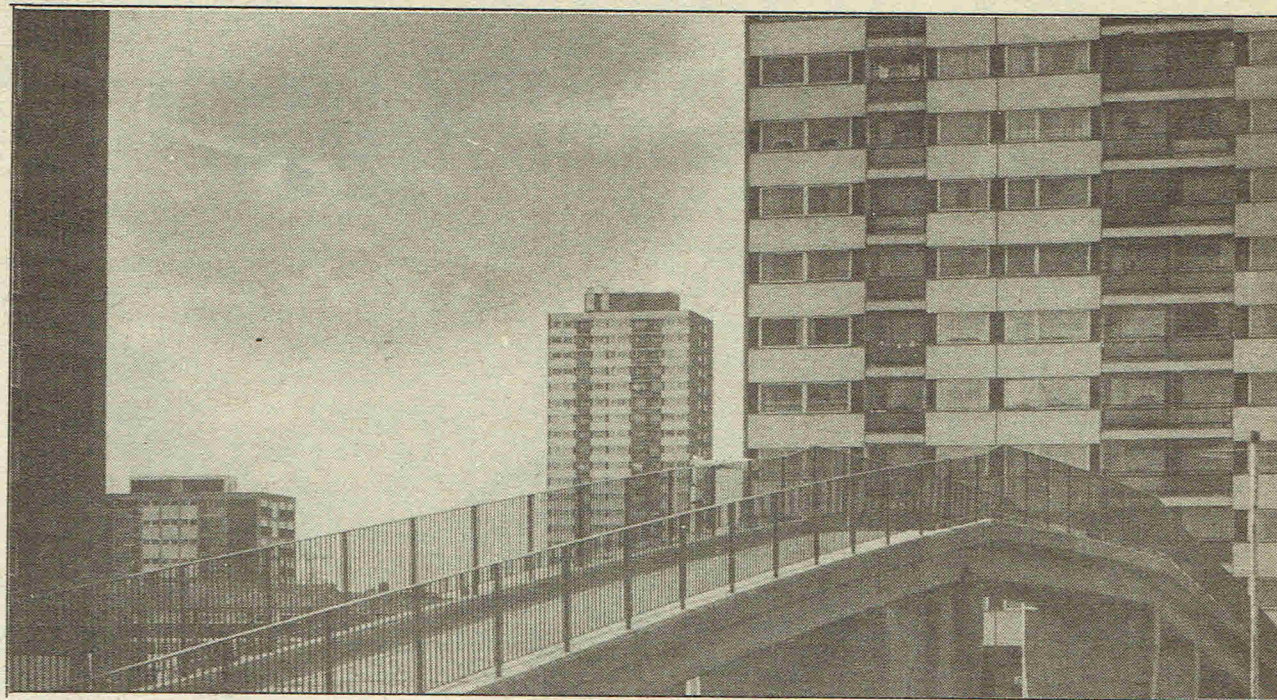


Photo: Dave Vanderhoven.

Britain's desperate housing shortage condemns thousands of families to living in tower blocks like these in Newham, London.

Bleak prospects for tower block tenants

Dear Comrades,

Whilst it is generally now agreed that the building of multi-storey blocks of flats was a mistake, it in no way eases the problem for people who live in them.

Bristol City Council has a policy of not placing families with young children in flats, but it still leaves thousands of families living in depress-

ing 'penthouses' fifteen or sixteen floors high.

The prospect of families being moved into civilised housing grows ever bleaker. Council house building is now at a minimal level and they are now being sold off, and with young families having priority for the few houses, tower block tenants find themselves at the end of

a seemingly endless list.

The old 'points' system of allocation has become a sick joke. As one applicant was told recently: "Although you have more than double the amount of points required, you could have as many as 80 points and you wouldn't get a house any quicker.

Surely the only way of rid-

ding society of this situation is a plan of massive council house building to make tower blocks obsolete. With manpower and resources available too what excuse can the Tories have for not carrying out these cures?

Yours fraternally
Ian Marshall
Bristol

Imperialist Orwell

Dear Militant,

I recently bought a copy of your paper and found it very good, apart from one article about George Orwell.

Undoubtedly Orwell was a good writer, but his politics were suspect. For instance his attitude to British Imperialism was tolerant.

In his book, *The Lion and the Unicorn* (1941) he says that India should not be granted independence after the war because "as things are at present, India can not only defend itself, it is scarcely able to feed itself."

This is the sort of thing you'd expect to hear from the National Front—we

can't leave the lesser races to themselves because they'd fall apart without civilised dominance'.

Firstly, India was feeding its own people quite adequately before the English barged in, but Orwell generously concedes 'Dominion Status' to them.

In an article which appeared in the *Irish Times* (17 January, 1984) entitled "Orwell: No friend of Irish Ireland" Orwell's wartime diary is quoted on the subject of Irish neutrality, "the spectacle of our allowing a sham independent country like Ireland to defy us, simply makes all Europe laugh at us." He suggest taking Irish naval bases by force but writes, "if we took the Irish bases by force, without a

long course of propaganda beforehand, the effects on public opinion, not only in the USA but in England would be disastrous."

So the Irish/English are a nuisance, he says they act as a sort of silent drag on Labour Party policy". That people like Fergus O'Connor were reactionary probably surprises a lot of people but Orwell concedes with typical generosity that the Irish "are not sufficiently under the thumb of their priests to be fascist in sympathy".

Surely *Militant* doesn't support British imperialism in Ireland?

Yours
Ciaran O'Laoghaire
Belfast

Press coverage of Liverpool

Dear Comrades,

When Liverpool City Council called a demonstration in support of their policies 20,000 people turned out. I looked for reports of this event in the national newspapers, and watched the TV for even a small mention.

The only report to be had was in the following week's edition of *Militant*. But when 5-10 Young Conservatives demonstrated in Liverpool against council policies, not only was it mentioned on *Granada Reports* (a local ITV news programme), but a film report was shown.

How can people talk about living in a democratic society until we get balanced news coverage?

Yours sincerely
John Hall
Accrington

Phone ad con-trick

Dear Comrades,

A TV commercial was recently made by British Telecom replying to the criticisms of BTUC unions that after privatisation loss-making services like phone-boxes in rural areas would disappear because of the pressure to remain competitive.

The ad showed a farmer in deepest rural Cumbria using his local phone box. What wasn't mentioned was that the phone box was only installed to make the commercial, and was taken away when filming was completed.

In fact the same farmer had been asking for a phone-box to be provided in the same area for the past ten years, but BT had always refused on the grounds that it wouldn't make a profit!

Yours fraternally
Clive Walker
Brighton LPYS

Labour's cash priorities

Dear Comrade,

As a delegate to one of the Labour Party's European Selection Organisations, I recently received through the post a copy of a 'Campaign Pack' which gives details about the EEC and about the party's European's election campaign.

While it might seem to be a step forward for the party to actually tell its members what's going on, I was in fact quite appalled. Not because of the contents of the pack, some of which was quite interesting, but because

it was printed on expensive heavy paper, with a separate cardboard thumb-index, all encased in a fancy red ring-binder.

Together with the postage, this little effort must have cost the Labour Party at least £1.00, and probably considerably more. There are 81 Euro-constituencies, with each selection organisation probably having at least 100 delegates. By my calculations that makes over £8,000 on campaign packs.

Lavish expenditure on this scale can only be utter folly when the party is supposed to be suffering a financial crisis, with threats of redun-

dancies at Walworth Road. And if the figure of £8,000 is correct, this single exercise could have cost the party more than the entire annual LPYS budget! Put another way, that £8,000 is probably equivalent to the entire subscription income for three or four CLPs for a year.

If further evidence were needed that the party bureaucracy has gone stark staring bananas, this must be it.

Yours fraternally
Iain Forbes
Croydon

Revolution by hypnosis?

Dear Comrades,

I have never seen such a distortion of the Russian Revolution as that on a 'For schools and colleges' TV programme.

They made out that Lenin and the Bolsheviks were some sort of hypnotists who forced their will on masses of people. They made out that the Soviets were for privileged Bolsheviks and not democratically elected workers' councils, as they were.

They made out that Lenin's *April Theses* was a bigoted, self-opinionated, inconsiderate move against anyone who wasn't a Bolshevik.

Who had time for 'consideration' during this crucial time? Any criticism of the Provisional government was on behalf of the workers and peasants, and their need to be represented.

Nothing was mentioned of how much the Soviet government achieved in *days* after the revolution, more than the provisional government had achieved in months.

To top it all they said that

armies attacked the Russian revolution in six fronts, when in reality, the 21 imperialist armies attacked on 14 fronts.

Lenin may have been a hard, even ruthless man, especially to the enemy, but he was not a class traitor, he did not hand out false promises, and he did not 'take over' people's minds.

I was very upset that historic events can be twisted and distorted so much that they tell the opposite of the truth.

Yours comradely
Lynne Tice
Hull

Council workers in the firing line

Tory strategy—union response

DIRECT LABOUR Organisations (DLOs, local authority construction workers) are under attack from the Tories and their capitalist backers.

The National Federation of Building Trades Employers and the Federation of Master Builders have been lobbying long and hard to get support from the Tories to give them a way into DLO work.

As many building firms contribute large amounts of money to the Tory party (without asking shareholders in many cases), they didn't take much persuasion.

Another reason for bringing contractors in is to destroy the influence of trade unions in the building industry.

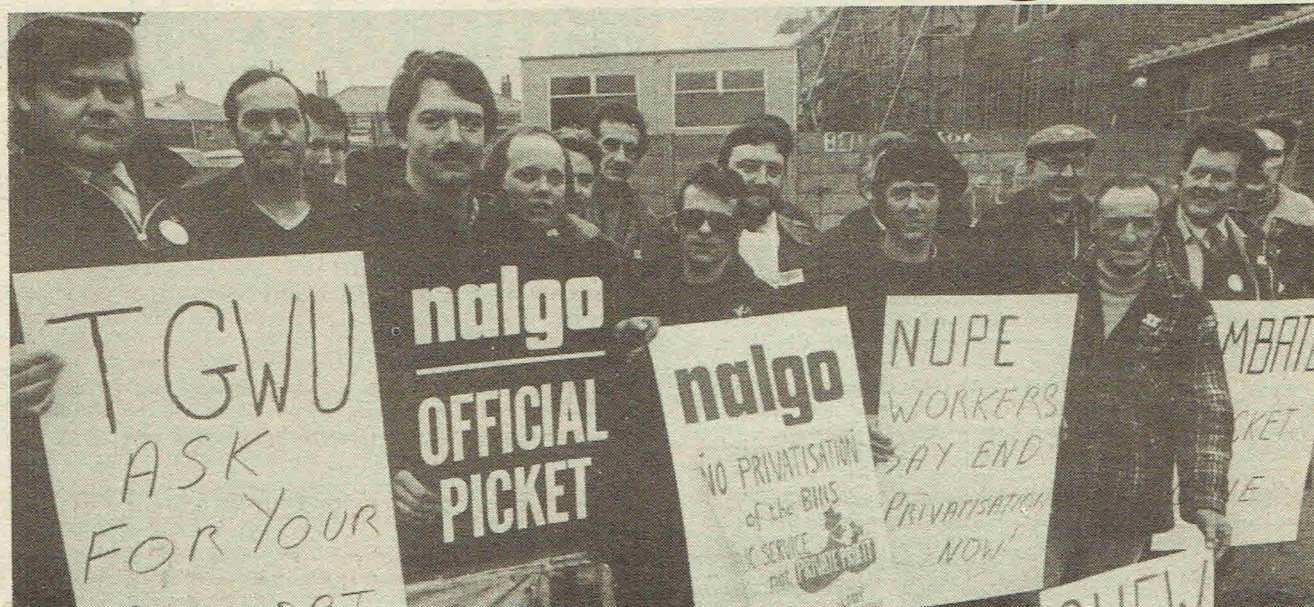
Walter Goldsmith of the Institute of Directors has

stated that something must be done to weaken the power of trade unions in the public services and the best way of achieving this would be "a massive programme of privatisation".

With all this in mind the Tories moved to force councils to put large amounts of work out to tender, starting with any work over the value of £10,000. Yet even this isn't enough for the bosses. From April 60% of all work will have to be tendered for.

Also from April, council tenants will be able to ask for work to be carried out within 24-hours and can fetch in contractors and then bill the council if it's not done—all this at the same time DLOs are being run down.

This change, which may seem small, could have widespread implications.



Bury council unions on one-day strike (2 March, 1983)—they fought off plans by the Tory council to reintroduce tenders for bin collection services. A pamphlet based on their campaign is reviewed below.

Most Labour councils have been able to ensure so far that any contracts lost have been to firms which operate trade union membership and proper health and safety standards.

But if a tenant wants a job doing he or she can ask anybody to do the work, leaving a way in for non-

union cowboys.

What is needed is a well organised campaign to build links round the country so that the full strength of DLO workers can be used to full effect. This campaign will have to involve all shop floor unions.

Another advantage would be that both council workers

and tenants could learn what is happening in other parts of the country such as Liverpool where the reforms being implemented are generating support from unions and tenants.

Where trade union leaders are unwilling to take up such a campaign because they are reluctant to involve trade

unions other than their own, the only alternative is for the impetus to come from the shop floor.

By Dave Furze
(DLO shop steward,
Stoke-on-Trent)

Hands off Bury's Bins!

how we stopped privatisation

This pamphlet describes how council trade unionists in Tory-controlled Bury (Greater Manchester) successfully campaigned against privatisation of the dustbin service.

The pamphlet aims to assist those in similar struggles by giving a step by step account of how the Bury campaign developed.

The atmosphere of the cam-

paign is vividly conveyed by the reproduction of many of the original leaflets, newsletters and other publicity material. For further information, please contact: Ian Stephenson, Branch Secretary NALGO, Bury Town Hall, Lancs BL9 0SW. Price: £1.15 including postage. Cheques payable to "Save Bury's Bins Fighting Fund."

Hackney occupation No 'Labour Tebbits'

THE ST JOHN'S area's housing base in Hackney has been occupied since Monday 16 January by workers from the council's Direct Labour Organisation and local tenants.

They are protesting at the failure to provide an adequate repair service for the tenants and are trying to force Hackney's Labour council to implement its manifesto pledges.

The Federation of Hackney Tenants Associations and all the town hall trade unions have pledged their support for the occupation.

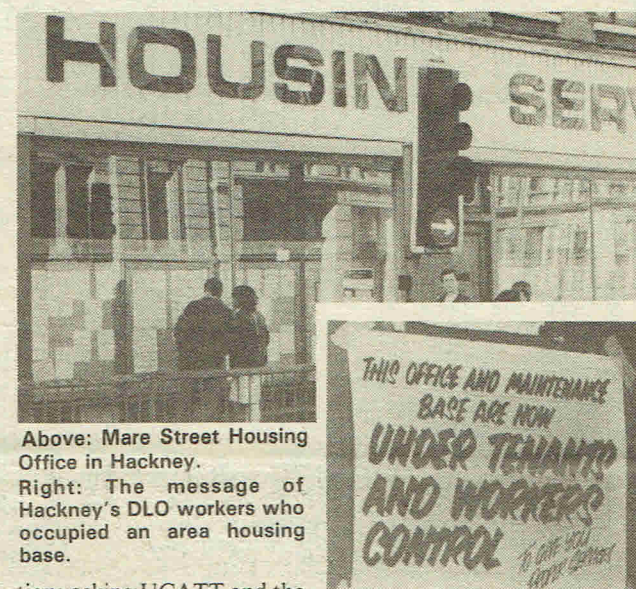
Amidst signs saying "under workers' and tenants' control and management" and "more workers, less bosses" one DLO worker told me, "the council leaders should do what they said in the manifesto. This is supposed to be a 'radical socialist

borough' yet the council leaders are trying to break our unions. They haven't even consulted the rest of the Labour Group about their actions!"

After getting no response from the council the DLO workers occupied the Bowling Green Walk Supply Depot to put more pressure on the council. However at dawn on 22 January the workers were evicted from the depot by the management who smashed the door down with a sledge hammer.

Despite this, the workers still negotiated. With fifteen of the twenty-five demands being agreed the dispute seemed about to end. But on Friday 3 February the deputy leader of the council presented the workers with five new conditions.

These included: sworn affidavits from the workers to say that work has been carried out during the occupa-



Above: Mare Street Housing Office in Hackney.

Right: The message of Hackney's DLO workers who occupied an area housing base.

tion; asking UCATT and the TGWU to issue councillors with an indemnity against surcharge before paying the workers for the period of the work-in; an agreement that use of private contractors should be expanded. The dispute was called originally due to the running down of the DLO and the increased use of private contractors!

However, due to pressure within the Labour Group, through the Labour Party branches and the town hall

trade unions and tenants associations, the five conditions have been withdrawn and the dispute looks likely to be over shortly.

This is a victory for the workers and tenants of Hackney. But we must ensure that our Labour representatives never again try to "do a Tebbit" on the council workforce.

By Dave Webb
(Hackney North LPYS)

Low pay—high risk

RAY WELSBY, a Building Trades Foreman with Swansea City Council and UCATT member, outlined some of the problems his members face to William Williams.

Over the years our conditions haven't improved in fact we're back to square one. OK the pay's gone up, but if the cost of living goes up 8% we don't get an 8% pay rise.

Last year the employers offered us 4%. UCATT came back with 4.75%, which was nothing—the men wanted more, but the union keeps postponing the talks. By the time we get the pay rise six months has gone by and unlike the employer we don't get interest on the money.

In a factory if the temperature falls below a certain level they go home. In the building industry we've got none of that. We work in the snow and sometimes we have to finish a job in the rain, but there's no negotiated pay for this—you don't get 'wet' money. It's understood in Local Authority employment that you finish a job. You can't leave someone without a window when it's pouring with rain.

Conditions are better with the Local Authorities because they stick to the working rule agreements for

providing facilities for the men, but most outside contractors don't.

You always see a lot of accidents on sites. A lot are covered up. Blokes don't say anything because they're frightened of losing their jobs. It's being exploited to the employers' advantage today because of the unemployment situation. If I was working for an outside contractor and I opened my mouth I'd get blacklisted.

You've got the private firms tendering for Council contracts but the Council can't tender for contracts in their side of the building industry.

The workforce employed by the council as tradesmen would leave a lot of these firms standing. If the council workman does anything wrong the tenants get straight onto the council, so he has to turn out first class work. The tenants are assured of a tradesman working on the house and not a cowboy.

Council workmen have always been the lowest paid. Nobody wanted to work for the council because there was big money elsewhere in industry. Married men, tradesmen with kids are taking home £61 a week. You see a labourer going home on a flat week with around £52.

Streets of London

I WORK as a mason paviour on Wandsworth council. That means I am the bloke who goes out and removes, repairs and replaces broken paving in the streets of the borough.

The job is dominated by a complex bonus scheme. Its workings cover reams of pages of detailed tables and figures.

It goes something like this:—management estimates that it takes five minutes to lay a 26" by 2" paving stone and it takes .95 of a minute to lay a square foot of paving. So over eight hours in a day you are expected as a minimum to lay that amount of paving.

That is the minimum with no bonus and for this we get £106 a week. But there is bonus for laying more stones

up to an equivalent of working an extra two hours a day—the maximum bonus. If you manage to achieve this 25% extra productivity then the bonus is another £33 a week.

The scheme is designed to divide the workforce and encourages poor workmanship and dangerous conditions. Firstly, the labourers who work with the skilled masons earn a lower basic wage but can get a higher bonus (£40). As a result they could end up with more money in a week than the trained man. This is obviously a deliberate ploy by management to set the workforce against each other.

There is a tendency to speed up work, to obtain the maximum bonus, cut corners and dispense with safety regulations.

The fact is that if the job was done as management lay down in their extensive descriptions the amount of paving that management say is possible in an eight hour day would never get done—let alone any bonus be earned.

When we go out on the streets of the borough to repair paving, we go by lorry. The correct procedure is to: park the lorry carefully, lay down warning signs at back and front, take all the tools off the lorry, remove the damaged slab, properly excavate the soil underneath, relay a new slab to fit, and reload all the tools and signs. All this has to be done in five minutes!

When you are in a hurry, you can get other injuries. Because of continual lifting of paving stones at speed I have suffered serious injury to my back.

The eight hour measurement for productivity does not allow for lunch. So if you stop to eat or for a cup

of tea, it means you are losing time to lay stones and so reducing your bonus. If there is a frost or it rains and you cannot lay stones, again you lose bonus time.

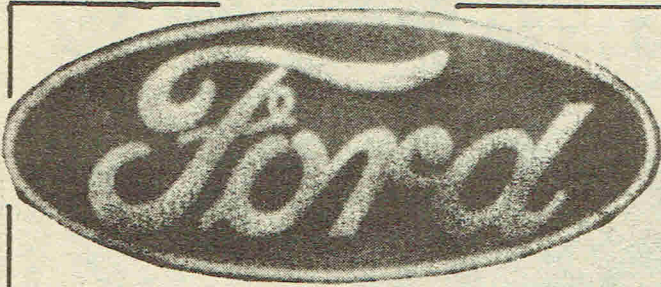
You could work really hard for four days in order to get maximum bonus and then if it rains on the last day and you cannot work, you lose all your bonus—the hard work is then for nothing.

The only way out of this trap is for the unions to negotiate a proper minimum wage for all those doing the work, paviours and labourers, it should not be dependent on productivity or on whether it rains.

Until that is achieved the ratepayers will get a substandard service and there will continue to be injuries or accidents.

A GMBATU Branch
Committee member,
Wandsworth Council
Branch

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS



National lead: national action

I am a member of the LPYS. After joining Fords I could see that disputes like this would happen and that the prospects for young workers as a whole were bleak. The LPYS has given me the confidence to get active in the union.

I'm now involved in the AUEW District Committee who have now given me the go-ahead to set up a Junior Workers Committee in Essex South. I will be writing to all the branch secretaries asking for all the names and addresses of young members who are active and for all those shop stewards under the

age of 24. Then we will convene a meeting of all the young workers to ensure that the voice of youth is heard in the union.

There is a total lack of fight or co-ordinated campaign to defend workers jobs and living standards from the TUC General Council. I see the Broad Left Organising Committee Conference in Sheffield on 24 March as an important part of building a fighting campaign for a socialist leadership. I'll be raising the question of BLOC at every opportunity and hope to be appointed as a delegate from the AUEW district committee. 9

JOHN McKAY for *Militant* spoke to Colin Adams who works at Fords Dagenham Foundry, which is threatened with closure. Colin is a young worker who is a member of the LPYS and active in his trade union—the AUEW.

What is your own personal view on the closure?

It is a scandal that 2,000 and more jobs are under threat. In the past the company has totally neglected investment into the foundry and they lied through their teeth over the future of Fords.

Not so new concept

In 1982 the new "Concept Agreement", was drawn up by the company and the unions. The new Concept meant that there would be a plan of

modernisation, a "slimming down" of the workforce, and it also gave the unions a guarantee of the survival of the foundry. Well we have "slimmed down" by losing jobs, but have seen little modernisation.

A lot of my mates took the easy way and accepted voluntary redundancy over the past couple of years. As far as I know all but one are still on the dole. In my view all apprentices should stand and fight.

There has been talk of overtime bans, work-to-rule, etc., similar to the campaign taking place in the mines. I believe that the leadership should push for strike action. We're messing around but at the present time there is a mini-car sales boom. Every car that comes off the production line

has already been sold. A strike would hit the bosses where it hurts.

When we take strike action we will need solidarity action from other workers, like in the 1981-82 pay claim dispute when links were made with Ford workers abroad. European workers stopped sending Ford cars into Britain.

Determined campaign

An appeal would have to be made to the dockers to ensure that they don't unload any Ford cars. The lorry drivers, as well, must be brought into the action. If management attacks on the foundry succeed it will result in lost jobs for drivers too. There are component suppliers that depend on trade with Ford and they too

must be brought into the action.

What is the present mood of the workforce in the foundry?

There is a great amount of confusion as it is not yet clear what the company is going to do. We won't know until 22 February, when the national joint negotiating committee meets with management to decide the future of the Dagenham estate and Fords in Britain.

We need a determined campaign to save the foundry, and all jobs at Ford, with the leadership not backing down in any way whatsoever. This is a make or break situation. If we lose the foundry other sections of Ford in Britain will follow.

BREL: where next?

THE FAILURE of the NUR and Confed leadership to mount an effective campaign of resistance to the closure of BREL workshops at Shildon, Horwich and Temple Mills was highlighted in *Militant* 684.

Special meetings were held for representatives from "safe" works, to convince them of a rosy future for BREL. If some workers do have ideas like this then they are in for a shock. The failure to oppose and campaign against the workshops closure is seen by the British Railways Board and the Tory government as weakness, a "green light" for future cuts and privatisation.

The "green light" for what could mean massive closures and the end of BREL as we know it has already been given. This time the question will be, "how many of the big

four workshops will be required?"

BR is committed to purchase, by 1985, twenty foreign locomotives for study. Already, BR engineers have visited Ireland (CIE Railways) to study in detail the locomotives operating there—built by General Motors.

BR will have to make a decision in the next five years about replacements for the class 45/47 locomotives, which work most secondary passenger and freight trains. This will be a big order and the twenty foreign locomotives will enable BR to gain experience before placing the order.

Unlike the days when BREL would have built some or all locomotives, under pressure from the Tory government BR will put the order out to tender. BREL would be only

one among many competing tenders. General Motors is likely to be strong competitor.

It has also been suggested that locomotive repairs might go to what remains of the private sector. What does this mean for BREL workers?

If any worker at the four workshops thinks he has a safe job under the Tories he will be very much mistaken. It was Horwich yesterday, it will be Doncaster/York/Crew/Derby next.

Fight back

The NUR and Confed must ensure that every BREL worker realises what is at stake: defeats in the past did not lead to stability. There is time but it must be used to mobilise BREL workers and all the rail unions around a programme of no closures, no redundancies. An attack on one workshop is an attack on all.

By a railman



Photo: Billy Parkinson

Scotts bakery — vote on national action

ON 9 February after threatening to get rid of 123 jobs, Scotts bakery on Merseyside threatened to close the whole place by 5pm.

Management were demanding acceptance of further redundancies and cuts in hours to match present known or future reductions in trade 'to be reviewed monthly', ie accept 181 jobs to go now and more every month; no strike clause with immediate dismissal in case of a strike or lockout.

In other words they were trying a Cheltenham in the private sector. Scotts workers at a mass meeting totally rejected these threats. Management have now withdrawn the immediate threat of closure but have stepped up security, with dogs in the factory and TV cameras on the roof.

A campaign for further action is under way with a national ballot for strike action throughout the Allied Bakeries.

Beauty Care: Learning in struggle

AILEEN INGHAM spoke to Kevin Moor, a shop steward at Beauty Care, who's been in dispute for 15 weeks over trade union recognition and in defence of young workers against exploitation.

What is your previous trade union experience?

I worked in the steel works and building trade and I have always been a trade union member, but have never been a shop steward before.

You've worked at Beauty Care for four years. What are conditions like?

Bloody awful. They treat the workers, especially young people like garbage. They pay poverty rates and they threaten us with the sack if we don't work overtime. I didn't realise this myself until I stopped being a driver and started working in a warehouse. Going from driving to a warehouse opened my eyes. I was on the road all day, I

Protecting ourselves

didn't really notice how they were being treated. There was a blatant disregard for health and safety, and no codes of practise at all. You had to climb 30 or 40 feet to the shelves at times. People used to fall and get hurt.

What made you go on strike?

Trade union recognition. So



Photo: John Smith (UFL)

Young workers in a bitter fight for union recognition at Beauty Care, Eccles, Lancs.

we could protect, not only ourselves, but other workers who needed to be defended against Eddie Shah-type bosses.

We've learned more about what we're fighting for, about trade unions. Those young workers who were a bit green have been out 15 weeks now and I think they will be trade union activists for the rest of their lives.

What kind of support have you been getting?

Support from other trade unionists has been good.

Workers from local firms have been down to the picket line, raising and donating money, helping with the blacking. The full-time official could have done more. He has not been down to our picket line for eight weeks. And sometimes he just fobs us off when we ask for advice. The difference between rank and file trade unionists and full-timers is the ranks are ordinary people who may have been in dispute themselves and realise what it feels like.

At the moment things are at

Trouble at the Garden City

THE DISPUTE between Sankey Vending (part of GKN) and GMBATU members at Welwyn Garden City started when an operative was told to do cellulose paint spraying on a full time basis.

He was prepared to do it, provided management looked into his complaints about ventilation, storage of cellulose paint and the fire precautions generally.

He was not prepared to accept their reassurances and asked for an inspection by a Fire Officer or Health & Safety Executive Inspector.

He was then issued with a written warning for "failing to carry out a reasonable order." He still refused to do the job and was suspended with pay for two days, then dismissed. The other workers decided to strike in his support.

The management has sacked them all and began to recruit scab labour on lower wages.

The GMBATU has now given official backing. This has resulted in an enormous boost in the pickets' morale. Since the dispute started on 6 December 1983, the strikers

have been joined by trades council delegates, trade unionists and *Militant* supporters. They have also had their financial hardships eased by workforce collections.

Messages of support or financial assistance may be sent to the shop steward Jeff Raddings, 2 Burycroft, Welwyn Garden City, Herts.

By R. Wilkins

(Secretary of Welwyn Garden City Trades Council, personal capacity)

loggerheads. But we will stay out there until we get union recognition.

Understanding politics

Why did you become involved with *Militant*?

After talking to *Militant* supporters on the picket line I realised that most people, myself included, didn't fully understand the political nature of the dispute. After attending a few meetings I began to understand the seriousness of the situation workers face. In a dispute like this you need political motivation. *Militant* supporters have offered advice and encouragement. As the dispute goes on we have all become more involved in politics.

People from the Trades Council have made promises to us and not then done anything. I'd like to tell them that they should think about young workers in dispute and what they should do and they should get moving. Our Labour MP should have done something too. He could have come down to the picket line but we haven't heard a word from him although he is a Transport and General Workers Union sponsored MP.

Basically the trade unions do a good job but they should be more democratic. We should be able to elect our own officials.

I asked Ian, who is 17, of his impressions of the strike.

I have worked at Beauty Care for 18 months and came

out on strike because of the awful conditions and low wages, because my shop steward explained how great it would be in the union. I didn't know much about unions when we first started. I just knew that something needed to be done about the management. I know a lot more now, about what it's all about. I should be able to get to work and enjoy it, with a decent wage and not to get picked on because I am young.

**Militant Meeting
7.30 pm
at Duke of York pub
Church Street
Eccles
Speaker:
Terry Fields MP**

Strathclyde transport strike

STRATHCLYDE rail workers demonstrated their anger at cutbacks in the region, supporting the call for a 24-hour stoppage in support of union policy.

Despite intimidation, lies and distortions by BR management and certain branch officials, who were allowed time off work to distribute leaflets undermining the strike, it was an overwhelming success.

The newly-formed Strathclyde NUR Action Committee called the stoppage. Strathclyde Region's public transport cuts would mean 500 job losses, one man operation of trains, station destaffing and line closures.

As rail unions do not have negotiating rights with Strathclyde, BR management are using the region to impose the corporate plan in Scotland as a forerunner to carrying it out in other parts of the country.

Rail workers of all grades took unofficial action in defence of NUR resolution 69 which clearly states, "This AGM instructs the NEC in view of the BRB attitude for

the 1982 pay claim and the SGM of October 1982 to withdraw from any further talks on productivity, including one-man operation of trains."

The NUR leaders must take up the Strathclyde initiative. National action is needed now.

Hundreds of jobs are at risk in Strathclyde, thousands nationally, yet management are allowed to introduce these measures. As one member commented, "the days of the ostrich are finished in the NUR. No more will they be allowed to bury jobs while we bury our heads."

This stoppage was a victory for solidarity—solidarity of all the grades on the railway. Guards, station staff, signalmen, permanent way men S&T (Signal and Telecommunication workers), all vented their anger in defence of jobs, conditions and living standards.

This is a beginning of a fight back by railway workers.

By John Herron
(Strathclyde NUR Action Committee)

ON THE same day there was a 2-hour stoppage of buses in Glasgow in protest at Strathclyde Passenger Transport Executive plans to close three garages and increase fares by 5%.

Thousands of bus workers lobbied Strathclyde Regional Council Labour Group. They were angry at Labour councillors acting as "Margaret Thatcher's hatchet men" as several placards said.

There was a real mood of anger with workers demanding Labour councillors should fight for their mandate and not obey Tory dictats.

The two groups of workers involved in transport must join forces. The local Labour Party has to support the fight and force the Labour Group to reverse their decision. The Strathclyde Regional Council should follow Glasgow District Council's example and freeze charges and maintain services.

A campaign in the West of Scotland should be launched which would force the Tories to retreat.

By Ronnie Stvenson

Rowntree redundancies at Halifax

TGWU MEMBERS at Rowntree Mackintosh, Halifax, ('Macks' for short), have had enough. For the past five years Halifax's major employer has stopped recruitment.

Now management plans for Halifax include 145 redundancies. Closure of a factory at Wainstalls and changes in working practices.

Some union members fear Macks could go the same way as Crossley Carpets. Once a major employer in the area it now only has a couple of hundred workers.

Halifax's main production has been Quality Street chocolates. Demand for this product has fallen over recent years, but production of Quality Street has begun in Dijon, France, for the European market.

The French government has reportedly given £1 million to the factory provided it employs a certain number of people. Dijon has new equipment, better than at Halifax, also some machines have been moved from Halifax to Dijon.

The TGWU have made their own plans—which they say will save the company £1¼m. It includes: 70 job

losses, through early retirement and voluntary redundancies; return of all Quality Street production from Dijon, and to see the company efficiency plan. Macks have refused.

Four weeks ago the union called for an overtime ban. Up to 500 TGWU members are involved. The company turned to short time and lay-offs effecting about 2600.

I talked to one man only working a 16 hour next week, but worst affected are probably women on the evening shift.

The company is trying to split the workforce and put the blame onto the union, writing to union members putting their side. One union member said "They're just out to ride rough shod over us to get everything in." It is better to make a stand now against management proposals which are the thin end of a wedge.

There are no rewards for loyalty when compared to company profits—as ex-workers of Crossley carpets know too well.

By Mick Fallon

Photo: John Harris (IFL)



Workers at one of the last three steel makers in the Black Country, John Bagnal & Sons voted to fight closure last Monday. As we go to press the main steel union's executive (ISTC) vote for a new general secretary to replace Bill Sirs who has presided over a drop in membership of three-quarters since 1970.

N Staffs miners say escalate action

A MASS meeting of nearly a thousand miners from Hem Heath and Florence collieries in Stoke on Trent voted to lift pickets at Hem Heath after receiving assurances from COSA that they would only supply the minimum cover necessary for safety work to be completed. COSA had refused to

follow the national guidelines and provide safety cover for the pits as long as the picket line was in place. COSA's intransigence has meant 3,500 men have been laid off for ten days.

NUM and Power Group members explained the issues to a Militant reporter.

Why was the picket put on?

This was a token picket of three Power Group and three NUM members to stop management dividing the workforce by allowing some men to work five days and others only three. We had even conceded the shaftsmen should work two twelve hour shifts so that the rest of the men could work a four day week.

We had been laid off on the Monday of every week to allow safety work. While the NUM and Power Group were laid off

COSA were not, even though there was noone for them to supervise.

The picket line was not to stop safety work being done but to ensure fair treatment of the workforce. The management could have prevented this dispute but they would neither lay off COSA men nor redeploy the miners.

They have even re-scheduled the rope-capping programme. The present capping would not normally be carried out till the

middle of March. The picket has been lifted following the written assurances given by COSA and recommendation of most of the leading NUM officials.

Nevertheless a number of them will see this decision as a backing down in face of management provocation. If any COSA member attempts to break the national guidelines it will be reimposed.

What effect is the overtime ban having?

As miners we shouldn't be fighting one another but management. This is supposed to be one of the most moderate areas in the country but that is changing. The NCB picked on this area to try and drive a wedge between the members and they have been shocked at the reaction. The NCB are losing more coal in North Staffs than any other area. This is because under normal working our production is so high.

The overtime ban is therefore highlighting the low basic pay even more here.

Leyland march

THERE WAS an impressive show of solidarity in Leyland, Lancashire, 6 February, when workers marched to show their opposition to redundancies and closures in Lancashire and within the Leyland bus and truck division. The Leyland workers were joined by supporters from the BL bus and truck division in Scotland, from Albion and Bathgate, as well as from the GEC factory in nearby Preston.

Women from the nearby rubber works came out to cheer the marchers and at the DHSS offices local civil servants indicated their support.

Since 1980 nearly 3,000 jobs have gone from Leyland vehicles in Leyland Chorley. Either the government will be forced to change its policy and invest for jobs in the industry or the town of Leyland will be destroyed. These alternatives were summed up in the slogan of the Leyland's works committee—"we want T 45 not P 45", referring to the T 45 truck that Leyland can make.

By Gerry Lerner

BAT's strategy

BRITISH AMERICAN Tobacco management, threatening massive redundancies at the Liverpool factory, have presented a document to stewards outlining their viewpoint.

They intend: withdrawal from the UK market; maximum "production rationalisation"; to eliminate potential losses from the UK operation; obtain the maximum financial benefit from production rationalisation; concentrate resources on the export market.

The company has now announced the second phase of redundancies and the kind of employment for the few who would remain.

It would mean:

- 1) De-skilling of tradesmen, a "nomad" labour force;
- 2) All manning agreements to be terminated;
- 3) Phasing out of certain areas—the contracting out of transport, canteens, cleaning, craft jobs such as joiners, painters, bricklayers, etc.

Conditions for keeping 400 or so jobs are changing working hours to the so-called nine-day fortnight; some workers to do enforced nightshifts which will be Sunday to Thursday nightshift; the predominance of women's production jobs to be eliminated.

Supervisors are to become working supervisors and the clerical staff are to be reduced

from 132 to 13, with work such as the organising of the wages to be contracted out or moved to Walton or Southampton and meal breaks being cut to the bare legal bone.

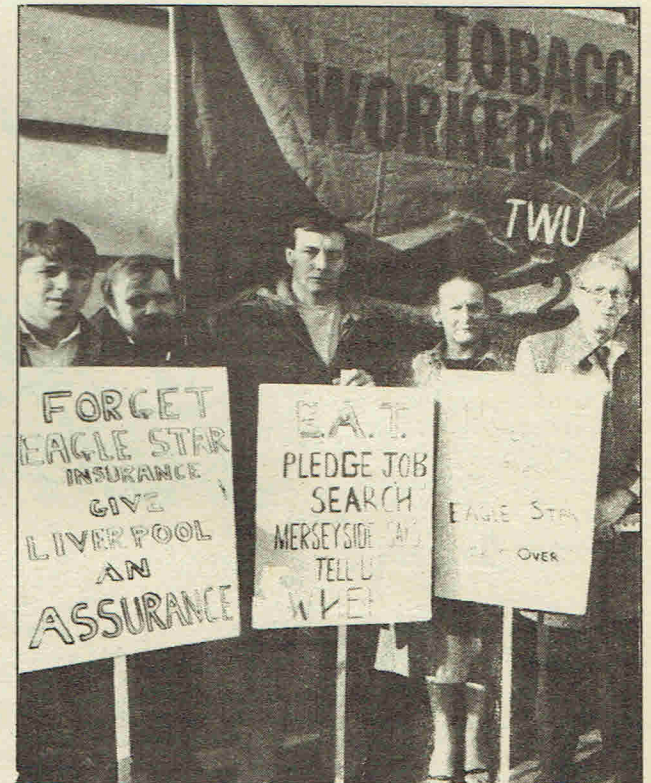
On-site nurses and the welfare department are to be eliminated and the first member of the management staff to be issued with his 90-day notice was the health and safety adviser.

Inherent in the company's plan is closure of what is left of the factory. The main production will be in what is known as cut-rag tobacco from which the cigarettes are made in the next stage of the process, particularly in Spain.

In 15 to 18 months time plants in Europe will be completed which will make the production of this tobacco in Liverpool unnecessary. In other words—closure of the factory.

The Southampton factory had no documentation or details of the proposed job losses there. The management game is obvious: woo Southampton into a false sense of security, then as soon as Liverpool is beaten batter them with threats of redundancies, using the move to either Corby or back to Liverpool as the big stick.

By Jim Hollinshead



BAT workers protest against the Liverpool redundancies

A DELEGATION of "British American Tobacco" workers held a vigil outside BAT's London HQ last week, protesting at the proposed loss of jobs at the Liverpool factory.

"Bloody awful treatment" read one of the placards, which about summed it up.

Steve Adams, seven years a BAT forklift driver, with Chris Adams, twelve years at BAT told me how they felt:

"Typical of BAT. They gave us no notice of this yet they knew about this since June 1983. We learned last

Friday (3 Feb) when they issued the DEP 90 day notices, before they told us we got letters."

"Last year BAT UK made £25m profit but that doesn't seem to be enough, they're interested only in their profits not people."

Three Liverpool MP's Bob Parry, Eddie Loyden and Terry Fields came and supported the vigil, 70 Militants were sold.

By Bob Faulkes

A Liverpool victory...

"A COMPLETE victory" was how shop stewards Paddy Campbell and Robbie Higgins described their reinstatement by John West management.

The two-week strike at the Liverpool distribution centre ended with total surrender by the bosses. They had sacked the stewards for failing to work the hours imposed on them by management. This was completely contrary to the agreement with the union, USDAW. Management had refused to negotiate until the workers returned to work. By Friday they were begging union officials to get their employees back "whatever it takes".

Solidarity in action

Total solidarity was the weapon which won victory—plus help and support from the Labour Party and Liverpool council. Workers brought the

warehouse to a standstill, as five people who had previously crossed picket lines joined the strike. TGWU lorry drivers gave support and threatened to black any scab lorries.

One lorry did venture across the line, but an independent driver who was passing by stormed into the yard, and hauled the driver out of the cab leaving the container stranded in the yard. Within hours, the boss of the transport firm had come down to the picket line to apologise.

Paddy and Robbie thanked the Labour Party and the city council for their support and active help. Derek Hatton, the deputy leader of the council was on the point of blacking John West when the strike was settled. Liverpool council lived up to their



Photo: Billy Parkinson

John West workers—Striking + Solidarity + Support = Victory.

tradition of giving full support for workers fighting for their rights and living standards.

Weekly fund

Paddy said "we won the strike by being on the picket line but it was certainly speeded up by the support we got. When we go back we'll be setting up our own weekly fund to aid other workers in difficulties."

The only note of concern from the workers was that the spontaneous walkout and strike was not made official. Although the strike was going through the executive of USDAW, swifter action was needed.

Workers at John West fully agreed with *Militant's* programme of election of all officials plus living on a workers wage. They will now be trying to get their local branch into activity. Paddy Campbell could not remember one branch meeting in 12 years.

First strike for a century

This strike is the first for 100 years at John West. Like other factories they have had their share of redundancies. However this victory shows that the bosses can still be beaten by a united determined workforce.

By Richard Knights.

DEFEND LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL

Rally and Organisational Conference
 St George's Hall, Liverpool
 Monday 27 February, 7.30 pm.
 Speakers include:
 Terry Fields MP,
 Ron Todd
 TGWU National Officer.
 All trade unionists welcome

...and a struggle

ON 21 February there will be another National Union of Students day of action. In Liverpool this will take the form of a demonstration through the town and a rally in support of the Labour City Council.

The reason why is simple. The Labour City Council is refusing to implement the cuts the Tories are screaming for in Liverpool's education system. Their policy of no cuts and no redundancies saves jobs and courses.

Save our education!

City councillors have become involved in a fight in the FE sector, for nursery facilities, better meal subsidies and a £25 grant. They've been prepared to come down to colleges and to speak in the canteen at dinner time, prepared to answer any criticism made of them and prepared to be accountable to the people who elected them.

Labour's councillors have spoken at a students union meeting at the Polytechnic and assured them that they will implement no cuts in courses although the Tory government would like to close the Poly completely. Throughout the FE sector, youth will be won to the Labour Party because they offer a £25 grant and the Tories offer nothing but cuts.

Under a Tory government FE students don't get a grant—they have to apply for the discretionary award from the local authority, which means if you live in a Tory area not only are you unlikely to get a grant but you'll probably be asked to

pay a percentage of your fees. Only those who can afford it will get an education.

Even under Labour councils discretionary awards are low, the majority are left on the dole. Because of this students drop courses to get under the "15-hour rule", so that they can claim dole. However, recently the DHSS started asking students how much homework they do. And if their homework and coursework adds up to more than 15 hours a week then they are no longer entitled to social security.

The Liverpool City Council has shown a lead in fighting back.

Support the council!

That's why, throughout Merseyside, mass meetings will take place in the colleges calling on youth to demonstrate in support of the City Council. 20,000 leaflets will be produced by the NUS, in support of the City Council.

College students, dinner ladies, cleaners, caretakers, teachers, YTS trainees and day release apprentices will unite in filling the streets of Liverpool in a demonstration against the Tory cuts in education and in full support of the Liverpool City Council.

By Cheryl Varley

No battle for Trafalgar

THE TORIES aim to give a major public resource Scott Lithgow, to a private capitalist firm. Having neglected industry for generations and ruined Britain's manufacturing base by gross underinvestment, all the bosses have left is parasitism.

Thatcher is handing over Scott Lithgow to the multinational Trafalgar House with all debts written off and extra aid given. And far from being won by the Tories' mythical "healthy competition", the yard was handed to them on a plate.

Tory backers

Trafalgar House gives £50,000 a year to Tory party funds. It used to own the *Express* group newspapers,



and has now expanded into property, building and shipping. The Cunard Line, part of the group, refused last year to buy a British-built ship to replace the *Atlantic Conveyor* lost in the Falklands, which shows their

commitment to shipbuilding jobs. The latest liner, the *Cunard Princess*, is registered in the Bahamas making it easier to employ non-union workers.

They own hotels including the Ritz and other famous

names like Trollope and Colls and Cementation International (Mark Thatcher was working for them in Oman while travelling with his mother).

Experts in piracy?

But they seem to specialise in privatisation. One director is on the board of British Rail Investments supervising the denationalisation of the profitable parts. Chairman Nigel Brookes is the chairman of the London Dockland Development Corporation, plundering the former docks for private capital. And they have already taken over Redpath Dorman Long from British Steel.

Trafalgar House seems most interested in the Scott Lithgow site's development for property; the site by itself has been valued at £5.6 million, more than the total asset value of the yard quoted by British Shipbuilders.



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