

# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 694  
6 April 1984

25p

INSIDE

Liverpool against the Tories. Page 2, 8-9

Save the pits  
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Stop all coal . . .

# Solidarity action now

## Building for a Marxist daily

THE AMAZING success of our Building Fund has been noticed by the capitalist press. The Sunday Times' article (1 April) quotes last week's *Militant*.

"A building Fund to finance new premises has passed £132,000 and is considered certain to reach £200,000 later this year. More than £30,000 has been raised in the last two weeks."

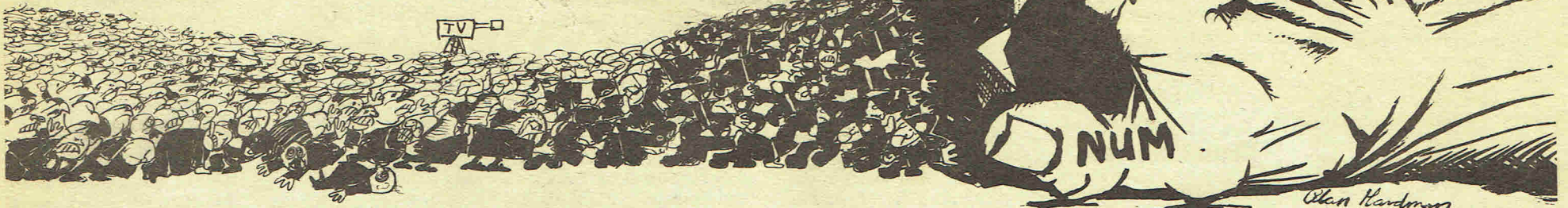
Even since the article on page 4, the total has gone up to £138,457. No wonder the Sunday Times was forced to comment on "the Marxist group's remarkable cash-raising achievements." We are proud of our 'remarkable' support from workers pockets and purses. No one can doubt their determination to build a daily Marxist paper.

However, the same article implied that there was something sinister about the Building Fund. Workers will not be fooled by Tory press distortions; they know every penny raised has been a sacrifice from our supporters in the Labour movement.

The article is no doubt aimed as a goad to the right-wing in the Labour Party to launch another witch-hunt against Marxism, using finances as a pretext. But any such move will be strenuously resisted by ordinary party members.

Workers make tremendous financial sacrifices for Marxism because they see that, through our programme, capitalism will be abolished and socialism established. Keep the money flowing in for the Building Fund. It's an investment in your own future.

AMID SQUEAKS AND SQUEALS OF DISBELIEF  
AN AWFUL TRUTH DAWNED ON THE STRAINING MIDGETS...  
THE ROCK COULD NOT BE MOVED



A MOOD of iron determination and an unprecedented will to win has developed among striking miners.

In South Wales the strike is 100% solid, with miners speaking with one voice. Even if there is to be a long struggle, we must win. There can be no compromise now.

Most miners are out nationally, voting with their hands and feet. They are now actively trying to control the movement of coal to prevent implementation of the MacGregor plan.

The minority of miners still at work have the answer to complete national unity in their hands. The only unity now possible is that of direct action. At this stage in the dispute, there can be no question of a national ballot; the momentum must be developed.

We can not afford to wind down the action and bring pickets home for an exercise in democracy. The majority have already made it clear where they stand.

The capitalist press, energy minister Walker,

By Ian Isaac  
(Secretary St Johns  
NUM, Maesteg and S  
Wales EC)

Thatcher and MacGregor all favour a ballot, to try to deepen any division between striking and non-striking miners. But these divisions are being overcome.

The strike is hardening daily. Fresh encouragement has come from the Notts area council instruction not to cross picket lines they will organise. Any local leaderships ignoring these instructions will find themselves more and more out on a limb, with increasing calls for their replacement by active miners prepared to fight.

KENT MINERS are marching to Nottinghamshire, arriving in London at 10 am Saturday 7 April at Camberwell Green. They will hand out leaflets and march to County Hall at 11.30. In the evening a benefit will be held at Dame Collet House, Ben Johnson Road, E1.

The fact that some miners are still working does not dishearten us. The dispute is developing the best among

Photo: John Harris (FL)



Massive police mobilisation at Daw Mill colliery, Warwickshire to prevent pickets discussing with miners (see report back page). Despite this, strikers are determined to win.

the rank and file nationally and in non-striking regions the nucleus of a new leadership is being assembled. We are confident the strike will shortly be 100% solid.

The vast reservoir of initiative, talent and flair among rank and file miners must be used to the full. Every miner must be mobilised to fight for the strike through weekly mass meetings and regular report backs to involve miners in

the action. Nothing should be taken for granted.

The same applies to the marvellous support developing in the wider movement. The local valley communities' initial scepticism whether victory was possible has been transformed into enthusiastic support for our cause. If the miners should lose, the whole social fabric of the communities would be torn apart.

The miners' strike is

becoming the property of the whole movement. If we are beaten, Thatcher will turn at once on other workers with her tail up. Lorry drivers, railworkers, steel workers, seamen and others have concluded they must support the miners.

Early in the dispute employers in road haulage

CONTINUED ON  
BACK PAGE

## Miners come to LPYS conference

YOUNG MINER Gary Marsden, the youth rep at Dodworth NUM will be spending Easter at the Labour Party Young Socialists annual conference.

"I went to regional conference and really enjoyed that, but that was only quite small. I'm looking forward to listening to all the other lads and lasses.

"I know we won't have to ask the YS for support for the miners—they're already giving it." The conference lasts from 20 to 23 April. The Socialist Youth rally will be held in support of the miners and the debates on trade union youth will be thrown open to trade union visitors, especially young mine workers.

If you're interested, contact your local LPYS branch or Andy Bevan, Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

# Liverpool will fight Tory plans

**THE MASSIVE** show of strength in Liverpool on March 29 will have served as a warning to the Tory government. Support for the Labour City Council's so-called 'illegal' budget was shown in the biggest regional one day general strike in British history and a massive demonstration.

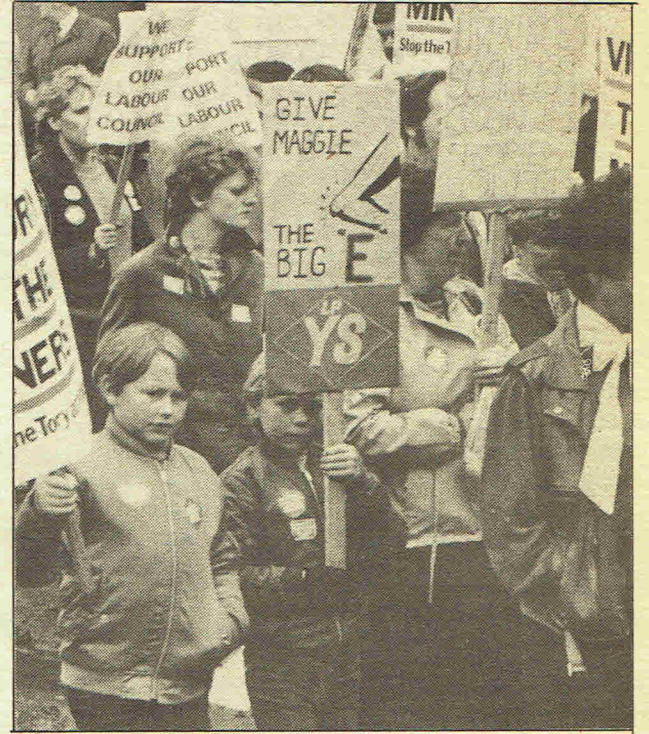
In the past the Tories have been generous with their

threats. They have threatened to persecute Labour councillors with surcharges, personal bankruptcy and debarment from public office. They have threatened to abolish the May elections, knowing the inevitability of a firm Labour majority on May 3. They have even threatened use of troops in Liverpool.

But the Merseyside work-

ing class have not and will not be cowed.

Now, due to the actions of the Liberals, Tories and Labour renegades, Liverpool has been left with no budget, and the Tories are faced with a number of options—each fraught with danger for the Thatcher government. Below, the options are taken up by Richard Venton:



Scenes from the March 29 demonstration. Above, LPYS members on the march. Left, from left to right, Tony Mulhearn, DLP leader, Eddie Loyden MP, John Hamilton, council leader, and Eric Heffer MP. Below, the banner of the Liverpool councillors.

Photos: Viv Seal & Tina Carroll.

## A coalition of Labour's opponents?

**THE TORIES** and Liberals, with the help of a vicious press campaign against Labour's budget, have stepped up their efforts to undermine the Labour Council.

It is a campaign to stampede the six Labour renegades to join in some kind of coalition with the Liberals and Tories on the City Council, to form a "local government of all the talents". The Tories openly called for this during the budget debate itself, as did at least one Liberal.

This could well be the intention of the Labour group's opponents at the reconvened council meeting on April 25.

### Divine intervention

This is undoubtedly one of the options being investigated by Patrick Jenkin. This was the line being pushed by the *Times* editorial on March 31 which said: "Next week's financial dislocation should not be underestimated, nor should the difficulties of Liberals, Conservative and moderate Labour councillors in reaching an accord. Yet were there to be an emergency council meeting within a fortnight the budget could be

drafted by the minorities. In this Mr Jenkin could surely help." It goes on to call on Jenkin to back up such a deal with "an array of programmes", a sugar pill with which to entice Labour's opposition groups to push through a budget of cuts and rate rises.

It has also been revealed that the Anglican bishop Sheppard and Catholic Arch Bishop Worlock have met with Jenkin, acting as mediators in the efforts to forge a coalition budget. So much for the neutrality of the "spiritual leaders"!

The church leaders may be used to patch up an 'unholy alliance' of Liberal, Tory and Labour renegade councillors whose 'talents' would be to kill local services by a thousand cuts—but there is no way the organised working class in Liverpool would allow such a coalition outfit to impose cuts. A coalition would face the same mass opposition of industrial action as an open Tory regime.

### Redundancies

As the Labour council has repeatedly explained, the only alternative to Labour's 'illegal' budget is cuts in services, compulsory redundancies, job losses through natural wastage and redundancies in the private sector through massive rate rises.

## Tories let city go bankrupt?

**AT PRESENT** the Tories face difficulties on other fronts, in particular the current miners' struggle. This adds to their hesitation over moving in on Liverpool. As such they may adopt a policy of 'wait and see'.

Some sections of the Tories will have considered riding Liverpool literally into absolute bankruptcy by encouraging investors to withdraw their loaning facilities, so that the commissioners could later step in as saviours. In that period the Tories' allies in the media could run riot with hysterical scare stories, whipping up an atmosphere of 'chaos, bankruptcy' etc.

### Press scares

The press have already run scare stories of the cash running out within seven days from the time the city was left with no-budget. This is

rubbish. It is purely propaganda. Even Patrick Jenkin has admitted that with the first instalment of the Rate Support Grant, plus rent collection, Liverpool's funds will continue until well after the May elections. Also the Labour group is setting up a special committee to ensure use of funds until the budget is set.

Meanwhile the bankers are fearful about the consequences of driving Liverpool into bankruptcy. Certainly the Tories' legislation is designed to literally bankrupt Liverpool this year, and other cities next year. In England and Wales, councils owed £37 billion in March 1983. 36% of this is loaned by the Public Works Loans Board, a government body, with the same proportion loaned from the banks. Under present legislation local authorities technically cannot go bankrupt. The Public Works Loans Board



## Send in the commissioners?

**SOME TORIES** are pushing for use of government commissioners to impose a budget and with it cuts and rate rises.

The *Sunday Times* reported that the Tories have prepared an emergency bill to send in commissioners in view of the fact that: "The expected Labour gains in the City's May elections may yet produce a majority for the proposed Labour budget".

### In the wings

While Jenkin has declared he will not use commissioners immediately, particularly after the working class's show of power on the 29th, *The Times* commented: "Standing in the

wings, he (Jenkin) hinted, still at some distance from the stage, is a civil servant with a commission to stop the vagaries of local administration causing financial jeopardy."

These great democrats show their scant regard for democracy, threatening this step towards a 'semi-bonapartist-dictatorship'. *The Times* even boasted: "That the municipal services could be run or rates levied by appointees of central government is not an issue. The ranks of uniformed Merseyside constables guarding the Town Hall the other day would turn out again if need be."

But despite the *Times'* chest-thumping, the Tories



acts as a "temporary lender of the last resort".

But even the bankers are worried by the Tories' new legislation which would remove this safety net. Liverpool council itself owed £558 million last March. So for bankers and financiers it would be extremely dangerous for them to pull out of Liverpool. Not only would they lose all their loot and interest repayments, but they would face the possible danger of a collapse of secondary banking.

### Banking collapse

At present then, it is unlikely they will pull out

and drive Liverpool into bankruptcy. They may prefer to attempt to starve Liverpool into submission by the government refusing concessions on grants, when the first instalment ends around the summer period.

But if investors including bankers do threaten to pull out of loans, it will be absolutely vital for Labour's national leadership to expose these unelected money lenders for the leeches that they are, and demand the socialist nationalisation of the banks and finance houses, a policy repeatedly supported by Labour Party conference.

are very nervous about such a move. They would enter a lion's den of mass working class opposition. To do so after the May elections, when Labour should have an increased majority and when the six defectors' votes will become irrelevant, would be an even more flagrant provocation of Merseyside workers.

### Workers' opposition

The commissioners may be accompanied by some of the same cosmetic concessions from the government as would be offered with a coalition. But cuts and direct government interference would still be restricted. Even Jenkin's own advisors see the difficulties: "The caretakers have to unlock the doors, the computer has to

be set up. There are 25 things that have to happen before you can sit in your grand office and pretend to run the city" (*Sunday Times* 25/3/84).

This method failed ten years ago in tiny Clay Cross. Imagine commissioners trying to run Britain's fifth largest city. The caretakers, a formidable opposition within themselves, would only be a small section of the workforce that the Tories would have to contend with.

Workers will not tolerate a denial of their right to vote, the right won by decades of struggle. The Tories may wish to impose a one party state on Liverpool to further punish workers for the crisis in capitalism, but they will try this at risk to their system in the long run.

## Labour's only option —fightback!

**BECAUSE OF** the brilliant campaign of socialist explanation which has aroused Liverpool's workers in a mass movement against the Tories, the ruling class and Tory government face a nightmare—all their possible options face a wall of opposition from the workers. Without doubt, if no campaign had been taken up, the Tories would have already imposed draconian cuts.

The emphasis of the campaign now switches towards building a solid Labour majority in the May council elections. Trade unionists are being called upon to ensure a swing to Labour, to give the City Council an increased mandate for the so called 'illegal' budget.

The May elections will become a referendum. We are confident people will decide for a firm Labour council to resist the government.

The Tories meanwhile are stubbornly refusing to concede on the £30 million Liverpool is demanding back. They know such a con-

cession would be a green light to local councils and council workers throughout the country, to adopt the "Liverpool option".

Yet Labour leader Neil Kinnock has said he is not backing the Liverpool Labour Party. He said such support would be "an idle gesture". If he'd attended the mass demonstration of March 29 he would have heard the real voice of Labour.

He has rightly described Liverpool as "a city under siege because of Tory cuts". But if he and other Labour leaders just lift their little fingers in support of Liverpool's struggle instead of being critical from a distance, it would be the Tories that would be 'under siege' from hundreds of thousands of workers nationally.

With national backing, Liverpool could win a victory and with it big concessions from the Tories which would spark a movement that could topple Thatcher's government.

# Blackburn six must be reinstated

**THE SIX Militant supporters expelled from Blackburn Constituency Labour Party appeared before the National Executive's Appeals Committee on 18 March.**

The basis of our appeal was that we had been expelled because of our ideas. There were three main areas on which the NEC should have reversed our expulsion. Firstly, it was unconstitutional; secondly, the expulsions were based on false

allegations such as the so-called "Gregory Report"; and finally, we had not been given a fair hearing.

After a six-hour session of statements and questions we now have to wait until mid-April to find out whether our appeals are accepted. All six of us forcefully and confidently denied every allegation made against us and submitted a folder of documents and statements which clearly refuted every charge.

## Fascist smear

But the behaviour of the Blackburn CLP officers and

of Michael Gregory himself shocked us and our witnesses. In a pathetic attempt to justify the expulsions, one long series of lies and unsubstantiated claims were made in a particularly offensive way.

Members of Blackburn CLP who were not present had their names blackened and vilified. Not only were we accused of being financed by the CIA (!) but the peaceful picket by local activists and trade union members of the Blackburn CLP Executive meeting, which decided our expulsion, was described as a "hooligan mob containing a large sec-

tion of fascists"!!

One party officer did concede that in reality we had worked tremendously hard for the local party. Another really gave the game away when, justifying the expulsions, he said he didn't want young people telling him what to do.

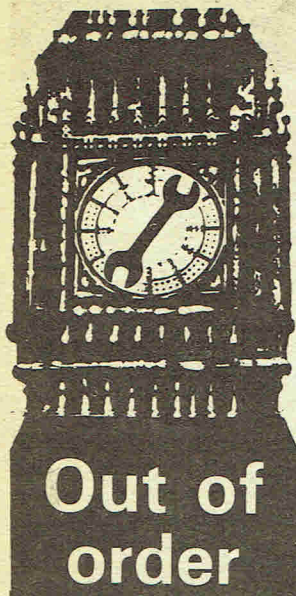
## No proof

As to be expected, not one single scrap of proof or firm evidence was produced to substantiate the allegations against us—just lies, smears and red herrings.

We were disappointed to find that some of the Ap-

peals Committee had not familiarised themselves before the hearing with the events in Blackburn and we feel that if this Appeals Committee is to retain any credibility as a fair and democratic body, then we must be found totally innocent of these ludicrous charges and be reinstated. But whatever the decision, we'll be back fighting for socialist policies. You cannot expel Marxist ideas from the party of the working class.

**By Peter Harris**  
(Expelled from Blackburn CLP)



## Out of order

IT CAN be worrying when you find yourself agreeing with the Tories, especially when it's Thatcher herself. But you usually find that when this happens, while you are being quite honest, the Tories are engaging in one of their many acts of barefaced hypocrisy.

This is true on the question of the rates. Remember the days when the Tories used to be champions of the ratepayer? To quote Mrs Thatcher, in a Parliamentary debate on 25 March 1974:

"I agree... that the debate on the Rate Support Grant Order tends to be a technical debate... but our constituents do not come to us with technical problems. It is no good trying to explain to them an increase in rates by reference to the resources element, the domestic element, the needs element, the relevant expenditure and so on. They say 'I still have to bear a certain percentage of the increase in rates and what are you going to do about that?'"

That's exactly what a lot of Liverpool people would quite rightly say if the City Council obeyed the Tories' demands and pushed through massive rate increases.

## Concern for rich only

In reality, the only people the Tories are really concerned in cutting costs for are the rich. As I pointed out to Parliament on 20 March:

"If the government are genuine in wanting to help resolve Liverpool's problems, they will find that they are able to be flexible and generous against the background of decades of deprivation and de-industrialisation. We have suffered and we continue to suffer. If the government are genuine and are not merely making hypocritical announcements, they can do something tangible..."

"The Chancellor of the Exchequer was able at a stroke (during the budget) to raise tax thresholds for high income earners. In so doing he gave away £35 million to 650,000 people. Liverpool has half a million people and we are asking for only £30 million... to help us overcome our terrible problems."

**By Terry Fields MP**

## Stop SA rugby tour



Photo: Paul Mattsson (IFL)

ANGER HAS greeted the Rugby Union's decision to go ahead with a tour of South Africa by an England team. Apartheid is still very much in operation in SA sport. As *The Observer* (April 1) reported: "... the game is still organised on classic 'separate development' lines, with a Rugby board for white rugby, a Rugby Federation for coloured rugby and a Rugby board for African rugby. Each racial body has its own clubs and runs its own leagues". Above, a national demonstration against apartheid in sport, in Llanelli, Wales earlier this year.

## Midland Marxists elected

THE WEST Midlands Regional Labour Party conference on 1 April came alive with an emergency debate on the miners' strike. Delegates were reminded of the victory at Saltly Gate 12 years ago, which was won by the "workers of the West Midlands".

TGWU delegate Bill Mullins gave the facts and figures concerning the crisis in the coal industry: "The labour movement in Britain," he argued, "owes the NUM a debt for bringing down the '74 Tory government."

The nightmare facing Labour councillors was the other key debate. Dave Griffiths, Stafford CLP, told the conference: "Liverpool is an example for all other Labour councils."

The main unions however, successfully won re-appoint-



TGWU delegate Bill Mullins

of the motion backing the Liverpool strategy. But *Militant* supporter Dave Griffiths had the consolation of displacing Lynne Golding from the Regional Executive. She and her husband John Golding MP are virulent opponents of *Militant*.

● Despite four left wing delegates being ruled out of

order, the right wing have lost control of the Birmingham District Youth Liaison Committee.

This body, which has three delegates representing the LPYS and one delegate per CLP including those which have no LPYS branch, co-ordinates LPYS activities in the city.

At its AGM on 30 March, the old leadership were criticised for inaction. In the elections, *Militant* supporters were returned as the secretary and chairman. Although it was a narrow vote, 11-12, the new leadership plan to build up the strength of the LPYS and have begun immediately, organising a meeting in support of the miners on 12 April.

**By a Militant Reporter**

## CP stab Labour in the back

THE FOLLOWING appeared in a national newspaper:

"The criticism of the (Liverpool) Labour Group has been their unwillingness to find the points of unity." It also said, "... the direction of a council leadership faced with an apparant no-win scenario has also provided bitter resentment from many people in the city who

have hoped for a fundamental breach with past practices of 'rule from the top' and who had been looking for a period of involvement and consultation."

*The Times? The Telegraph? The Express* maybe? No. This is from an article in the *Morning Star* (31 March) by Merseyside "Communist Party" secretary John Blevin.

Blevin continues: "Despite warnings of a Clay Cross development, despite the National Labour Party advice, despite the lack of a broad based mass appeal, the council has chosen to create anti-Tory struggles virtually in isolation." We have come to expect criticism from Labour's right in these terms—now the CP passively support them.

And these comments after

## Merseyside rally

MERSEYSIDE MILITANT supporters aim to have their biggest public rally yet on Monday 9 April. The platform is first class, representing a range of leading activists in various sections of the labour movement. We have set ourselves a target of 750 in attendance.

Merseyside has had some tremendous *Militant* meetings in the past. Last October over 300 attended an enthusiastic meeting including industrial shop stewards and covenors from various work places. Now we are aiming to beat our record with a show of strength which would reflect the leading role of *Militant* supporters in the struggles of Merseyside workers.

## Militant's role

Our supporters must mobilise for the rally, every seller should attend, arrange transport for groups of comrades including mini-buses if necessary. Every seller should accompany at least two people who have never been to a *Militant* rally before. Every comrade in a union or workplace should immediately mobilise a turnout of workmates and interested fellow trade unionists and put up posters

on union notice boards.

Workers in struggle should use this rally to win solidarity. LPYS branches will be organising a full turnout of all the new members they have recruited during the past month or so of outstanding public activity, similarly with the College Labour Clubs.

Sellers will be out on the streets in shopping areas on Saturday 7 April with a blast of leafletting and selling papers.

More artistic Marxists aim to make a Merseyside *Militant* banner to be unfurled at the rally, just to remind friends and others alike that we are here to stay.

The dedication and enthusiasm of *Militant* supporters cannot be questioned. One comrade who has just recently started selling *Militant* hitch-hiked from Wrexham to Liverpool on 29 March and sold 30 papers on the demonstration. With this spirit plus a meticulous check on detail, we will show what a force the Marxists are on Merseyside, and will win new supporters to our cause.

For details contact Richard Venton: 051-260 3111.

**By Richard Venton**

## Coventry vote backs MP

SUPPORT FOR Marxist ideas has grown considerably in the Coventry South-East Labour Party over the past year. These developments were reflected in the 1984 AGM of the constituency, held recently.

Last year, after the election campaign, there was some criticism of the election agent, Tom Smith. Now Tom has been elected constituency chairman, defeating a right wing challenge by a two to one margin. With 85 delegates present this was the largest AGM in recent years also reflecting the increased number of delegates which has reached the 100 mark.

Support for Marxism was confirmed with the election of *Militant* supporters to the positions of Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Political Education Officer and Youth Officer. The left has an overwhelming majority on the constituency Executive with Marxists in force there too.

The local paper, the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* previewed the Annual General Meeting by saying the election of Tom Smith as Chairman would be seen as a vote of confidence in the constituency's MP Dave Nellist. The *Telegraph* has received its answer.

**By Pete McNally**

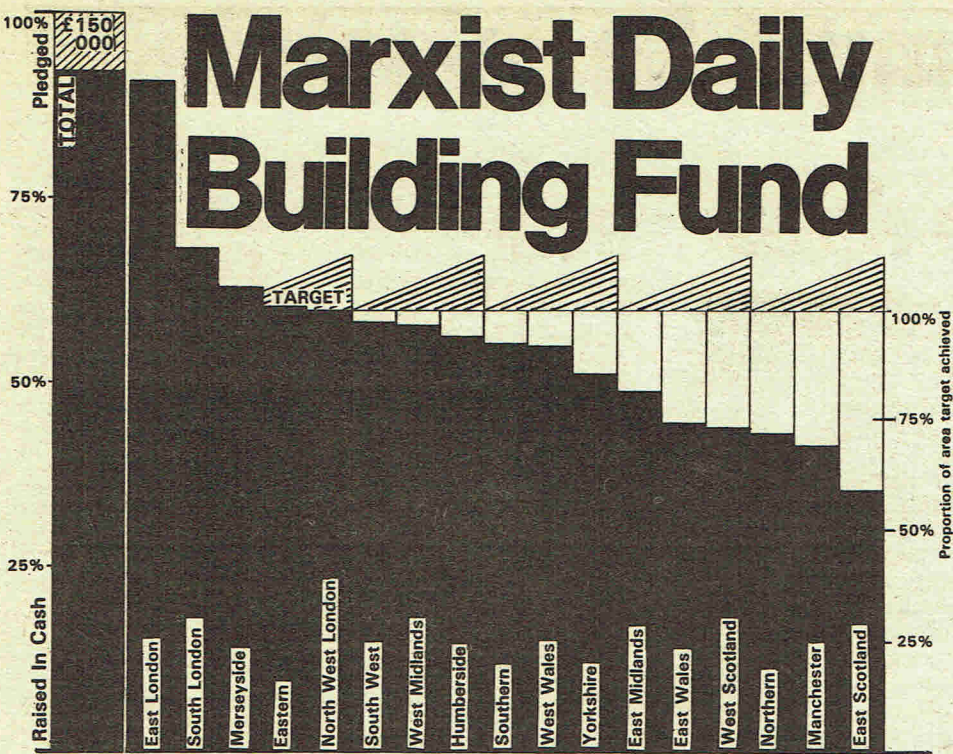
the mass movements that have taken place in Liverpool (see centre pages). How much broader do the CP want it?

Now the CP announce they will stand five candidates against Labour in the May elections. At a time when the ranks of the labour movement are rallying behind Liverpool, the CP attempt to split the crucial Labour vote.

Indeed, in Liverpool their literature has continually urged a 'broad alliance',

even including "sections of the Tory party"! The logic of their argument is that they wish to see a coalition council of the type favoured by Liverpool's enemies (see page 2).

With a 'revolutionary' leadership and policies like this it is no surprise that the CP are losing members. Many of their worker members will follow those who have already left and joined the Labour Party, some of them standing firmly behind *Militant*.



**EVEN AFTER** the massive amount received last week the money continues to pour in. This week we have been sent another £5,116 taking the total to a magnificent £137,385.

The money might have slowed down a little but we are still receiving £1,000 each day. Even when our supporters take a breather they still leave everybody else breathless at their dedication and commitment.

The chart is well on its way to the £150,000 target. The Sunday Times article (see front page) quoted this column last week that we are "certain to reach £200,000 later this year."

The leading areas have shown how this can be achieved. Although East London, South London and Merseyside have passed their targets they continue to send in £1,000s more. This success can undoubtedly be repeated in all the other areas.

The Sunday Times, along with opponents of Marxism in the labour movement cannot understand how we manage to raise so much money. The following letter from one supporter shows why ordinary workers donate to our Fund.

Dave Kearsley from Blackpool writes: "Enclosed you will find £50 for the Building Fund. I hope we raise the target soon so that we have a daily paper. As a night shift worker I miss out on all the meetings that used to keep me in the picture of what is happening in the country and abroad and depend on the Militant. But as you can only cram so much into sixteen pages, a Daily Militant will be a massive advance, but even more for me and comrades like me."

Rich Garrad and Karen Gowler, East London, have sent £150. Terry Liburd, Leicester, has sent in £100 to add to £50 already given. We have been sent £33 by a supporter in Australia and £10 by an Italian CP member showing our international appeal. Paul and Julie Smith, members of Coventry SE CLP have sold a home computer, a bicycle frame and a sewing machine to raise an £80 donation.

Uxbridge and Tyne Bridge LPYS branches have sent £5. This is the sort of support we can rely on. There is nothing sinister about this.

Workers, unemployed, students, pensioners—all are prepared to give to our Fund so that the fight for socialism will be waged more effectively. Build our Building Fund. Build Marxism.

By Nick Wrack

# ADS

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

**WANTED**—Room in shared flat or house near centre of London. Contact Mike, 67 Ness Rd, Burwell Cambridge. Phone Newmarket 741471.

**"The Workers Press—Lenin and Trotsky"**  
£1 including postage, bulk copies over 10 at 75p. Available from World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

**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: (0532) 493440.

**ACCOMODATION WANTED** for YS conference (approx 6 or more places), preferably self-catering. Phone: 01-515 1718 (evenings or weekends).

**Fridge wanted.** Contact 01-980-9855.

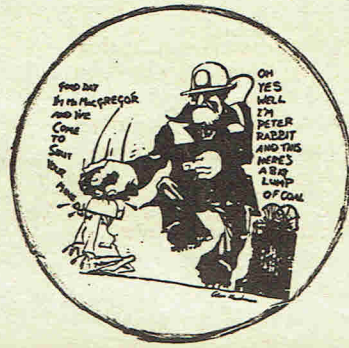
**NEW ISSUE of Struggle.** The new English edition of *Struggle* (Pakistani Marxist paper) includes analysis of the Pakistan People's Party, the anti-dictatorship movement in Sind, why Bhutto was hanged, heroin—a profitable seller, imperialism's grip on Pakistan, Kashmir, conditions of the movement in Pakistan and Asians in Britain.

Available from: Post Box 46, 136 Kingsland High Street, London E8. Price 50p each including postage and package. The *Struggle* Perspective books in Urdu "Socialist Revolution and Pakistan" is also available from the above address, price £1.50 plus 50p postage and package.

**POPULAR & BOW** 'Militant' supporters. Italian evening. Saturday 7th April 7.30pm. £1.00 (includes food) ticket. For more details contact local sellers.

**Militant Miner Badges**  
Two designs  
Save the Pits. Father and son cartoon.  
McGregor/Peter Rabbit cartoon  
20p each + SAE.  
50 badges £8.50 and £1 p+p.  
All proceeds to the Fighting Fund.

Cheques/P.O.'s payable to J G Douglas, 48 Beetwell Street, Chesterfield, Derbyshire.



## SPRING ISSUE—MILITANT INTERNATIONAL REVIEW—JUST OUT

Articles on: Andropov and after Lenin's last struggle 1983 Belgian General Strike

Buy it from your local Militant seller, 75p or order from World Socialist Books 90p (incl. p&pp), 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

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

**BLACKBURN:** Tuesday 17 April, 7.30 pm, Regency Hall, Northgate, Blackburn.  
Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, *Militant*), Terry Fields MP and Derek Hatton (Deputy Leader, Liverpool Council).

**HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING:** Marxist discussion group-held every Monday, 7.30pm. Programme for March and April includes: What is Marxism; Is Russia Socialist?; Parliamentary road to socialism—is it possible?; Role of the state; The Marxist view towards terrorism and violence. For further details ring (0783) 653994.

**BRADFORD Industrial Forum:** "What future for the trade union?" Fox and Goose, Canal Road, Bradford. (5 minutes walk from Forster Square). 7.30 pm Thursday April 5.  
**Militant Readers Meeting:** "Support the miners!" Labour movement and NUM speakers Room 1, Central Library, Bradford. 7.30 pm Wednesday 11 April.

**DERBY LPYS public meeting.** Tuesday April 10th. "Support the Miners": Speaker from the NUM. Venue: White Horse Pub opposite main Derby Bus Station, 7.30pm.

# FIGHTING FUND

This week: £2,413

Last week of quarter

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 7 April
Eastern	1298		2500
East Midlands	1122		2900
Humberside	644		1500
London East	1687		3250
London West	766		2050
London South	1439		2650
Manchester & Lancs	949		3520
Merseyside	1606		4000
Northern	1231		3350
Scotland East	870		2150
Scotland West	885		3000
Southern	2146		4300
South West	647		2000
Wales East	817		1880
Wales West	741		1650
West Midlands	1162		3500
Yorkshire	2186		4100
Others	1298		2000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>21493</b>		<b>50,000</b>

**THE USE** of rattling tins appears to be international. In America during the 1930s in the bitter and bloody battle with the bosses to get the Teamsters' union recognised the union brought out a strike daily.

"It was the first strike daily ever published by a union in the US. A weekly paper would have been utterly inadequate to deal with fast-moving events. The paper's circulation quickly leaped to 10,000 and it soon became self-financing.

"No price was set for single copies. People were simply asked to donate what they could. Sales people carried sealed cans with a slot in which to receive contributions. These cans were frequently stuffed with dollar bills and as much as five dollars was paid for a single paper." (From *The Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs)

W Lane, Bolsover CLP£25; Richard Norris, Woolwich £16; Chris Holmes, NOLS Cambridge £15; Rattling tins on town centre sale Bradford £11.50; a new supporter, Winchester £10; Linda Burke, Sheffield Central LPYS £10; Fred and Barbara Kidd, Tooting £6; Russell Taylor, Edinburgh AUEW convenor £4; Tonbridge LPYS £3.62; Terry Lee UCW, Hayes £2; and Tommy Nelson, Scott's striker, Liverpool 30p.

## Teamster rebellion

More recently and closer to home a couple of supporters raised £70 from rattling tins on a demonstration! In the words of one of our supporters, "Small change makes big changes". Help us make big changes in our campaign for our daily by sending us all your small change.

By Kim Waddington

# Prepare for May Day



On the May Day march in London.

Photo: Militant

**THE MAYDAY** holiday dates back to 1889. It was called by the Second International—then led by followers of Marx and Engels as part of the campaign for the eight-hour day. The call was answered by workers throughout the world who took strike action and organised marches.

This action was often taken in the face of repression from the state. In Germany, May Day marches were made illegal. In America, Turkey, South Africa and other countries marchers have been attack-

**MAY DAY GREETINGS:** get your labour movement organisation to place a greeting in the May Day issue of *Militant*:

3 column cms (up to 15 words) £8, one sixteenth page £13, one eighth page £25, one quarter page £50. Deadline for copy, April 18.

ed and killed for celebrating May Day.

The battle for the eight-hour day has been partly won but May Day is still the day for workers to demonstrate their solidarity with their brothers and sisters in struggle and to celebrate their own victories. Throughout Britain thousands of activists will march on May Day—keeping May Day as part of the socialist tradition of the movement—not just another Bank Holiday.

Another way of celebrating May Day in a

socialist manner is by greeting the movement in the *Militant*. That will help to raise vital finance needed for our new premises.

Most importantly, each greeting will show that the socialist traditions which gave birth to May Day are still alive and that support for *Militant* continues to grow throughout the labour movement.

By Dave Fryatt (Bethnal Green and Stepney LPYS)

## National Organisation of Labour Students annual conference

## Students face crisis



The National Union of Students demonstration in 1983. Numbers present on NUS demonstrations have been falling.

**THE CONFERENCE** of the National Organisation of Labour Students on 11-13 April comes at a critical time.

Following nearly five years of Tory rule during which 20,000 University places have been lost and the real value of the grant has fallen by over 13%, the Tories are preparing for a new round of attacks against education, students' conditions and their rights to organise in defence of those conditions.

The 'increase' in the grant for 1984/85 will be 4%—or 23p a day. By 'adjusting' the parental contribution scales and halving the minimum award to students to £205 the Tories are saving £20 million.

Loans are being introduced for postgraduate business studies and an MSC adult occupational training programme. This could be a trial run for abolishing grants and replacing them with loans for all students—an idea favoured by Thatcher and Education Secretary, Keith Joseph.

Students Unions protesting at cutbacks have had to face the law courts—students at Coleg Harlech were fined £500 and the Students Union at Sheffield University recently faced escalating fines of £10,000 a day if it continued its protest action against library cuts.

However while attacks on education are continuing, opportunities are developing for students to successfully defeat the Tories' plans. The miners' strike and the sup-

port of local workers for the strategy of the Liverpool City Council Labour Group show the growing determination of the labour movement, especially in the public sector, to fight back against the Tories. This offers an ideal opportunity for the student movement to link with the most active layers of the labour movement. Indeed students could play a useful role in ensuring victory for the miners, as they did in the early 1970's when Student Union facilities were used to accommodate 'flying pickets'.

### Build links

Building these links are vital if students are to be successful in defending education both locally and nationally. In Liverpool one FE College with the Student Union led by *Militant* supporters, won extra nursery places and an increase in the meal allowance through getting the support of the College workers and other local authority workers.

But unfortunately the cur-

rent majority on the NOLS National Committee, who lead the National Union of Students, have not adopted that approach. At the March NC they even abstained on a simple motion to "build support amongst students for the miners' fight!" Instead they argue that defending education is a "battle of ideas" to convince enough MP's to vote against the government's proposals.

Neil Stewart, NOLS President of NUS, has argued that winning a decent grant means using students' "endless reserves of enthusiasm and ideas...the skill and power that we have—the power of our ideas and of numbers".

No clear and consistent appeal has been made to students to join with and aid all the battles of the labour movement. During the General Election the election slogans of the NUS with its Labour leadership were non-political: 'This Time Vote For Education', 'For a Government That Uses its Brains' and 'Great Oaks From Little Oaks From Little Biological Science Departments Grow! How could an appeal to all parties to 'think about education' convince students of the crisis facing education and the need to vote Labour? Unfortunately the 'battle of ideas' approach of the

NOLS leaders has whittled away the "endless reserves of enthusiasm" of students. Unlike the Grand Old Duke of York, students don't like marching to no effect. And despite five major NUS demonstrations and four national 'Days of Action' since November 1981 the Tories' cuts have gone through. Consequently the 10,000 turnout of students on March 10 was the smallest NUS demonstration for two and a half years.

### Stop the Tories

Students, like any other section of the labour movement, are not a tap that can be simply turned on or off. Instead those links must be built with the labour movement in a well thought out campaign.

The labour movement is the only force that has the power to stop the Tories. 'Ideas', no matter how correct they may be, are lost on Thatcher, Joseph and co. The only thing they understand is industrial clout.

By Kath McDonnell  
(NOLS National Committee)

## Campaign Group back NOLS protest

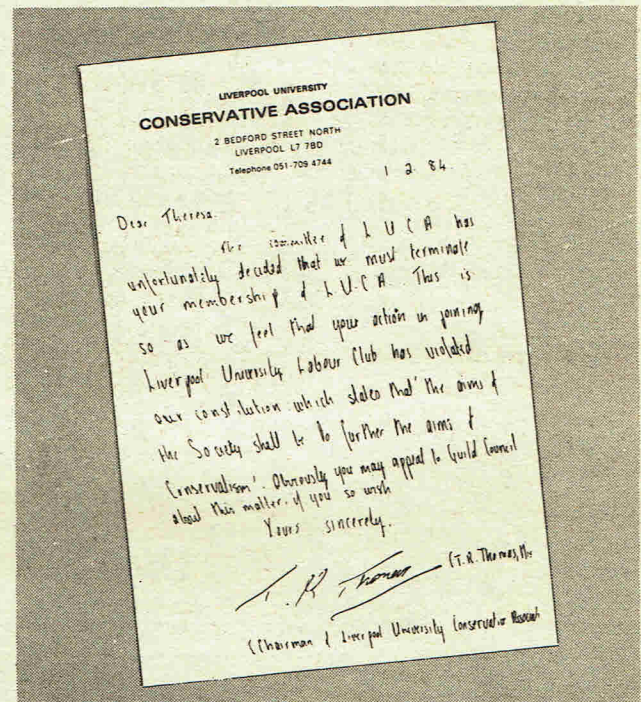
THE CAMPAIGN Group of Labour MPs have joined the protests against undemocratic measures in NOLS (see *Militant* 691). They have signed a petition which reads:

"We the undersigned members of the Campaign Group of Labour MPs are concerned at the refusal of the Labour Party Student Organiser to implement an emergency resolution passed unanimously at last year's conference of the National Organisation of Labour Students.

"This resolution demanded that all correspondence and Labour Club cards sent

to the Student Organiser be opened to inspection by any member of the NOLS NC. We request that this resolution be implemented immediately in order that this year's NOLS conference may proceed in a democratic manner."

Signed by: Dave Nellist, Ernie Roberts, Willie McKelvey, Bob Litherland, Margaret Beckett, Jo Richardson, Clare Short, Dennis Skinner, Max Madden, Jeremy Corbyn, Bob Clay, Joan Maynard, Tony Benn, Martin Flannery, Dennis Canavan, Ron Brown, Jerry Birmingham, Terry Fields.



Above, a letter written by Liverpool University Tories expelling Theresa White for joining the Labour Club while still being in the FCS. White was signed up by 'Clause 4' supporters at Liverpool University to vote against the *Militant* two days before the Labour Club AGM! At least the Tories took a principled stand.

## Right wing welcome 'soft left'

**SO WHY IS** it the NOLS leaders, the so-called 'Clause 4'/'Democratic Left' group have drawn back from leading a struggle to link students with the most active sections of the labour movement?

One reason stems from their relationship with the "soft left" in the Labour leadership. In this sense the NOLS leaders have built links with the labour movement—with right wing and "soft left" trade union and Labour leaders. One of Neil Kinnock's personal advisors is Charles Clarke, a former NOLS member and President of NUS; one of his 'Campaign Team' was Nigel Stanley, secretary of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee and a former NOLS chairperson. A NOLS member of the NUS Executive, Stephen Morgan, who it was reported to the Welsh Labour Students Conference *actually voted Tory* at the March 1983 NUS

conference, is an advisor to labour's front bench on Youth Affairs.

It is no coincidence that the NOLS leaders voted for Kinnock against Heffer for leader, were split between Meacher and Hattersley for deputy and voted against Joan Maynard for the NEC.

### NGA refusal

This has shaped the approach of the NOLS leaders to the opportunities that have arisen over the past year to link the student movement with the struggles of the labour movement. During the NGA dispute they refused to discuss our proposals to give practical help to the NGA and to put pressure on the Labour leaders to end any equivocation about defying the Tories' anti-union laws. Instead they condemned "the violence...around the *Stockport Messenger* premises" and called for government mediation and negotiation to settle the dispute.

They rejected our proposals that NUS should approach the 'Broad Left' in the college workers' unions to aid their work for a fighting leadership of the trade unions. They rejected a modest donation of £500, out of an NUS budget of £1.4 million, to the Broad Left Organising Committee.

And recently they added their voice to that of the Labour leaders in opposing the stand of Liverpool Council Labour Group. No wonder Denis Healey's Political Advisor, Richard Heller, greeted the decision of last year's Labour Party executive Youth Committee to cut the LPYS budget and give more money to NOLS as a "welcome improvement"!

The student movement has the potential to be a significant ally of the organised working class and, in turn, to earn the support of the labour movement for the defence of education.

The 750 student unions affiliated to NUS between

them receive a budget of £24 million. As well as accommodation many large student unions have their own office, canteen and printing facilities which could be used to aid workers involved in action. The failure of the NOLS leaders to realise this potential may be "welcome" to the right wing but not to students who face mounting problems under the Tories.

Despite two years of a NOLS leadership of NUS

### Vote drop

the Tories' attacks have continued apace. Not surprisingly, at the December 1983 NUS conference, the NOLS candidates first preference

vote in the executive by-election was the lowest figure in a comparable election since NOLS won the leadership of NUS.

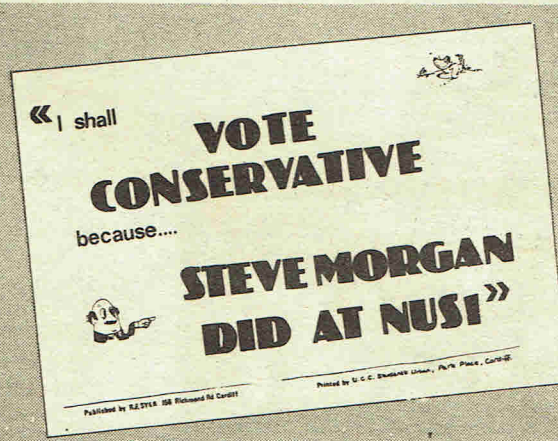
A growing opposition to the policies of the NOLS leaders has developed within NOLS. The NOLS leaders have responded by bureaucratic measures and, at times, completely unconstitutional actions to stifle opposition. They are even proposing, in the new Standing Orders for the NOLS conference, that only the unelected Labour Party Student Organiser can decide on a count after a show of hands!

Two NOLS NC members and one NOLS member of

the NUS Executive have resigned during the past year, a sign of demoralisation with the situation in NOLS.

But individual changes in the leadership are not enough. The task of the NOLS conference must be to elect a new socialist leadership determined to end the undemocratic practices of the past and lead a consistent fight against the Tories.

By David Jones  
(Welsh Labour Students,  
NOLS NC rep)



Above, a poster produced by the Federation of Conservative Students revelling in the fact that NOLS member of the NUS executive, Stephen Morgan, voted for a Tory candidate at the NUS 1983 conference. What sort of 'leadership' is that? Stephen Morgan is also, incredibly, an advisor to Labour's front bench on youth affairs!

# The early rise and decline of CND

**THIRTEEN YEARS** had to pass after the dropping of the first atomic bomb before CND was launched.

When the US destroyed Hiroshima in 1945 many in the war-weary West just welcomed the sudden end of hostilities.

An opinion poll in Britain showed only 21% were against the atom bombing of Japan.

Awareness of the potential destructive power was slow to materialise. It was not until 1950 that the British peace campaign gained one million signatures for the Stockholm Peace Appeal, but this was widely disregarded as it was linked with the World Peace Conference, generally seen as a Communist front.

1952 saw the first Aldermaston march—attended by just 30 people. October that year saw the first British 'A' bomb and the US test the far more deadlier hydrogen bomb. The latter's load was equivalent to 10 million tons more than all the bombs dropped in the second world war.

## Fear of arms race

The following year the Russians exploded their own 'H' bomb and the nuclear arms race boomed. The possible effects of these bombs were shown at the Bikini Atoll test in 1954 when a Japanese boat 85

miles away, suffered the death of a crew man.

The first major campaign by the labour movement was the National 'H' Bomb Campaign in 1954 which had the support of six MPs and was able to gain a million signatures. Despite a conference of 300 representatives the only call was for top level disarmament and a strengthening of the United Nations. This was when the super powers were pouring millions into nuclear weapons. And the UN, like the League of Nations before it, was proving incapable of stopping wars.

## Moral pressure no answer

Even more amazingly, when Britain announced its 'H' bomb capability the Labour opposition agreed to support the weapon pending world disarmament. Only 70 MPs abstained.

The 'H' Bomb Campaign mobilised 4,000 people in 1957, alongside the formation of the National Committee for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons Tests, forerunner of CND. The 'H' bomb campaign collapsed when an anti-nuclear resolution failed at the Labour Party annual conference.

Rising international tensions and military expedi-

tions such as Suez, created an awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons. In 1958 four sites in East Anglia were earmarked for the new Thor missiles which had a range of 1,500 miles. Opposition to it mirrored that against Cruise missiles in the 1980s.

In 1958 CND was launched at a meeting in Central Hall, London attended by 5,000 people. The leaders were such worthies as JB Priestley, AJP Taylor, Bertrand Russell and Aldous Huxley. Paradoxically, one of the founders was Canon Collins, a former chaplain of RAF Bomber Command in World War II. The aims of the campaign were moralistic in tone and hadn't the slightest aspect of a class approach.

They called on the British government to:

- 1) Renounce unconditionally the use or production of nuclear weapons, and refuse to allow their use by others in her defence.
- 2) Use her utmost endeavour to bring about negotiations at all levels for agreements to end the armaments race and leading to a general disarmament convention.
- 3) Invite the co-operation of other nations, particularly the non-nuclear powers, in the renunciation of nuclear weapons.

The first Aldermaston march in 1958 after the

IN THE second of a three-part analysis of Britain's peace movement, 1914-84, DAVE FARRAR looks at the rise and decline of CND in the 1950s and '60s.

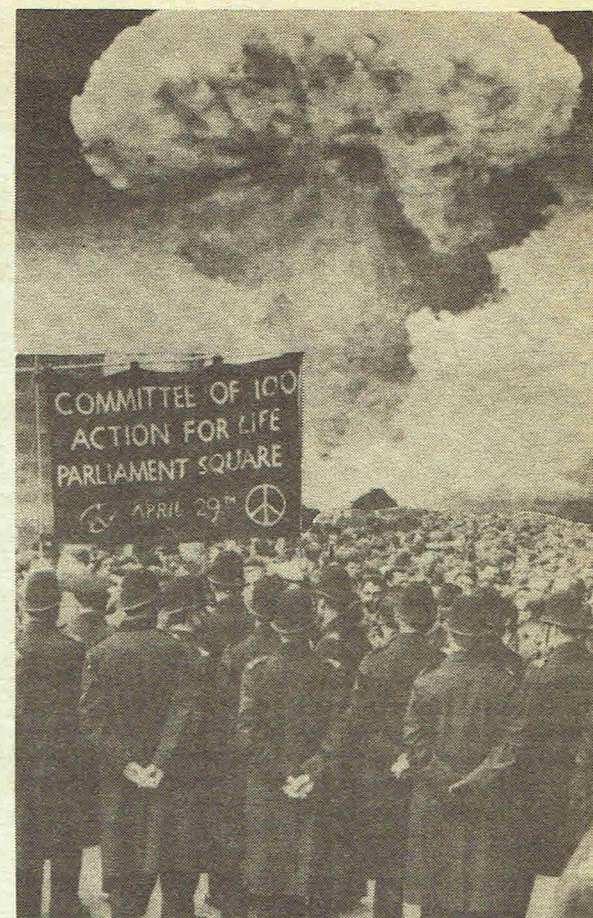
foundation of CND saw 5,000 people march but CND distanced themselves from it saying that they gave their blessing but should make it clear that they could not become closely involved. The following year saw 20,000 join the march. A major component of the anti-bomb campaigns was the Direct Action Committee from whose action CND disassociated itself from.

## Non political stance

The leaders of CND preferred to campaign against nuclear tests and placed a lot of emphasis on the hope of a Labour government, without seriously campaigning inside the party. Publicly they espoused a non-political stance.

In 1960 a nuclear disarmament resolution was passed. It took a massive campaign by the right wing led by Gaitskell and Bill Rogers to overturn the decision the following year. Such was the pressure amongst the ranks of the working class that the GMWU, then staunchly right wing, passed a unilateral resolution only for the conference to be recalled by the leadership and the decision reversed.

At the height of its strength in 1962 the Aldermaston March saw 15,000 march; the position of CND



Photomontage by John Viner.

being greatly strengthened by fears over Berlin and America's sabre-rattling against Cuba.

## Class action needed

The defeat of the campaign at LP and TJJ conferences saw CND reach a cross-road. Either CND was to take a class position and fight within the labour movement for its ideas or it would fritter away its strength on fruitless marches like the Grand Old Duke of York.

Frustration with CND's approach saw splits with the formation of the Committee of 100 who favoured more radical action than the CND leaders.

But the radical, direct-action people had no clear alternative either. Many of them saw direct-action as an exciting substitute for the slog of building up mass class action.

CND went into decline due to its failure to take a class orientation. The election of the 1964 Labour government proved a disappointment for many, as right wing leaders kept Britain's 'independent' Polaris nuclear force. The forces of CND were worn-out and with the passing of the partial test ban treaty in 1963 the issues of nuclear disarmament took a back-seat in the middle and late 1960s to such campaigns as opposition to the Vietnam war.

## Save Our Health Service



**ONLY INDUSTRIAL action can save the NHS. That was the view of 250 health workers and members of the public after a recent meeting of the Bradford Area Health Authority.**

Earlier in the day they and called a two-hour strike so that porters and domestic staff could attend the authority's meeting and ensure that there was a proper discussion on privatisation of local NHS services and the closure of Thornton View hospital.

The Chairman, one Royston Moore, totally ignored their views.

He refused to allow any discussion on those issues. He stated that the decision on privatisation had already been made and that Thornton View Hospital was now in the hands of Norman Fowler.

## Industrial action

But Maggie Pearson, a member of the authority, pointed out that the discussion on privatisation, which affected one thousand hospital staff, had been rushed through in thirty minutes flat. She proposed that it now be properly

discussed whilst the people whose jobs were threatened were present.

This motion was seconded by a member of the public so the Chairman ruled it out of order. Then an elected spokesman from the public asked the meeting to defend the NHS and the jobs of NHS staff.

This was too much for the Chairman and he promptly suspended the meeting. By now people were angry that their views were being totally and arrogantly ignored; they refused to let the management leave.

The Chairman appealed to stewards to remove the human bar-

ricade, but to no avail. So the police were called in to take the management out.

After they had gone Max Madden MP chaired a meeting of health staff and members of the public. "We must fight for our NHS" were Max Madden's closing words and the meeting decided that with the kind of management democracy they had witnessed, the only alternative was industrial action to safeguard the NHS.

By Martin Devaney  
(Odsall Labour Party, Bradford)

## LEFT and RIGHT

### There'll be a welcome in the hillside

If you are thinking of having a holiday on the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond this year, you may have to consider packing a bullet-proof vest in your rucksack. There are some land-owners who will not be welcoming you.

An inquiry is taking place on plans to make this beautiful area more accessible for recreation and tourism. For two farmers' spokesmen this spelt danger. They were not worried about the "genuine hillwalker, ornithologist and people of that ilk", but expressed concern about "city dwellers" who expected "urban-type amenities" in the countryside.

What these landowners are concerned about was made clear by the Marquess of Graham who was horrified that the plan would increase "informal recreation", such as rambling to the detriment of individuals who enjoy fishing and game shooting. "An increased emphasis on 'informal recreation' is bound to detract from this aspect of its present

use and reduces its financial value."

The Marquess further warned that an influx of visitors during the deer-culling season would mean a real danger of people getting shot!

So, "city-dwellers", if you don't want to be mistaken for a stag as you wander through what you misguidedly thought was your natural heritage, you had better stay in your ghettos. There's too much money to be made, to allow folk like you into the bonnie braes of Loch Lomond.

### Hello John, got a Militant motor?

"...people speak to each other with their cars. If you see a bloke in a Volvo wearing a deerstalker and a labrador in the back, chances are he's not going to be a member of the Militant tendency."

Alexei Sayle, *Melody Maker*, 24 March.

### A home of their own

Who says our aristocrats don't have a proper sense of priorities? The Earl of Pembroke has just spent £6,000 on restoring a house for his children. The value of this new property is now worth £50,000. But it won't be having any impact on the problem of homelessness, for the property in question is a doll's house for the Earl's daughters.

(Thanks this week for Left and Right to Dave Cumberland, Dave Thompson and Steve Davies)

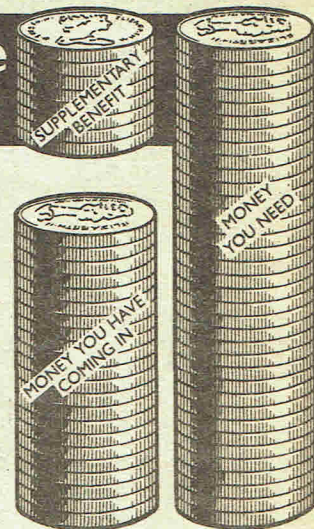
## need more money?

If the money you have coming in is less than you need to live on, you may be able to get supplementary benefit. Claim even if you seem to have a little more than you need.

Supplementary benefit is the difference between what you need and the money you have coming in.

You can get it even if

- you have savings of up to £3,000
- you own your own home
- you have not paid national insurance contributions.



### Spot the difference

Even the government's own propaganda doesn't think that the money you get from supplementary benefit will provide you with the money you need to live on. For in the above piles of coins there is a 16% gap between the money you need and the money you have coming in even after supplementary benefit is added.

# Publicity wins support for young miners

DOZENS OF young miners in North Yorkshire area have taken copies of *Young Miner* to help argue their case. This pamphlet, produced by NUM members with the backing of the Labour Party Young Socialists, is already being sold inside ten individual NUM lodges.

No less than four *Young Miner* meetings have been organised in the Wakefield and Pontefract areas. The latest of these meetings was addressed by Nick Toms of the LPYS and David Miller, secretary of Kellingley NUM.

Young miners from seven local pits came to the meeting where David described the morale amongst miners being at its highest ever. At Kellingley alone 896 miners registered for flying picket duty at the start of the dispute. That figure is now past the 1,000 mark.

## Train drivers' support

At the meeting young miners expressed their eagerness to picket outside industries. Nigel Pearson of Denby Grange NUM, called for an immediate turn to the

power stations to bring the issues to a head. To loud applause David Miller was able to inform the meeting that ASLEF members had been sent into the Kellingley social club (strike HQ for the whole of North Yorkshire) and said that train drivers would respect any NUM picket line at power stations.

The hallmark of the *Young Miner* meetings has been the explosive nature of the discussions. An audience that has just been through shifts of 24-hour flying picketing is guaranteed to discuss issues in a lively manner.

At one meeting Mick Conway of Acton Hall NUM explained how he and a car full of his friends made it through to the Ollerton Colliery to picket. It was the first day of the massive police clamp-down and their's was the only car to get through.

Surrounded by 400 policemen the four lads asked the inspector if they thought 400 coppers would be able to cope!

It is these experiences and the knowledge that they do not stand alone that has brought young NUM



members together around the *Young Miner*. Their fight has to be taken up by all sections of the labour movement. Mad MacGregor has already closed down steel plants. Now he's using his own butchery of the steel industry to claim that there are no markets for the coal from collieries like Cortonwood. Under the Tories rail jobs will be the next to go.

As David Miller said in his summing up: "There is no final battle for working people, but this battle was one of open class war and one that we have to win. Young Socialists and young miners have the most to fight for as their whole future is tied up in saving jobs and fighting for socialism."

## Pamphlet sold far and wide

Rising to this appeal NUM members from as yet uncontacted pits came up to take bundles of *Young Miner* to sell as far away as the Ricall

Young miners on Labour Party demonstration in Cardiff, 1981. The threat to jobs had already begun. Photo: Militant

Colliery in the Selby coalfield. The pamphlet, which includes articles from branch secretaries, Area Council members, young miners and a letter of best wishes from Arthur Scargill's office, has even been known to change hands on the picket lines in Nottinghamshire and Lancashire.

With the pamphlet already into its third reprint (700 distributed in the North Yorkshire coalfield) we are now urgently turning to the issue of raising funds. Workers who give their cash today are more likely to take solidarity action tomorrow.

## Get your copy of



Send to Adrian O'Mally, Secretary, Wakefield LPYS. Articles or comments, write to Richard Clarkson, Editor of *Young Miner*, Prince of Wales NUM.

Both c/o Wakefield Labour Club, Vicarage Street, Wakefield, Yorkshire.

(£1.20—includes postage for 10 copies)

Name .....

Address .....

No required .....

## Why we're going to LPYS Conference

**ANDY CLACHERS (Scottish Regional Committee LPYS) spoke to Joe Owens, NUM Youth Delegate, Polkemmet and Alex Shanks, SCEBTA Youth Delegate, Monktonhall, both in a personal capacity.**

### What is the effect of the government's policies in your own areas?

**JOE:** There have been no electrical or engineering apprentices taken on in Scotland since 1980, and in Polkemmet, I was in the last batch of mining trainees which were taken on—that was years ago! There have been no younger men taken on, which along with the fact that there have been early retirements and redundancies, shows the deliberate short-sighted policies of the NCB and their lack of any long-term planning.

If Polkemmet was closed it would mean 1,200 men straight onto the dole queues, because as a result of previous pit closures there are no vacancies in any other mines. West Lothian already has an unemployment rate of over 20%, and with the threat of closure hanging over British Leyland, that would spell disaster for the area.

**ALEX:** To give a comparison, during the 1972 strike there were 72 apprentices at Monktonhall, now however there are only six, another example of the NCB failing to plan for the future.

If Monktonhall were to close then Bruntain's Wire Works, another major employer in the area would also close as it relies on the pit for much of its work. Unemployment in Mussleburgh would then be pushed up, well over 20%.

### What is the feeling amongst the younger miners?

**JOE:** To begin with, the younger miners were divided about whether or not strike action should be taken. This was because they feared that the Scottish Area might be isolated. Now, however, I believe that the situation has changed, everyone realises what the issues are, they know that they are fighting for their future, and everyone is determined to fight.

**ALEX:** There is great bitterness and hatred towards MacGregor and the government. However after the eight-week strike at Monktonhall a lot of the younger men were sceptical about whether or not industrial action would be backed up with good leadership.

However, hardly anyone has crossed the picket line and as an example of the strength of the action, there are now only three men on the picket line where to begin with there were about 150. The youth are fully in support of the strike action with everyone realising that MacGregor is out to destroy our future. We are now determined to take a stand.

### Why did you join the LPYS?

**JOE:** I was unemployed for over a year before I got a job in Polkemmet, my sister also has been unemployed for over a year and despite many attempts she has little hope of finding a job.

Everywhere you look the effects of the government's policies are plain to see, the unemployment, the poverty, the hopelessness. I want to change this rotten system that inflicts these things on people. I joined the YS because I believe that they have the ideas to do so.

**ALEX:** I joined the YS during the Monktonhall dispute after attending two YS public meetings. It was the YS who were to the fore in organising events and raising money during that dispute.

I believe also, that as well as fighting for jobs and better conditions on the industrial front, young miners should be waging a fight, through the YS, on the political front to get rid of this boss's system.

### Why are you going to this year's national LPYS conference?

**JOE:** I see this as an opportunity to explain the issues which are involved in the miners' dispute, as well as being a chance to meet and hear the experiences of hundreds of other young people—whether they are working, unemployed on YTS or still at school.

I've only been in the YS a few months and this event, through the discussions, and the debates, will enable me to learn more about the ideas

of the YS.

**ALEX:** I want to use this event as an ideal chance to discuss the ideas of socialism and we're going to fightback against the Tories. Also with over 2,500 young people being brought together it promises to be a tremendous event.

Finally, we would both like to appeal to all young miners to get involved in the YS, to attend this conference and to fight to get rid of the Tories and their system which is attempting to decimate our industry.



Labour Party Young Socialists Conference '84

## 22nd annual national conference

at Spa Royal Hall, Bridlington Easter weekend, April 20-23.

Debates include YTS, drug abuse, unemployment, racism and nuclear disarmament. Speakers include: Tom Sawyer (NUPE Asst. Gen. Sec.), Dave Nellist MP, and top labour movement figures. Entertainment includes discos, live band, plays and the feature film *Reds*. Visitors tickets: £6

Details from LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT

## Fight MacGregor and Tories

OVER SEVENTY people attended a public meeting called by Aberavon LPYS at Blaengwynfi, Wales, in support of the NUM and the local community's fight against education cuts.

Speaker Ian Isaac, of the South Wales NUM Executive, explained that the miners' fight wasn't just against MacGregor and the National Coal Board but against the Tories too.

### Young people's interests

Richard Morgan, Wales LPYS chairman, stated that the miners were fighting particularly in the interests of young people which is why the LPYS were standing on picket lines in solidarity. He also urged support for Liverpool and talked of the need for young people to get organised in the labour movement.

Prior to the meeting over 50 *Militants* were sold and work such as this has laid the basis for setting up an Afan Valley LPYS branch.

By Wayne Lee (Aberavon LPYS)



Speakers at the Town Hall.

Photo: Viv Seal

## From the balcony

*"The Daily Express' Headline is that 'Maggie lets market go broke' to get a 'better deal for Britain'. Well if it's OK for Maggie to let Market go broke, it's OK for us here in Liverpool too."*—Eric Heffer MP.

*"The coal miners are in the same position as Liverpool council and in both cases if we stay united, we can't be defeated."*—Frank Slater, Yorkshire NUM.

*"In 1921 in Poplar, 30 councillors were jailed for standing up for local workers. Like Liverpool it was a high unemployment docks area. Like some present day Labour leaders, Herbert Morrison then told Poplar to stay inside the law. I urge you to join the LPYS and the Labour Party."*—Terry Fields MP.

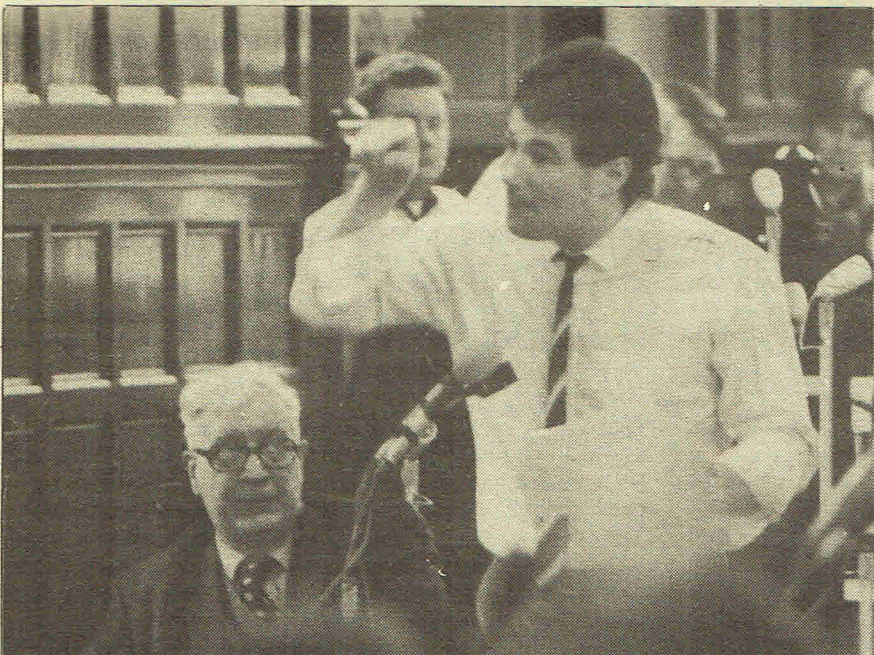
*"Council workers helped return this socialist council. We're now fighting to save all jobs, and we've got the most magnificent demo ever in this city."*—Bill Jones, chairperson, Joint Shop Stewards Committee.



Crowd outside the Town Hall with marchers still arriving

# The day Liverpool said

Photo: J Smith (IFL)



Derek Hatton speaking at the council.

Liverpool last week saw one of the largest city-wide general strikes in Britain's history. The march and the rally at the Town Hall on 29 March were a crushing demonstration of the power and organisation of the Merseyside working class, and the depth of support for the stand taken by Liverpool's Labour Council against Tory cuts.

40-50,000 workers and young people packed the city centre. Castle Street, facing the Town Hall, was jam-packed with demonstrators shouting support for the councillors inside.

Roars of approval followed socialist speeches from the Town Hall balcony. The crowd sang in football style: "Labour Council, Labour Council, we support you evermore". Postmen, firemen, water workers, printers, car workers, builders, seamen, dockers, hospital staff, civil servants, office workers, miners, ferrymen, shop workers, railwaymen, transport workers, ship-builders; these and many other sections joined the masses of council

both manual and office staff, thousands of unemployed and the numbers.

And many thousands more, but for the transport difficulties of the busmen in all Couplands were seen walking to Dovecot estate about six miles chairs.

Contrary to the lies of the Tories, the demonstrators were well disciplined and absolutely peaceful and unnecessary presence of riot police or

The roars from the crowd in the public gallery inside the council show of solidarity with the Labour six labour councillors who by their mandate were smuggled much for their claim of 'pop

The Labour movement of the struggle or starve'. That fundamental working class today. The 29 March the day when no-one could be Merseyside's workers have taken (See article on Liverpool

## Reports and Pictures: Paul Traynor and Roger Shrivves.



*"This council is the first to actually stand up for peoples' rights. For the first time in years I can actually say that I'm proud to come from Liverpool."*—Carralyn Guy, Bootle (above).

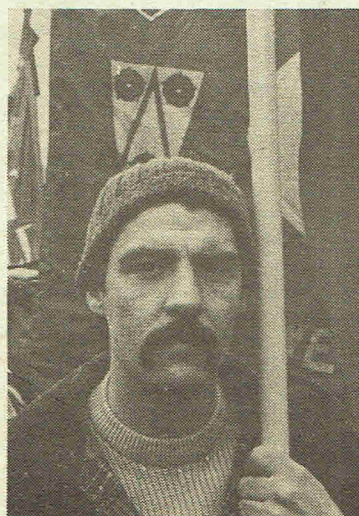
*"We've brought our kids along because it's their future we're fighting for. I think Kinnock should have been here today, showing his support."*—Jackie McCoy, Kensington LP.

*"We support the Labour council for trying to keep to their promises. That's why we're here today. We're from Lucas Aerospace and though that's outside the Liverpool boundary, most of us live here and all our families are here."*—Steve Parkinson, AUEW Lucas Aerospace (with banner).

*"This city is being battered by just about everything, from children right up to old age pensioners. The place is falling to pieces. The Tories are doing nothing for housing, they're doing nothing for the unemployed. We're here for some sort of future."*

Kevin Walsh, Kirby unemployed centre (right).

*"You've got to support the council, especially the corpie workers. With all the cutbacks and everything, loads of people stand to lose their jobs. We're just saying 'enough is enough'. We expect this government to have the attitude of 'if we don't like it we'll ban it.' That's the Tory way."*—Les Giblin, Billy Edwards, local authority building workers.



Building site meeting votes to come out on morning of strike.

ON THE morning of the city-wide strike, councillor Paul Astbury and Andy Pink of the local authority JSSC came to our building site. Out of the workforce of about eighty men, there were only a few activists so we discussed what to do.

We decided to call a meeting at the morning tea break, and ask the men to hear Cllr Astbury. We went over the site explaining what was going on.

Cllr Astbury explained the issues to the men in the packed canteen. He told us that

without Labour there would be no housing programme, and that our site would probably be sold off and revert to batch building and a much smaller workforce.

The men decided to down tools at mid-day. The show of support on the site was tremendous, and we did exactly what we should have done—come out and support the council.

By Eddie Ward  
(UCATT shop steward,  
Windermere Green Site,  
Toxteth)



# Right wing alliance defeated in council

**THE COUNCIL meeting ended in a tactical victory for Labour. The Tories, Liberals and right-wing failed to impose a cuts Budget.**

How this came about it is best to recall the film *The Sting*. For in the final quarter of an hour of an eight-hour council meeting the Labour Group totally out-manoeuvred the con-men of the Liberal and Tory parties and defeated the right wing Labour renegades who had tried to destroy Labour's fighting budget.

It was upon these Labour traitors that the two bosses' parties, the Liberals and the Tories, had rested their hopes. Both Liberal and Tory budget proposals had been defeated when the six, called the "super six" by one so unbiased TV reporter, proposed that the meeting adjourn for two weeks to allow a deal to be cobbled up by themselves, the Liberals and the Tories.

## Proposal to adjourn passed

When this was passed by the Liberals, Tories and the six voting together against the Labour Party the smugness on the victors' faces was a joy to behold. Now they controlled the council again.

But then Labour proposed, as an emergency measure, that a small all-Labour committee be established to allow essential services to be funded up to the 11 April meeting. The Liberals and the Tories got indignant. Didn't Labour realise that they were the masters now and it should be an all-party committee?

Even the six right wingers found that arrogance hard to swallow. And when it came to the vote they voted with the Labour Party so the proposal for an all-Labour Emergency Committee was carried.

But now the main motion consisted of two parts: one for a recalled council meeting on 11 April, and one for an interim all-Labour Emergency Committee until then. The Tories and Labour's right wing decided to vote in favour.

The Liberals thought they would be clever. They expected Labour to vote in favour, so they decided to vote against and then the Liberals could go to the May elections and speak about a Labour-Tory coalition and how they were the only true "radicals".

But, in a real 'Mersey Sting', the Liberal con-artists were caught out. For Labour abstained.

That meant the 30 Liberal votes defeated the 24 combined votes of the Tories and Labour's right wing. So the whole motion was lost. There would now be no recalled council meeting on 11 April.

And just to rub salt in the Liberal wounds, Labour Leader John Hamilton announced to jubilant scenes on the Labour and public gallery benches, that by voting against, the Liberals had made themselves liable to surcharges. The final decision on the budget and the way forward for Liverpool would now be decided by the outcome of the May elections.

To chants of "Here we go"

and cries of "how about a whip round for the Liberals", the Labour councillors and members of the public triumphantly left the meeting. Outside Derek Hatton told people patiently waiting to hear the decision:

## Hatton reports victory

"We have defeated every attempt by the Liberals and the Tories to cut jobs and services because of the support you and others like you gave. We are pleased that the people of Liverpool will not face a surcharge. In May we will put our position to the people and if we win we will bring back our budget."

With victory signs and cheers all round people moved off for an evening of celebration.

It had been a similar emotional scene eight and a half hours before when the council debate began. The roars from the thousands outside could be heard inside the chamber as Labour Leader John Hamilton got up to introduce Labour's budget. He explained that the budget had been deemed illegal.

But "what is illegality? Since when in the country has it become illegal to help the poor and unemployed? In Tory Britain it has now become a sin to provide a house for the homeless. It is wrong to help the aged and sick. To spend money on education is a crime.

"... A minister, quite arbitrarily, with his own distortion of the figures, can make overnight a criminal of the law-abiding citizen who has served a lifetime of public service for his city and its citizens. Today I, a law-abiding citizen, because of my zeal to achieve these worthy aims, find myself beyond the law and among the law-breakers".

John Hamilton sat down to a standing ovation from the Labour Group and the public gallery. He was followed by Finance Chairperson Tony Byrne who detailed the financial crisis facing the city.

## Labour budget spelled out

He explained that even Tory Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin had stated in discussions with the council that he could see no way that the council could budget for less than £245 m in the coming year. Yet the same Tory government had decided that Liverpool could only spend £216 m and anything over that would be penalised.

With impressive mastery of financial statistics, Byrne detailed the reasons why there was no alternative to Labour's budget which would save jobs, services and mean no massive rate rises. The Liberal budget for last year had been fundamentally dishonest. It would have meant cuts in services, in education and housing. Labour taking control had meant the immediate saving of 1,000 jobs and the creation of a thousand more.

It was then the turn of the Liberals to move their amendment. They appealed to the Tory government for support. You must not threaten the Thatcher government Liberal leader Sir Trevor Jones lectured the Labour Group.

They appealed to Labour's right wing. But those flights of rhetoric rebounded on them. For when Liberal spokesman Paul Clark said that the Labour council was untypical and "the

Labour Party we see here in Liverpool is the Labour Party nationally in ten years time" there was a prolonged outburst of applause from the public gallery.

The Liberals proposed a 30% rate rise, an increase in rents for those on supplementary benefit, cuts in the building programme and a non-filling of vacancies. "Natural wastage" they called it.

"There's nothing natural about it," was the reply from Labour's Pauline Dunlop. The Liberal amendment would threaten 5,000 jobs and cut services. In a rousing speech she pointed out:

"It is not us that creates chaos, but capitalism. There are people dying unnecessarily whilst firms, such as GEC, announce record profits and lay off a thousand workers. We want an alternative—a planned society where people can fully develop.

"Listen to the people inside and outside the council chamber, they are saying no to a policy of despair."

On rising to reply to the Liberals, Labour's Deputy Leader, Derek Hatton was greeted by cheers from the public gallery, and applause punctuated his speech. He pointed out that Labour's determined campaign was having its effect even among the Liberals. In the next ward to Liberal Paul Clarke, the Liberal candidate had just resigned and was applying to join the Labour Party.

## Liberal amendment defeated

The Liberal amendment would devastate a city already in an appalling plight. On the TV *Brass Tacks* programme recently they has shown a man from Netherley who when he went to the Social Security to ask for money for a car to take his daughter's body to the funeral was told to take the coffin on his knee in the care he was travelling in.

The choice for the people of Liverpool was clear. Either to back Labour's budget or go back to the Dark Ages of Liberal-Tory Alliance. The Council was only asking for £30m from the government's contingency funds. In the recent budget, the Tories had given £35m to the 650,000 already earning over £15,000 a year.

After the Liberal amendment was thrown out, it was the Tories' turn. But their arguments were even more pathetic than the Liberals. They had no alternative proposals. All they wanted was a postponement of the meeting so they could fix up a deal with the Liberals.

Their level of politics could be judged by Tory leader, Chris Hallows' racist comment that Neil Kinnock had no backbone, "because he had a nigger in the wood pile, Tony Benn". Twice he was asked to withdraw this remark. Twice he refused. Another Tory joked that when Hitler smashed up the unions, it was the best thing he ever did.

The Tories amendment was overwhelmingly defeated. But then six and a half hours after the meeting had begun, Labour's right wing finally got up to speak and propose their amendment to hold another council meeting on 11 April.

When it was carried shortly after nine o'clock, the Liberals and Tories were ecstatic. Their hour had come at last. Victory would be theirs. But they did not know the sting in the tail.

Report by Jim Chrystie



Photo: John Smith (IFL)

# No!

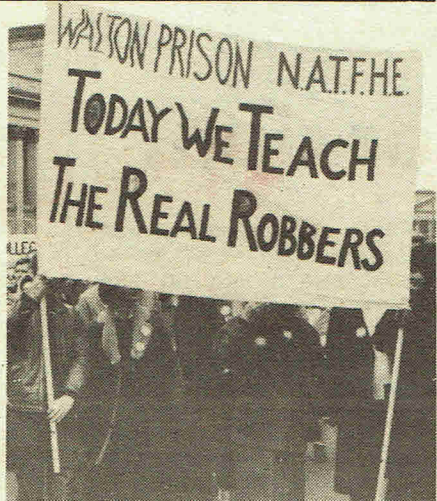


Photo: Ben Easton

A lesson to the Tories from the teachers.

"Our hospital is being closed down with Prince's Park, and we think we should support the Labour Party because after all they started the Health Service. We support them 100%.—Mary Staunton, NUPE, Maureen Jenkins, GMBATU.

"I'm a steward in the Speke area and I'm out here in support of these people who are fighting for jobs, not just that, but for education and jobs for our children."—Amy Connor, steward, Speke GMBATU branch 80.

"We're from the docks and a lot of people say that this doesn't effect people who live outside Liverpool. But we say that what is happening here will follow all over the country soon, and Liverpool's got to make a stand. Everyone's saying there's four years of Thatcher left. We've got to ensure that she doesn't last that long."—Brian Roberts ACTSS Docks branch.

"I'm an unemployed heavy goods driver and I'm 120% for what the council is doing. We've got to have go at this, otherwise we'll really be on the floor."—Frank Fay, Walton.

"As a fireman, the council issue affects me personally, but I also feel that for the Liverpool City Council to increase the rates by 70% or whatever is pretty tough on the people of Liverpool, so they couldn't do that. And to make 5000 redundancies is a bad thing as well. So they've been put in a corner by the government and I'm opposed to the government."—Tony Starkey FBU.

Community groups and housewives further swelled

ould have joined the march s caused by the magnificent three companies to strike. he demonstration from the away, with babies in push

ory rags a large proportion en, and the whole demo was eful, despite the provocative large number of police in-horseback.

d support from the packed chamber were a tremendous our group. By contrast the ayed the working class and in under police escort—so lar support'.

'30s had the slogan 'strug- choice faces the Merseyside arch will be remembered as left in any doubt which road en.

ol's future, page 2)

"We want Maggie Thatcher out and our council in. We want them ruling the city because they know how to do it. They're the only sort of people who know how to do it. We've seen the NHS collapsing since she got in. I think the council fight has got to be part of a wider thing."—Nora Sheahan, RCN nurse taking a day off to support council.

"There's no other option to supporting the council unless you want to go back to her Victorian values—pay for this and pay for that. We can't have Cruise and have social services, it's as simple as that."—Mrs Cunningham, Knowsley NALGO on strike.

"I'm here partly to publicise our case and raise money, but also because I fully support Liverpool City Council. Maggie Thatcher's trying to cut everyone, she's trying to cut us and cut the council and I agree with what Liverpool are doing."—Peter Lennard, Sutton Manor NUM

## Ireland



Photo: Derek Speirs (Report)

Dublin 1983; Workers protest at imprisonment of trade unionists from Rank Flour Mills. Labour must withdraw from this capitalist coalition.

# Labour's disastrous coalition

By Peter Taaffe

**THE CAPITALIST media now has a conscious policy of playing down workers' struggles abroad for fear of encouraging similar movements in Britain.**

They have ignored the colossal ferment taking place in Southern Ireland, for example, which can exercise an enormous effect on workers' struggles in Britain, as became clear to me on my recent visit.

Under the stewardship of the effete Irish capitalists, the country has been brought to the brink of ruin. Right from its inception as an independent state in 1921/22 Southern Irish capitalism has been dependent on Britain. Most of its markets and inward investments were British.

Now Britain has been partly replaced by American, Japanese and German capital. During the long economic upswing which Ireland benefited from late—from 1960-'73—the fundamental weaknesses of the Irish economy could be hidden.

But now its frailty is exposed by the recent world recession. There has been a collapse of industry which dwarfs even that of Britain. As in the North the number of unemployed, now standing at 216,000 exceeds those employed in manufacturing industry!

## Closure of Fords

The latest casualty is the virtual closure of the Ford plant in Cork which has existed in the area for 67 years. In fact it is the oldest Ford plant established outside America itself. From 5,000 jobs in the plant 10 years ago a mere 230 will be employed at the end of the present closure programme. Already one in five of the labour force is on the dole in Cork.

Ireland's ruling class sees no way out for itself except by savage reductions in the living standards of the working class. It has amassed foreign debts of £5,000 million. The total deficit including the National Debt and foreign debts is an incredible 12,000–13,000 million Irish pounds, equalling the Gross Domestic Product of the country. Servicing the debt, the payment of interest, equals the amount received in PAYE each year!

State expenditure has swollen from 35% of Gross National Product 10 years ago to 66% last year! This colossal explosion of state spending has a number of causes.

On one hand private industry was incapable, even during the upswing, of developing the Irish economy or providing jobs. The state sector had to fulfil this task. Thus out of a labour force of 1,200,000 something like 200,000

are employed in the state sector.

At the same time the economic downswing internationally has choked off the safety valve of mass emigration which existed for the Irish economy in the past. The millions of "surplus hands" can no longer find an escape route to America, Canada, Australia or Britain.

Like Reagan, Thatcher and their counterparts around the world, the Irish capitalists are engaged in a policy of savage deflation ie cuts in living standards. However in Ireland the vehicle for this policy is the coalition government between one of the main capitalist parties, Fine Gael and leaders of the Irish Labour Party.

The coalition's disastrous role answers those like Hobsbawm in Britain who have suggested some kind of coalition between Labour and the Social Democrats in the future. By this device the Irish ruling class calculate that they can secure their aims of cutting workers' living standards and at the same time discrediting the workers' organisations.

Such are the cuts carried out by the government that there has been a tremendous upsurge of workers' strikes, occupations and protests. The Irish capitalists are putting relentless pressure on the coalition to carry through further savage cuts in welfare spending in particular. Thus Barry Desmond, a Labour minister in the coalition recently announced the withdrawal of medical cards for students!

The students occupied the Labour headquarters and organised strikes and demonstrations. This in turn provoked the intervention of the police and the jailing of a student leader.

Dick Spring, Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the Irish Labour Party has criticised the unions and proposed they forego wage increases to "help the unemployed". The cost of living in Ireland is at least 20–25% above that of Britain. A pint of Guinness costs £1.16 in Dublin! The collapse of the Irish economy has of course brought in its wake horrendous conditions in the inner-city areas, particularly in the Dublin area.

This has been reflected in the staggering increase in drug addiction in the city of Dublin. The Irish police have been unable to deal with the drug pushers who prey upon and scar the lives of tens of thousands of young Dubliners from working class families.

In some parts of Dublin heroin addiction is more severe than in the worst ghettos in America. This in turn has led to a quite magnificent movement by workers to rid the area of pushers. When I was in Dublin a demonstration of 5,000 "concerned parents against drug pushers" marched to the Irish Parliament, the Dail.

What the police and the state

## Setback for right

**THE LEADERS** of the Irish Labour Party have made a major retreat in their campaign against supporters of *Militant Irish Monthly*.

At the party's Administrative Council, (National Executive) on 22 March they put forward a resolution calling for the expulsion of anyone associated with *Militant Irish Monthly*. They hoped this would be passed and put to conference in April.

But 50 to 60 resolutions against the witch hunt were before the AC meeting and the obvious opposition forced the leaders to amend their plans.

Now the new AC elected at the April conference will set up a sub-committee to "look into" the question.

This major victory for the Marxists and anti-coalition forces in the party shows the increased acceptance of the role of Marxism. But Labour Party members are aware that while Labour is in coalition, there will be renewed attempts to take organisational methods against *Militant*, as the real unstated reasons for the right-wing's attempted purge has been *Militant's* consistent opposition to coalition.

have been powerless to achieve, spontaneous action by the workers has done. They have cleared the pushers out of some important estates which were notorious in the past. At the same time crime and other social diseases which go with drug pushing and addiction have been eliminated. This has not pleased the powers that be.

Parents have been denounced as "vigilantes" by various ministers. Shamefully this has included some Labour leaders. The Irish Labour Party Youth section has greeted the initiative of the workers and pointed to its significance for the movement of the Irish working class.

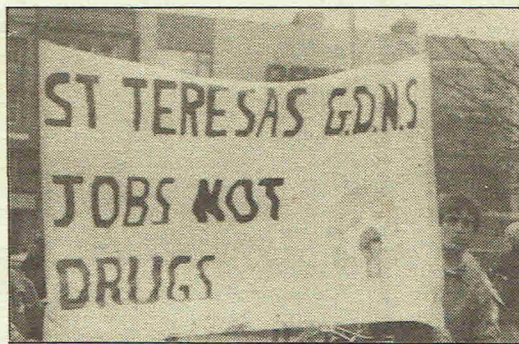
If Labour would have maintained its independence on a class programme then it would now be in an

"over 70% of Labour voters are disillusioned by the behaviour of the party in government." (*Irish Times*, 17 January, 1984).

The coalition itself is extremely unstable and could fall at any time. Such was the discontent with the participation of Labour in coalition that a Labour minister Frank Clusky was forced to resign last year. In defence of their role Dick Spring Labour Leader has declared, "I would be the first to recognise that we are not going to achieve socialism. But neither do I believe that we will achieve socialism by refusing to serve in government until we can form our own."

This "serving in government" (a capitalist government)—has involved presiding over a huge increase in unemployed, occupations and even hunger strikes by workers in protest at factory closures and also attacks on welfare spending. The most recent opinion polls show a big increase in support for Fianna Fial.

It is in this situation that the Labour leaders decided to attack the Marxist wing



Demonstration against Dublin drug-pushers.

absolutely impregnable position. However, there is mass disillusionment amongst traditional Labour supporters with the leaders of the party and its role in coalition.

This could be seen in the recent Central Dublin by-election where Labour came fourth behind both the Workers' Party (formerly Official Sinn Fein) and also Provisional Sinn Fein! It got a mere 6% of the vote compared to 19% in the 1969 general election. Thus Labour has been reduced to the level of its share of the vote in the 1930s. Recent opinion polls have shown that

of the Irish Labour Party, represented by the supporters of *Militant Irish Monthly*. The great majority of the party rank and file are implacably opposed to any purge of the Marxists. A witch-hunt would throw the Labour Party in Southern Ireland into turmoil. It could even cripple the Labour Party in many parts of the country.

However, even if action were taken, this would not mean the end of the Marxist wing of the Labour Party. Nor would it mean the end of the Irish Labour Party as some of the sectarians on the outskirts of

the labour movement imagine. The present Labour leadership, it is true, is leading the party to disaster. The disillusionment is such that it is not excluded that even some of the major unions will—wrongly—disaffiliate from the Labour Party.

The Republic's second largest union, the Federated Workers' Union of Ireland, is discussing disaffiliation. Similar moves are afoot within the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, the third largest union in the country. Matt Merrigan recently sent out a circular to union branches in which he says that the Labour Party "has by its repeated failures in conservative governments made itself almost irrelevant to the political needs of unions and working people."

## Disaffiliation threat

"In June 1984 the branches of this union will be given an opportunity to recommend disaffiliation until the party regains its Connolly socialist origins and principles."

For the trade unions to disaffiliate would be entirely wrong. Their opposition to coalition is well founded. However, it is necessary to change the position of the party using the power of the unions to effect a change in the policies. The Irish Labour leaders must be compelled to withdraw from the disastrous coalition government.

In France after 20 years of coalition government, the Socialist Party was reduced to a rump; it received only 4% of the vote in the presidential elections in 1971. However big events there compelled the former Catholic union the CFTD and tens of thousands of workers to move into the party and begin its transformation.

The right wing Irish Labour Party leaders could possibly reduce it to a shell. But momentous events will force the unions to move in and transform the Labour Party.

One thing is clear; Irish capitalism offers no way forward for the working class. A recent report from an Irish semi-government agency explained that "private industry" offered no prospect of jobs to prevent a huge rise in unemployment. They said that only state industry and higher taxes were capable of solving the problems which Ireland now faces.

However, on the basis of capitalism such a solution is entirely ruled out. The Irish capitalists are hell bent on forcing big reductions in jobs in the state sector. "State industry" does however offer a solution but only on the basis of a socialist planned economy. This would involve the nationalisation with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need of the monopolies.

## Mexico, India, Chile

# Reagan's Mexican nightmare

**A regular nightmare of the American ruling class is that the revolution sweeping through Central America would touch the US border through Mexico.**

The country has a large stock of natural resources, most notably petroleum, and during the oil boom of the '70s there was talk of a Mexican miracle. But the world recession has ended the oil boom and massive debts loom over all other problems for Mexican capitalism.

The world's bankers have demanded big cuts in wages and government spending to slim down these debts; almost all the country's oil earnings go to servicing charges alone. Subsidies have been lifted on many goods and inflation has hit the roof, reaching 250% pa at the beginning of 1983, and

still about 10% a month according to union organisers.

There were massive protests when the price of the staple food, maize tortillas, rose by a third from the level fixed by the government. "To prison with the dough and tortilla monopolisers" housewives shouted as they picketed the small tortilla shops, mostly controlled by large combines. The shops threatened a strike unless prices were allowed to reach "free market" level.

### Drop in earnings

But the government are worried that this rise would cause riots. The average Mexican eats 10 tortillas a day; only about 20% of the population can afford meat. Mexico's workers can buy 50% less with their earnings than they could two years ago.

The *Wall Street Journal* quoted a young mother, "the government told us

they were using the money to pay the debt instead of paying the workers. We don't know where our money went but the debt is still there".

To prevent explosions, the government are trying to introduce a two tier price with cheaper tortillas for the poorest Mexicans. Tortilla coupons will become like money. The money economy has partly broken down already. For example, parents are charged for their children's schooling—to be paid either in cash or bricks! Many can afford neither.

Wall Street and other capitalist institutions like the government's "businesslike" approach to their debts. For the millions on the minimum wage of £2 a day or the over 50% of the population who are out of work or under-employed living standards are plummeting.

Rural backwardness and poverty is pushing more and more people every year into the cities, especially Mexico City, a third of whose 16 million population live in new slums on the outskirts created in recent years. These sprawling "suburbs" grow by 10% a year, with no sewerage systems and treacherous roads.

### Chronic pollution

The city, at a height of a mile and a half has little enough oxygen at the best of times but thousands of tons of pollutants go into the air daily. Doctors say that just breathing in Mexico city is equivalent to smoking 40 cigarettes a day. Nearly half the population have bronchitis, while the lack of public hygiene spreads

diseases like hepatitis.

The city produces 800 tons of rubbish each day, beyond the city authorities' capacity to deal with, producing toxic fumes, which some scientists fear could ignite and result in a firestorm. When a rubbish dump caught fire in 1981 flames and explosions lasted for ten days.

On top of this scenario for a dozen horror movies, the country's government and state apparatus are notoriously corrupt. The capital's former police chief has been charged with evading taxes of £424,000, illegal possession of arms and smuggling.

### Police Chief's perks

On his official salary of £1,000 a month he was found to have accumulated several houses, one modelled on the ancient Greek Parthenon, 15 race horses, 19 vintage cars, cellars full of wine and a large private discotheque!

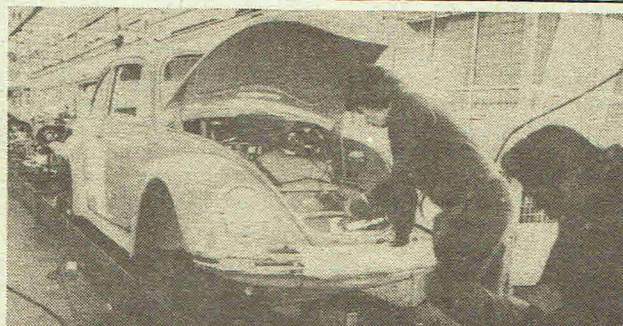
He reportedly hired 1,200 private servants at public expense and used 650 policemen to build his homes. The whole police force is riddled with corruption and attempts to clean up the police force have left many squads way below strength, and Mexico City, predictably, has a very high crime rate.

If this is all capitalism can offer the oil rich "success story" of Mexico, no wonder Reagan and his advisers get nightmares

By Roger Shriver



Mexico City police chief Arturo Durazo—charges of massive corruption.



Car workers in Mexico. The working class represents the major force in Mexican society.

# Workers prepare to overthrow junta

**Tuesday 27 March saw another massive day of protest throughout Chile against the Pinochet dictatorship. It showed the isolation of the military regime more clearly than ever.**

About the only force on the side of the military were the guns of the paramilitary police, which led to four deaths, dozens of injuries and hundreds of arrests. Ranged against these were the working class, the urban poor who erected barricades and even most of the middle class.

Except in the richest areas, attendance at schools was about 5%. Truck drivers, mostly owner-drivers, joined taxi and bus drivers in support of the protest and shopkeepers closed their doors. We print below a letter from Chile giving the background to the protest.

**THE RULING class are split into different groups, all denouncing each other. They are terrified of the process unfolding and have no confidence in the future. 30% of all loans abroad are being invested outside the country, 7% is being invested in the economy while the rest is unaccounted for.**

The regime is now seen as not only repressive but totally corrupt. This is fairly new. The military had previously succeeded in distancing itself from direct financial corruption.



Dictator Pinochet

The government's internal problems are best illustrated by some events of the past few weeks.

No resignations are now accepted from the Cabinet (these rats cannot desert!). The regular meeting of the Junta was cancelled and it was announced that the President need only see them individually. 24 hours later an "extraordinary" meeting was held. Two days before, the air force chief had declared that elections should be held two years early (they are due in 1989 according to the junta's timetable) showing the pressure building up.

### Opposition from church

Even the church is forced into total opposition (the Archbishop originally had a position of "dialogue"). All those found to be involved in torture will now be excommunicated and not allowed a church wedding, showing popular pressure and the church's need to keep its base. The regime itself seems to have no clear strategy, lurking from minor concessions to brutal repression.

Things are developing in the workers' movement. The attitude of youth in particular is incredible in the hatred of the regime and the

willingness to struggle. One group discussing the general strike all agreed that transport must be stopped but that would be well guarded by the state. Then one 16 or 17 year old intervened: "But it must be stopped. Some of us will die stopping it, but it must be done".

On International Women's Day, 1,000 women demonstrated in the city centre. The brutal repression was the worst for some time. The police simply waded in, and also beat some men who tried to stop them.

The next day of protest will be very large. But the main topic of discussion is still the general strike, which is seen as the next step forward from the endless days of protest, etc. The ranks see it as a strike to overthrow the regime, with the youth putting a major emphasis on the need for arms, and significantly, a realisation that the proletariat must be involved in and lead the struggle.

### Strike not prepared for

Some strikes have occurred. But nothing seems to have been done by the leadership for the general strike planned for May. Due to lack of preparation among some key sections of workers, the call may not take off.

But in some areas local leaders have done some good ground work and meetings have voted overwhelmingly in favour and a strike is more likely. Significantly the petrol workers have said, "We will go to the end" to get their union's leader released. The bourgeois are terrified.

Things are certainly stirring. After one arrest recently a group of police had a huge argument about the slogans on the poster, with the majority supporting them; policemen's wives have joined some protests.

When the President visited the south a demonstration met him face to face for the first time and some were arrested, one of them a junior officer in the army! This process should not be exaggerated but the President himself spoke of infiltration into the army. The regime has less support than ever.

## Letter from India

Militant readers in Bombay were happy to see the report on the Bombay textile strike (*Militant* 16 March). This was undoubtedly one of the most titanic struggles in the history of the labour movement. However we wish to correct certain errors.

Firstly, your editors may not have believed their eyes but there were not 25,000 but 250,000 workers involved.

This was an heroic achievement by Bombay's textile workers who have a history of militancy stretching back to pre-independence days and even organised strikes during the dark days of the emergency. But unfortunately we can not accept that "the fight goes on". We must face the truth that this particular battle is lost.

Uday Mehta of the Revolutionary Socialist Party explained: "The first eight mills downed tools in October 1981 and the rest joined in January 1982. But no fight can last forever. For a number of reasons; the textile slump and serious mistakes and a total lack of guidance or perspectives by Ditta Samant and the union leadership, (whose uncritically favourable assessment by the report's author is not shared by us) by May 1983 100,000 workers had been starved back into the mills.

If we take into account the 50,000 or so surplus workers made redundant through modernisation and tens of thousands more who have returned to their villages, the strike is effectively over."

What is amazing is not that this or that section

loses a battle but that the whole working class has shown seemingly inexhaustible resilience. The textile strike came hard on the heels of the prolonged and at times almost insurrectionary strike of 125,000 Bangalore public sector workers.

The textile strike itself saw the events of August 1982 when the police also mutilated and department stores were jointly looted by striking policemen, textile strikers and unemployed youth! Before the textile strike fizzled out, 200,000 jute workers in West Bengal, 600,000 state employees in Andhra Pradesh and tens of thousands of Madras engineering workers had started their strike movements.

Now the Indian economy is gripped by a national port and dock strike of 300,000 workers! George Gomez, a popular

militant rank and file leader in Bombay described the effects.

"All ten Indian ports are deserted. The strike is 100% rock solid. Every day of the strike costs the capitalists Rs800 million (over £50 million) in lost exports, let alone the costs of closure of factories (including oil refining plants) due to loss of imported raw materials.

"The four union federations are committed to fighting for a charter of demands, including a Rs1,000 monthly minimum wage, sliding scale, 5 day weekend a range of fringe benefits, pensions and injury benefits, decent conditions and the exclusion of private contractors from the ports. It is a really big battle this time. All that is lacking is a militant Marxist leadership."

From our Bombay correspondent.

# Letters

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

## Orange and Green rats

Dear Comrades,

I read Bob Harker's letter in *Militant* (issue 692) where he told how some would-be socialist had argued with him that Catholics were worse off than Protestant workers in Northern Ireland because rats only plagued Catholic houses. This character also labelled Bob an 'imperialist' because he served over here in the British Army.

For the information of Bob's 'friend'—for the sake of argument I shall call him Ratty—I share a flat with a Protestant friend. Together

we killed 14 mice in our flat and terrorised a few rats in the backyard.

Ratty will be surprised to hear that my Protestant friend killed nine mice while I only managed to kill five. Perhaps the nine he caught were Catholic mice?

However, more generally, Irish rats are not sectarian. Yes, Irish rats stand for unity and claim affinity with rats of all nations—even British ones.

Bob should send Ratty to visit Ireland some time—we need the odd laugh.

Yours fraternally  
Glenn Simpson  
Belfast Labour and Trade Union Group.

## Deathly cost of Tories' cuts

Dear Comrades,

The experiences of a family in north Birmingham tragically shows the disastrous effects of the Tory cuts in the NHS. John Ward's father, who suffered from Parkinson's disease, was taken ill on one Monday in March. The GP was called and he promised that the geriatric specialist would go to the house by Tuesday or Wednesday. By the Friday however, Mr. Ward senior had become more seriously ill and the specialist had not arrived.

An ambulance was phoned for at 11 am, yet the doctor said that he couldn't get an ambulance until 4 pm. The ambulance arrived at 7.30 pm. John's father was not seen by the specialist in the hospital 'till Monday—on the Thursday his father died.

A member of the family has put in an official complaint to the Area Health

Authority. A spokesman for the Authority said that in the last 2-3 years (since Thatcher began the cutbacks) complaints about treatment have gone from a trickle to literally thousands. Many more who have had poor treatment do not complain because they do not know the right procedure.

This is what the cutbacks mean for Birmingham. There is only one geriatric specialist for the whole of Erdington and Sutton Coldfield—an area of 150,000 people. The number of ambulances are so few that unless there is an emergency call, you have to wait nearly a whole day for one treatment.

This shows the contempt the Tories have for ordinary people. The Tories and their capitalist backers say they cannot afford to spend more on the NHS. The labour and trade union movement should say that if the Tories cannot afford the NHS, we cannot afford the Tories.

Yours fraternally  
Paul Ellis  
Erdington LPYS

## YCs bottle out

Dear Comrades,

A debate on the future of youth between the Young Socialists and the Young Conservatives was organised for March 13 by Benton LPYS. Even though the YC had been notified three weeks previously and had agreed to debate with us, they backed out a week before the debate saying it was "inconvenient" to attend. Perhaps they had some important gin sipping to do, rather than debate the problems facing the youth of Britain today.

Despite contacting Conservative regional HQ, we were unable to find any Young Tories willing to

debate with us.

Even without any Tories present the evening was a great success with about 45-50 people attending. After speeches from our secretary Annette Logan, our MP Ted Garrett and Jane Harker from Wallsend LPYS, there was a lively discussion with contributions from most people there. An excellent financial appeal from our chairman Deryck Marsh raised more than £34.

Do the Tories have any answers to the problems facing youth? If so why are they so unwilling to put forward their ideas in public?

Yours fraternally  
Graeme Cornell and  
Simon Lamb  
Benton LPYS

## A dole-ful world

Dear *Militant*,

Out of work, I recently had to leave home. My girlfriend found me digs at £15 a week for bed and breakfast.

I applied for financial help from the DHSS as I was only receiving £24 a week on the dole, which after paying my landlady left me with the ridiculous amount of £9. After a month of borrowing money from my family and friends, I finally received a reply from the DHSS saying they could not give me any extra money as I was not

staying at a commercial establishment.

It seems a crazy world to me when young people are forced to leave home because they can only get a pittance on the dole, yet the Tories don't mind you staying in a guest house or even posh hotel with all expenses paid.

What we want is jobs with decent wages. If this system cannot provide jobs then at least we ought to have a decent allowance to enable us to live at home without being a burden on the rest of the family.

Yours Sincerely  
Terry Lovely  
Littlehampton LPYS



Pickets at Longannet power station, Fife.

Dear Comrades,

The present troubles in the coal industry have reached boiling point. After the national overtime ban, which has been supported 100% for the best part of five months, why does the 72 year old chairman of the National Coal Board now come out fighting after sitting

back, doing nothing to settle the dispute?

If the true facts are known the Tories see this dispute, not about pit closures or wage rises, but about smashing the NUM.

They have been planning this since 1979. Look at the two recent disputes with the NGA and the

civil service unions at GCHQ. The Tories were only testing the water for the big one.

The sole aim of the government is to hammer the NUM into bits. To counter this threat to the vanguard of the trade unions, the whole of the trade union movement and the Labour Party

should throw its full weight behind the miners. If the NUM goes down I don't hold much hope for the rest of the trade unions in this country.

Yours for socialism  
F Gill  
Sutton Manor NUM,  
St Helens  
personal capacity

## Nursing home rip-off

Dear Sir,

I would like to express my views on private residential and nursing homes for the elderly.

Our present government is encouraging the development of private homes and recently the Social Security Minister, Dr Rhodes Boyson, ordered huge increases in payments through the DHSS to the owners. Despite the increasing number of elderly people now needing specialised care, it is the policy of the government to decrease the number of long term beds within the NHS for geriatric patients by the closure of many wards and hospitals specialising in this field.

Also, although the demand for beds within the local authority homes is great, no new homes have been built to cater for this need. Instead private enterprise is being encouraged, with huge profits being made at the expense of the elderly who are often not provided with an adequate standard of care.

Each Local Authority is responsible for registering

homes within their area and keeping regular checks on how they are run. Yet many homes which have been registered are run by persons without experience or qualifications, with drugs being administered without control. Often there are too many beds in one room and not enough storage space for clothes and other belongings with residents having to share wardrobes.

Representatives of the Local Authority who visit these homes seem to be unperturbed by these conditions. Also staff, the majority of whom are female part-time workers, are paid extremely low wages without increments for Sunday work or Bank Holidays. Even qualified nursing staff are paid less than £2 an hour at the majority of private homes.

It is time for a change of policy. Tax-payers money should be used to help provide good care for the elderly who, through no fault of their own, are unable to care for themselves. At present it is being used to further private enterprise.

Yours Faithfully  
*Militant* reader  
qualified nurse  
Blackburn

## William Morris exhibition

Dear Comrades,

After reading the article on William Morris in *Militant* (issue 690) I went to see an exhibition about him, at the Institute of Contemporary Arts.

What struck me about the exhibition is that it showed the links between his ideas about art and politics, treating both aspects with equal seriousness—it wasn't just an exhibition of his fabric designs.

It showed how William Morris saw a future rural socialist society where town and country had become one, as a revolutionary alternative to the squalid urban slums that had sprung up around the factories during the industrial revolution.

It was made quite clear that the beginning of the exhibition—on a large reproduction of a manifesto written by William Morris, that only the working class in control of the means of production can make such a utopian vision of society possible.

I found it an interesting but difficult show to look at.



William Morris.

It took me two visits to get round and see all of it. The ICA is in the Mall, off Trafalgar Square, and it's open from 12 o'clock to 9pm, Tuesday to Sunday. The show ends on April 29 and it costs fifty pence to get in, or twenty five pence on Wednesday if you're unemployed.

Yours fraternally  
Richard Finnigan  
Deptford LPYS

## Question time for Clark

Dear Comrades,

Recently our hospital received a visit from the health minister, Ken Clark. The purpose of his visit was to inspect two small hospitals in our town in order to take his report back to the Ministry, before deciding whether or not to close either of them. During his stay he met a delegation of officials from the different unions and professional bodies to answer questions from them.

When I got the opportunity I put it to him that the system that his government represents cannot possibly afford to have the socialist philosophy of free health care and the present attacks on the health service are symptomatic of capitalism in crisis. I then asked him what he had to say about staffing levels. They are at a much lower level now due to Tory cuts than they ever were during our pay dispute, when the Tories claimed our action was affecting patient care.

I presented him with a pay slip of £49.50 for 40 hours work. Again in our dispute

they claimed we were on an average of £120 per week. I asked him if he could manage to live on this every week of his life.

As I expected I got no reply relating to the socialist philosophy of free health care, or about staffing levels. All he could manage was to mumble something about how it was difficult to sort out pay because of all the different pay grades and schemes. He also said that like all other public services, the government could only afford to spend so much within the NHS.

Comrades, we have all

seen how past reformist Labour governments have failed to make capitalism work for the majority of people and have made health cuts. More than any other section of society the NHS cries out for socialism. Only with the election of a Labour government absolutely committed to the socialist transformation of Britain will we workers see the health service which we surely need and deserve.

With comradely greetings  
Mick Griffiths  
COHSE Branch Secretary  
Wakefield  
West Yorkshire

## Unite and fight

Dear Comrades,

The article in the March issue of *Militant Irish Monthly* about 15 year old Ann Lovett and her new born baby dying of exposure, is a disgusting fact of life for working class women. It shows the need, in fact the basic right, for the essential facilities of birth control,

adequate child care facilities and Well Women Centres, just like the one set up in Blackburn.

The recently produced *Militant* pamphlet on women is essential reading matter for every working class woman and man. It spells out the socialist alternative and also dispels the misconception that positive discrimination and feminism can go anywhere to solving

the problems of female oppression.

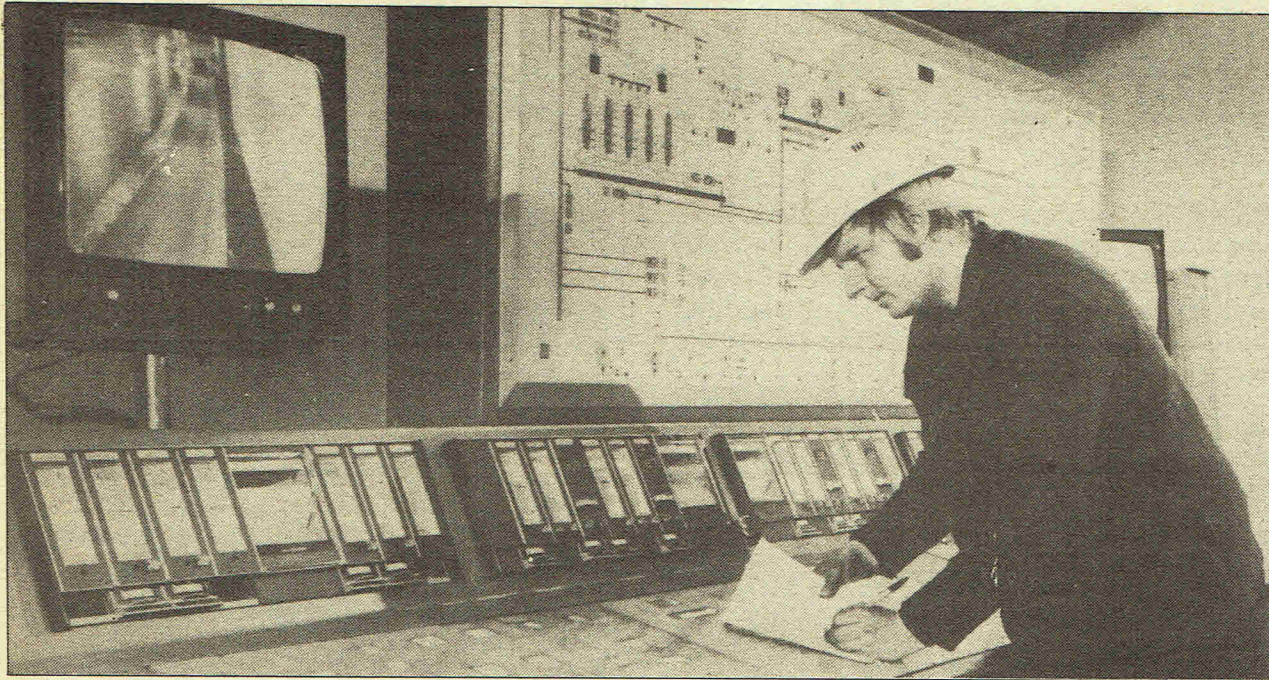
This pamphlet can be used in urging women workers to become more active in the labour and trade union movement, demanding adequate crèche facilities etc. to enable maximum participation. We must no longer tolerate the attempted annihilation of the basic rights of the working class. Both working class men and

women must unite and fight together to eradicate the deformities of the capitalist system.

Our message to working class women must be: "while you are doubly oppressed under capitalism you will benefit doubly under socialism".

Yours fraternally  
Susan Porter  
Morecambe

# New technology...



Computerisation at Thurncroft Colliery's new coal preparation plant.

SINCE THE 1930s coal mining has changed drastically from the days of hand-filled coal tubs being hauled by ponies to the cage, to be lifted to the surface.

We have seen electrification, which brought conveyor belts into the mines. Then the introduction of shearers on the coal face, backed up by armoured flexible conveyers to take coal from the face as the shearers cut it. Then there was the introduction of powered roof supports, and on the surface, mechanised coal preparation plants.

The present period has been termed the 'partial automation era'. We are just starting to see, at the Selby pit, the introduction of the first complete MINOS system.

Many pits already have

one or more of the various sub-systems in operation. Examples are control of underground conveyors from a surface control room, environmental monitoring of underground conditions or computer controlled coal preparation plants. But Selby is the first one where the National Coal Board (NCB) hopes to bring them all together.

**Here is a brief guide to the main features of the new automated systems:**

**MINOS** (Mine operating system) is the central basis for the automation of the coal industry. It is a standard computer system which will be used to bring together and control all the component parts of automation.

**FIDO** (Face information

digested on line) is the NCB watch-dog, its own version of the lorry driver's tachograph. It monitors all coal face activity and transfers it to a visual display unit (VDU). One of these will undoubtedly be situated on the manager's desk. So greater control can be exercised over coal face activity from the surface.

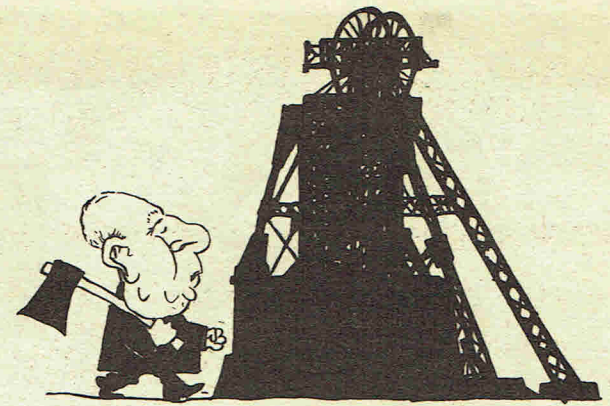
**IMPACT** (Inbuilt machine performance and condition testing). I call this the fitter's favourite. It is designed to monitor and report on machine performance. The object is to try and spot breakdowns before they occur. If put to the extensive use the NCB intend, it would more or less eliminate the skill of craftsmen, reducing the number of jobs dramatically and the remaining

work to basic routine maintenance.

**MIDAS** (Machine information display and automation system) is the production model of a system previously known as system 70,000. All together twenty of these will be fitted on coal faces within the next year or so. Its function is to act as a horizontal guidance system to keep the shearer cutting drum in the coal seam.

In theory, by monitoring the density of the coal strata it will keep the cutting drum out of the dirt bands and reduce the need for expensive coal preparation.

**OTHER SYSTEMS** are also being tested that will carry out operation of coal face supports and alignment of the face, thus effectively automating the entire coal face operation.



**Richard Clarkson, Prince of Wales NUM, explains some of the changes miners face (left) and the union's response (below).**

The NUM has submitted to the NCB its own draft of a technology agreement but the only response has been a letter of acknowledgement.

The union claims that without this agreement we will see 100,000 jobs lost by the year 2,000, total deskilling of miners' jobs, vastly increased management control, new health hazards such as stress and eye sight deficiency caused by VDU operation, loss of bargaining power.

Miners can gain enormous benefits: a four-day 28-hour working week; retirement at fifty-five; longer and more frequent holidays; improved working conditions; an end to overtime.

## NCB strategy

The union is also demanding re-training for mine workers currently doing jobs that new technology will render obsolete. The proposed agreement states that the union should be kept up to date with all programmes of research and development and would be consulted at the earliest stage on the design, planning, location and installation of all new systems; representatives at all levels would negotiate technical change.

One point worthy of comment is the insistence of both the government and the NCB that pits that don't make a profit must close. The majority of pits classed 'uneconomical' are the ones that have had little or no investment made in them. Most pits will now fit into the category of high cost—low technology or low cost—high technology.

Because of this the union is demanding that technology appropriate to the differing conditions of each pit must be developed—especially in the outlying coalfields, such as Scotland, South Wales, Kent and the

North East.

It is evident that by trying to implement new technology in the coal mines and subsequently reducing manning the Tories and their puppets in the NCB are trying to smash the power of the NUM and pave the way for privatisation.

The latter is a crucial element in the Tory strategy to destroy the trade union movement. By selling off profitable pits not only do they present an opportunity for vast private profit but they also open the way to non-union labour.

Even if we could force this government to make an agreement on technology, the Tories remain intent on destroying our ability to protect living standards and democratic rights. The whole movement must unite to bring down this government.

Coal is a natural resource and should be extracted for the benefit of the people of this country, not so that the bosses can accumulate wealth on the backs of the miners.

## Socialist alternative

A Labour government committed to socialist policies and an integrated energy plan is the only way to save the coal industry.

By utilising new technology to benefit the miners and society as a whole the NUM's claim could easily be achieved—and bettered.

Under those conditions new technology in the mines could provide us with a safe, secure future, with drastic reductions in the time spent at work. But nobody is going to give it to us, it will have to be fought for, and that fight has to be understood as part and parcel of the fight for a socialist future.

## Mechanisation, miners and wages

By  
Ian Ilett

**COAL PRODUCTION** has traditionally entailed three main stages: cutting coal at the pitface, loading and then transporting to the pit head.

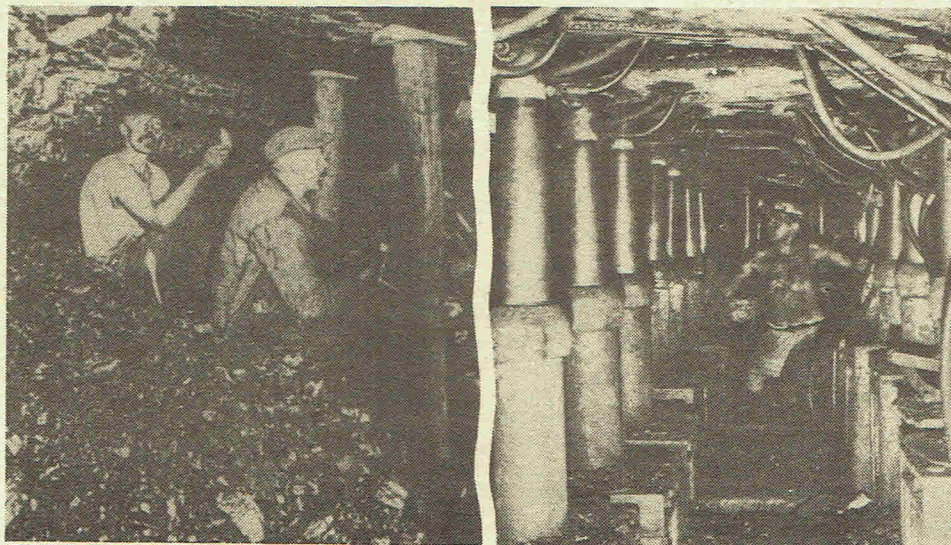
There are other related tasks and once on the surface the coal has to be prepared for sale, but these three main elements, including preparation for cutting were always the heart of the operation and were split into three distinct shifts and done almost entirely by manual labour. Right up until after the first world war.

### Unsystematic mechanisation

In 1928 only 12% of the coal was mechanically transported from the face. By 1939 about half was mechanically cut and transported.

Following nationalisation in 1947, the NCB concentrated on rationalisation and consolidation to increase productivity, rather than investment in new methods and technology which had been so neglected by the private owners.

The introduction of mechanised coal cutters did not take place in a systematic way. The enormous variation in coal face conditions: differences between seams and geological conditions; friability of the coal; presence of water; all presented difficult technological problems.



Then and now—the introduction of powered roof supports brought major changes in working practices.

In the early days of mechanisation neither could the three main stages of production be integrated into one process breaking down the three shift pattern of the job. After 1945, in conditions of high demand for coal and cheap, plentiful labour, there was little pressure on management to introduce new technology.

But the introduction of powered roof supports brought a dramatic change. It opened the way for an integrated power loading system which moved up and down the face mechanically cutting and loading without explosives whilst hydrostatic steel props supported the

roof and pushed the conveyor belt forward as the face receded.

This innovation brought enormous changes. Less men were needed on the face and they required different skills. In 1955 9.8% of total output was power loaded. By 1960 it was 38%, by 1965 87% and 1970 92.2%.

### Piecework and day wages

Another new factor which this introduced was the breaking down of the old three-shift system—nonstop coal cutting became quite possible, opening the way for much closer management control of operations.

Under the piecework system of payment, although rates were fixed after the second world war within district agreements supported by national agreements, there were enormous variations from area to area and face to face. There were constant struggles for increased payments, often resulting in local stoppages.

In 1955 a national day wage structure was agreed. It was an enormously complicated task, however. The introduction of power loading had been accommodated within a wide range of local agreements, starting with Scotland in 1948. By 1965 the task of construc-

ting a national wage structure involved reconciling different agreements. There were also big differences in pay between daywage and piece rate workers.

### Incentives

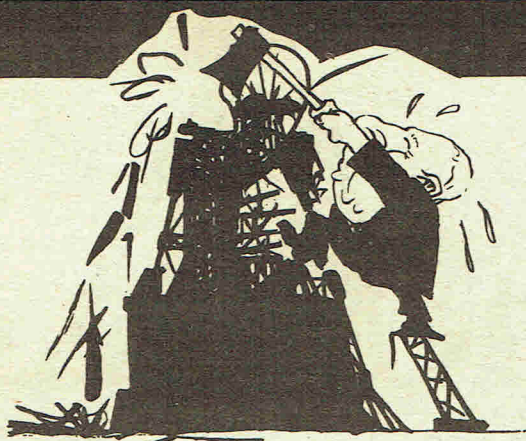
Initially the NUM executive argued that a national day wage agreement had to be taken separately from a power loading agreement. But between March 1965 and April 1965 when a special conference on wages was held the NEC's view changed. Conference accepted an NEC proposal setting up a completely new daywage agreement for 100,000 miners on power loaded faces but leaving out those on conventional face.

The deal was signed with the NCB in June 1966. They saw it as a way of curbing local militancy. The NUM executive, under right wing

control, had swung firmly behind the NCB and the idea of a wage agreement with no element of bonus or incentive. So far had they shifted that the agreement actually entailed a real wages cut for those on the highest rates during a five year transition period, whilst a uniform national wage rate was established.

What neither the NUM executive nor the NCB realised was the degree to which the national agreement would weld Britain's miners together in future wages battles.

It is also ironic that following the successful struggles of the early 1970s the right wing went on to ignore two national ballots rejecting the reintroduction of incentive schemes in order to undermine that militancy. *How the right wing re-introduced incentives—next week.*



## Arthur's flying pickets

WE MANAGED to get into Nottingham from Derbyshire using clandestine methods—the fact we didn't use vehicles totally threw the police.

We arrived Thursday morning and went back on Friday evening.

The coppers kept twigging us on how 46 pickets got through. We told them 'by aeroplane—we're Arthur Scargill's flying pickets!' With 8,000 police in Nottinghamshire they couldn't understand it. The inspector got a right earful from head office.

We arrived at Nottingham city centre and started to march. Four police vans got to us and told us we couldn't march—a bit late that! From pit to pit they followed us. But at night we went into a pub with them waiting outside—and we were spirited away from right under their noses. Whatever the police do they cannot stop pickets getting through.

### The long march

We marched from pit to pit, sending a two man delegation to see representatives of each lodge we visited. We had a good reponse during the march. While one shop keeper wouldn't let us in his shop, the next one came out to talk to

us. When the police arrested one of four delegates, Gordon Skinner, a Labour councillor and miner from Gedling pit, intervened and the man was released.

The police sent a television crew to the wrong pit to stop them filming our success, and a photographer who did take pictures of us had his name and address taken.

### 'Eddie MacGregor'

But the attempts by the police public relations people to show them as 'unbiased and independent' has not sunk in with some of their ranks. A group of coppers were singing 'Eddie Shah, Eddie Shah, Eddie Shah' over their lunch.

But then they had just come down from Warrington to Nottinghamshire, to quote one of them, "to kick a few civvies". The coppers ought to remember that the walls have ears. However, not all the coppers were that bad and one sergeant gave us some snap of oranges and chocolate.

At one pit we were told it had made an £8 million profit, but by linking it with two other pits the NCB said collectively they made a loss. This pit will be closed if the NCB gets its way. The Notts lads must see this.

By Tiny Proffitt  
(Whitwell NUM)

## Durham solid—and support coming in

THE MYTH of the middle class miner has been shattered forever in Durham. Lads with mortgages and new cars are out on the picket line. Morale is very high, in spite of the DHSS and the police.

Six thousand men attended the funeral of David Jones the Yorkshire picket who died in Notts. I have never seen such a display of emotion before. The streets of South Kirkby were lined as the sixty banners marched in the funeral cortege. Men from Yorkshire, Scotland, Northumberland, Wales and Durham struggled through

police harassment and road blocks sometimes for hours on end to pay their last respects.

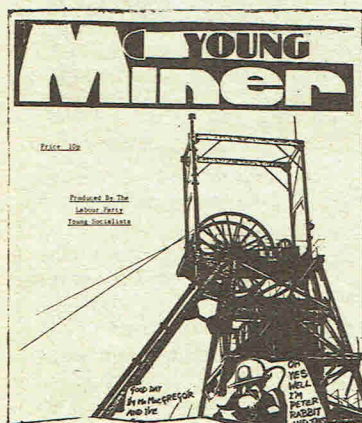
At Wearmouth a strike headquarters has been established, a strike fund started, with donations coming in already, £100 from NUPE, £100 from Bob Clay MP and over £50 from the workers of Austin and Pickersgill whose shop stewards' committee has been of great help to miners on strike, with practical help on DHSS claims etc.

By Kevin Gallagher  
(Wearmouth Mechanics)

Lothian LPYS public meeting 'Save the pits—give youth a future', 7.30pm Mayfield Community Centre, Mayfield. Eddie Donaghy (Scots Exec LP, personal capacity). Chris Herriot (Monktonhall NUM, personal capacity). 10 April

Musselburgh LPYS 'Support the miners' meeting, 11 April, 7.30 pm Brunton Hall, Musselburgh. Speakers as above.

Militant Miners' Meeting 12 April, 7.30 pm, Blackburn, West Lothian, Blackburn Community Centre. Joe Owens (Polkemmet NUM, personal capacity) Alex Shanks (Youth Delegate, Monktonhall, SCEBTA, personal capacity)



For details contact LPYS, Wakefield Labour Club, Vicarage St, Wakefield or phone Wakefield 252 466. Price 10p and 20p p&p.

# Miners counter po

THERE WE were walking through a field and along a public footpath, which just happened to be five hundred yards from Silverhill Colliery in Nottinghamshire. All of a sudden there were loads of coppers at the end of the pathway.

"What are you doing" asked one bright copper. Mick from Kellingley NUM replied that we were out on a nature ramble and then said "Right boys, here we have a Pussy Willow" But there is no fooling today's police.

They said that our group of eighteen even looked like flying pickets. They argued that there were already seven pickets at the Silverhill colliery (which one of our lads was allowed to verify) and that we should go back through the fields up to Yorkshire.

Then came a warning to one of the pickets "You step over the fence and out of the field and you will be arrested." He replied, "Don't think you can stop me going over the fence". We all followed.

The coppers looked taken back because we had stood our ground. But we still ended up in the back of Transit vans. After that we were transferred to football type hooligan buses with tiny individual cells.

### By two arrested Yorkshire miners

As they transferred us to another bus they photographed us with a polaroid camera. If you tried to hide your face they held your arms down. Then the coppers gathered round to take a photo of themselves standing proudly in front of their bus load of arrested miners.

### Political interrogation

The next stop was Mansfield police station. The cells were exclusively given over to the NUM. Signs were hung over every cell saying. 1. NUM pickets unprocessed; 2. NUM pickets processed; 3. NUM pickets charged.

Then the questioning came. Every single one of us was taken to see two supposedly CID men at some time during the day. Did we hold any position in the union? Did we support the union? Did we pay subs and where did the subs go to? These type of questions



Police and pickets at Lea Hall pit in Staffordshire.

showed they were not ordinary coppers.

Next they talked about Arthur Scargill driving a big car. The way they went on anyone would expect him to drive a Mini-Metro which would fall apart the number of times he has to go between London and Sheffield.

Then they looked for a conspiracy angle. How did you all come to be in the same place at the same time? Who pays for the picketing and who organised it?

### No conspiracy

Organised us? No! everyone

## Lancashire leadership fails — rank

THE MOVEMENT at Bold pit started from below. It was the ordinary lads who showed the way. Our instruction from the regional union officials was to work normally and to cross picket lines.

Sid Vincent, secretary of the Lancashire NUM came to our branch and when I asked him if he would cross a picket line—all he could say was "Come into the toilet and I will tell you".

But many of our miners are young and know that if the pits close their own futures will be in jeopardy. When the pickets from Yorkshire came we decided not to cross the picket lines, now all our miners are in support of the strike.

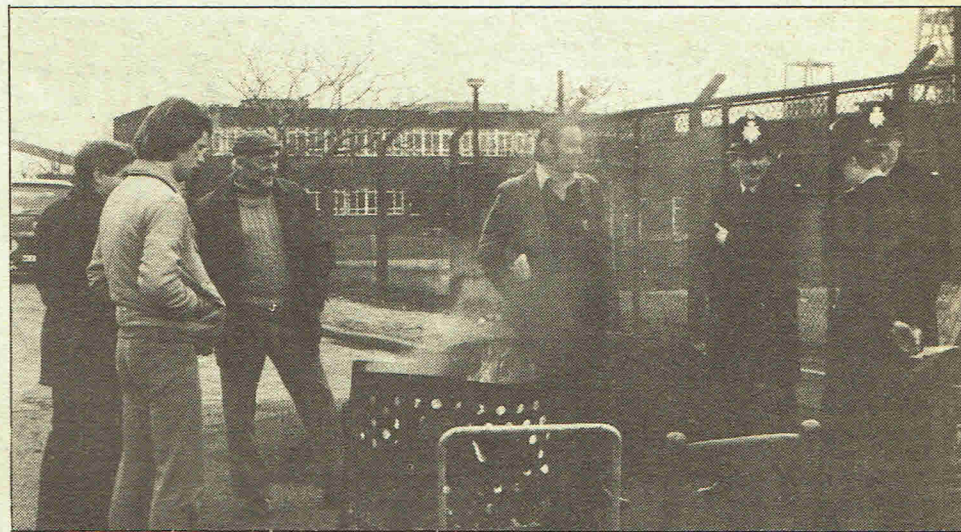
### Changing mood

The situation at Bold pit has changed dramatically. I often felt in a minority in opposing pit closures. But seeing nearby Cronton close, after being promised that it would stay open, and after being kicked around by pit officials ever since MacGregor, attitudes have changed.

## Sutton Manor

MINERS AT Sutton Manor colliery at a branch meeting on Sunday decided overwhelmingly to join their colleagues throughout the country in the fight against pit closures.

The massive vote in favour of strike action was greeted with loud cheering and clapping and immediately talk was



Pickets at Bold Colliery.

Photo: Tina Carroll.

After we voted to come out the Yorkshire official pickets could have been cardboard cut-outs. We needed them there to make our action official. One day they were late and some of the men went in, in confusion. But we hunted around and when we found some pickets the union secretary rang down the pit and got our blokes out, telling

them they could stop work because the pickets were back on again.

### Ballot = retreat

I don't want a ballot. The ones who want a ballot are the ones who told us to cross the picket line. That type of advice is what caused the violence. Little wonder many of the

men ask why Vincent's wages are being paid.

The only ones who want a ballot are the ones who want to go back. On the picket line we feel our solidarity—we are together. What we want now is to spread the strike.

By Stan Russel  
(Bold NUM)



Steve Sullivan.

of co-ordinating with other branches to go out into the area to persuade the Lancashire coalfield to a stop as soon as possible.

Although the majority of delegates at last Saturday's area conference voted to return to work they admitted that attitudes throughout the area were changing and support for the strike was growing. During last week's stoppage pickets were sent out to power stations and succeeded in turning back the majority of coal destined for CEEGB's already diminished stock piles.

Picketing will now be stepped up and with assistance from the rail unions all movement of coal will be stopped.

This means any 'uneconomic' pit is under threat—including those with large reserves. Even the long standing colliery review procedures are being ignored in an effort to decimate the industry. The union is now not being given the right to appeal against a closure decision.

Miners throughout this country should unite solidly behind Yorkshire, Scotland and other striking areas.

By Steve Sullivan  
(Sutton Manor NUM, personal capacity)

# Police-state tactics

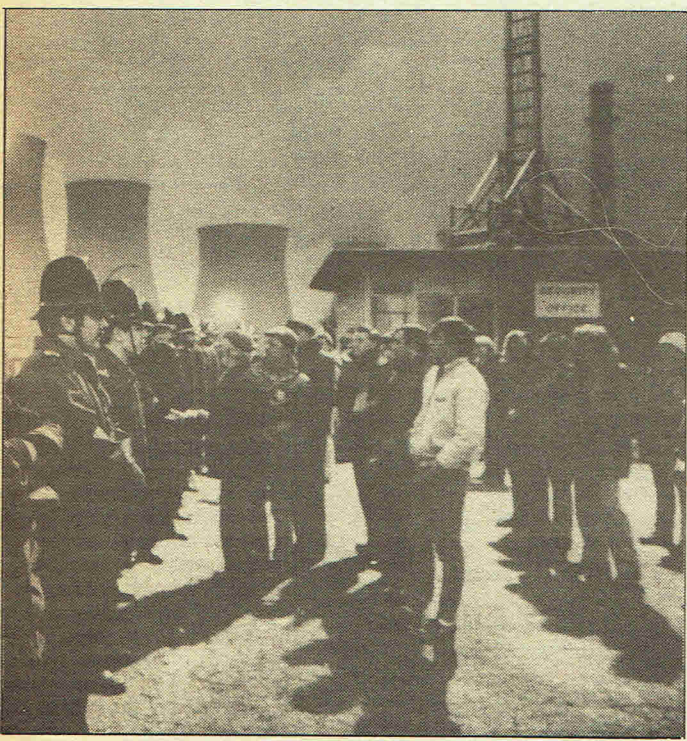


Photo: John Harris (IFL)

replied. It was pure coincidence our car load started with a few of us meeting in a Wakefield pub, and then off to Kenningley social club where we met a lad in the car park, all chipped in for petrol and went off in search of Silverhill colliery.

The next line of questioning

shows how the police really care. It seems we were all asked "aren't you interfering with democracy by stopping people going to work?" Touching isn't it?

When they were asked about Cortonwood miners being undemocratically thrown out of work they immediately

changed the line of questioning. Most of the miners were non-political but could see through these cosy little chats, and gave nothing away. Some were asked if we were better off in this country under the Tories than in Russia.

When some of us said we were in the Labour Party back came the comment, "Oh you're a Bennite".

The aim was to say as little as possible, but something had to be said when they brought chickens into our cosy little chat. They argued that miners were the same as chickens—if chickens stop laying you would get rid of them. It was pointed out that you can not compare miners to chickens—for a start miners don't lay coal.

## Families worried

They had plenty of time to play their games as we were held in the cells for eight hours. However with eighteen of us in the same cell morale was very high, with singing and joking throughout. It turned out later however that our families were worried. We had not been allowed to have any phone calls. Instead, at five-thirty we were told that our next of kin had been contacted. In reality it was ten thirty at night before the local coppers told our families.

Crossing a fence to get out

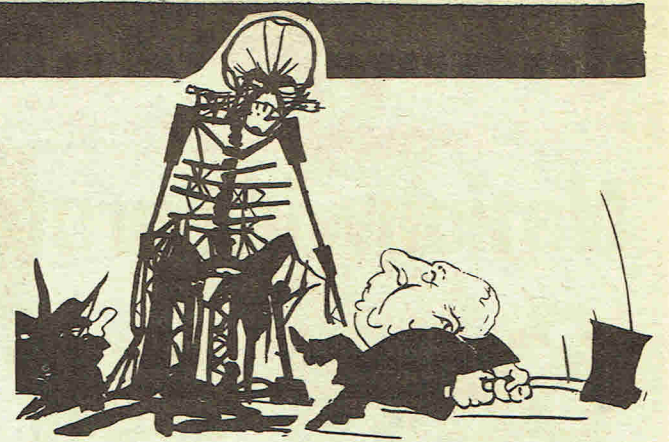
of a muddy field has, it seems, a more technical meaning. By the time we reached court it was 'action likely to cause a breach of the peace' and 'obstructing the police in the execution of their duty.' For this we now have to appear in court on 16 April.

## Still determined

There are that many of us that it might be a good idea to get a coach up for the return trip to Mansfield. What a joke if they turned us back at the Yorkshire border. We are now all on bail and not allowed near any NCB property apart from our own pit.

This sort of action won't defeat the miners. The response we got back at Kellingley social club was great, they gave us a real hero's welcome, and the union men in the club got the drinks in. We are all still determined to play our part in this struggle.

We have already started to form into teams and are going to approach every factory and workplace in the area for cash. You can help us get this work off to a really good start by hurrying donations to the Yorkshire miners appeal fund, Yorkshire and Humberside TUC, Trades Club, Savelmount Leeds 7.



## S Wales Protest



Photo: Dave Sinclair

Miners at South Celynon colliery.

**HUNDREDS OF** South Wales miners supported by LPYS branches and trade unionists marched through Blackwood, Gwent on Saturday March 31 on a demonstration organised by Rhymney and Gwent District of the South Wales Miners.

Lodges came from as far away as the Tower and Penhewceiber in the Cynon Valley and a bus load of Young Socialists came from Cardiff. There were also a number of nurses and NUPE members, miners wives and NCB canteen workers from the Oakdale Lodge.

The demonstrators marched through the valley's market town and with cries of 'Maggie out' and 'MacGregor out'. Many shoppers and shop workers applauded as the march went by. Not even the snow could deter them.

A rally followed the march. The audience exploded with cheers when Derek Gregory of NUPE presented the South Wales NUM with a cheque for £5,000. Terry Thomas, NUM area vice-president, explained the background to the dispute. He attacked police tactics, telling how one picket was arrested, taken to the police station, had his shoes and socks removed. The police then trod on his feet breaking his toes.

Emlyn Williams, S. Wales area leader, linked the miners' fight to the struggle against the Tories; "We have built our own communities, our own culture in these valleys and no-one will take them away."

150 copies of *Militant* were sold and dozens of *Militant Miner* posters taken.

By Frank Cuthbert  
(Caerphilly Labour Party)

## and file organise

LANCASHIRE MINERS are increasingly swinging behind the national struggle at the NUM, despite the decision of the area conference last Saturday.

The main reason for the confusion is the total lack of any campaign from the official leadership. Over the weeks the task of organising the fight has passed from the Lancashire executive to the branch leaderships. In some branches the initiative has been left to the rank and file.

### 'Don't strike'

The first reaction of the Lancashire executives to the official strike in Yorkshire and other areas was not to call out the area in support, but rather to call members to work normally despite the official pickets on their gates, and to conduct a ballot on 15 and 16 March.

In the week leading to the ballot vote the majority of miners in Lancashire refused to cross picket lines. This solidarity was often spontaneous and had an impact on the ballot vote.

### 'Do strike'

Traditionally a moderate area with a right wing leadership, the vote against strike action was the lowest of all the votes in recent years. This clearly showed a shift in the opinion of the miners. This was recognised at the local area conference on 17 March, which called on the NEC to hold a ballot. The right wing leaders called a week's strike because they saw the way the mood was growing. By calling a limited strike they could head off the movement and bring pressure on the NEC to

back down.

During the week of strike action, however, Bold and Sutton Manor colliery became involved in organising flying pickets. The success and the support received hardened their attitudes. Although the recall conference on 31 March called for a return to work that resolution was rejected unanimously at a full meeting of five hundred at Bold.

At Sutton Manor, in the presence of Sid Vincent, the right wing area secretary, less than thirty out of the three hundred workers were prepared to endorse the return to work. At Parkside colliery which had not been involved in flying picketing the previous week, the men voted to accept the conference decision by a margin of only five votes out of eight hundred present.

### Joint action

Since then Bold and Sutton Manor have established a joint strike committee, and have appealed to other pits to join with them. At Parkside increasing numbers came out on the morning shift and by the afternoon shift a majority of men had joined the pickets.

Substantial numbers refused to work at Golborne, Bickershaw and at Parsonage colliery. Only Agecroft was working normally at the end of the week, it's felt that they will be shamed into solidarity with the rest of the union.

Increasingly the demand for a ballot vote is being seen as a side issue to the real question, which is spreading the struggle.

By Gerry Lerner

## Lothian

**LAST SATURDAY 31** March, the NUM organised a very successful march and rally in Dalkeith, Lothian for the "miners' case" which attracted 500-600 workers. Miners and their wives and families were there with banners from Monktonhall, Bilston Glen and NUM Scotland.

Other unions such as the TGWU gave support and the LPYS with placards and slogans were strongly in evidence.

People on the demo and in the streets were saying that it proved the working class is a hundred times stronger than the Tories. People on the march's route were putting £ notes in collecting tins, one man put in all he had—it was his football coupon money!

## Ashington

**500 MINERS** staged a spontaneous march last Tuesday in Ashington, Northumberland, to protest at police brutality on the picket line and nearby Blyth power station.

## Red Row

**LAST WEEK** the first ever meeting of the LPYS in Red Row, Northumberland saw nearly forty people, including some 25 miners and miners' wives crowd into the *Grey Arms*.

The meeting was addressed by Bill Smith, branch secretary Whittle NUM and Steve Brown Wansbeck LPYS.

Much of the discussion centred around the role of the Labour Party. The chairman of Wittle NUM criticised the past role of right wing MPs, he called for a campaign to get youth into the party and get the right candidates for MPs. There was also scathing criticism of the position taken by some Labour MPs in the Nottingham area.

In closing the meeting the chairman appealed to the young miners in the meeting to join the LPYS, but above all to form an LPYS branch in Red Row.

## Mass sackings at BBC

750 BBC workers in scenic services and operations were sacked on 28 March.

They have been out on strike for six weeks against reorganisation plans which would involve the loss of 180 jobs out of 800 and the imposition of a complete change in working practices.

On Monday 26 March between 7-800 scenery men met at the Kensington Odeon for the most extraordinary ABS (Association of Broadcasting Staff) meeting

I have ever attended. The joint secretaries of the Entertainment Trades Alliance were there plus all the shop stewards and television full time officials. It was packed to the ceiling.

The floor asked for assurances they would get backing from other sections of the union. Tony Hearn (Gen. Sec. ABS) said "If need be we will turn the BBC into a Nottinghamshire pit." This was greeted with rapturous applause. He then

went on to say, "Gone are the days of '50s and '60s when we could negotiate every issue. I am of that school. But now we are in a whole new ball game that I will have to learn as well as you. This is the industrial relations of the 1980s."

It is essential that all other unions in the BBC support this strike. Remember, times are changing, even at the Beeb.

By Andy Herbert  
(ETA, ABS section)

## Police and strike-breakers in Barking

Photo: Neil Martinson.

**NINETY DOMESTIC** workers in Barking Hospital have been on strike for 2½ weeks now against their employers, private contractors Crothells Ltd, who have brought in scab labour protected by paid 'mindors' and the police.

The company recently negotiated its contract with Redbridge District Health Authority. This new contract means a reduction in workers' hours by a third, holidays cut from four to three weeks, no sick pay and imposed shift changes.

The workforce is virtually all women and the uneven shift work is impossible for those with children.

From 1 April, all of the women have been sacked some after twenty years in the hospital. The 24-hour picket has had immense support from local workers and labour movement activists.

Many lorries have refused to cross the picket line and the local TGWU branch has refused to collect refuse or deliver fuel. Also G&M workers at neighbouring



Police aid strike-breakers at Barking hospital.

hospitals have refused to do the laundry.

The picket line has been visited by many Labour Party activists, local shop stewards, Kent miners, the National Executive Committee of NUPE including Rodney Bickerstaff.

On Monday 2 April. The first coach loads of new workers were brought in at 6.30 pm. A large protest picket was present from 5 am. But Crothells brought people in with "mindors" and police protection. They were actually

picked up outside Barking police station.

Some of the women on the picket line and outside Barking hospital were assaulted by the "mindors" but the police did nothing.

One woman was sworn at and blew her top—she was arrested—making a total of four arrests so far on the picket line.

Some of the new workforce walked out immediately they found out that they were crossing a picket.

# Nationwide protests say; Save our services



"Democracy Day" 29 March.

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

The Tories' plans to abolish the metropolitan county councils are being opposed by workers throughout the country.

In London on 29 March over 40,000 workers demonstrated against plans to abolish the Greater London Council. Large numbers of GLC workers and trade unionists from other local boroughs in London were joined by contingents from all over the country including striking miners and miners' wives from Yorkshire and Kent.

The day before, London Transport workers closed down the capital to defend jobs against both the Tory local government plans and the Transport Bill. Every tube was out and 90% of the buses. The day's action brought home to many commuters the vital nature of public transport for any big city.

### Further action

Bob Law, a tube worker and member of East Ham NUR told *Militant*, "The unions and the labour movement must lead any fight to save GLC, ILEA and London Transport. This day mustn't just be a day to let off steam. We need further



On the demonstration on 29 March

action as the start of an industrial and political campaign to stop Thatcher putting us out on the stones.

"We will fight alongside all public sector workers. A privatised local government office cleaner is as much an attack on us as lost guards' jobs. To raise the understanding of trade unionists, we need to have meetings at every workplace like they've done in Liverpool. If, because of night shift, workers can't get to the meetings, then the meetings must go to the workers".

Outside London and Liverpool, the biggest demo was in Birmingham where

12,000 demonstrated. NUPE school dinner ladies sacked last month by Birmingham's Tory-controlled city council were out in force.

### Follow Liverpool

They had been offered new contracts losing 14½ days pay. No school meals were provided that day, such was the support. One banner read, "school's no fun on an empty tum" and some children were served dinner outside the Tory education chairman's house as a protest. Marchers were singing, "If Liverpool can do it, we can do it too".

Lil Stevens, NUPE National President, called for a Labour vote in May to keep the dinner ladies' contracts safe. When Labour is voted into control of Birmingham city council next month, the Tories' can be stopped in their tracks. If the councillors show the determination of the Liverpool councillors, the Birmingham workers have already shown where they stand.

The same message came nationwide—harness the power of the working class and the Tories' anti-democratic proposals can be beaten.

## Solidarity action

Continued from front page

companies threatened drivers with the sack if they turned back at picket lines. Now the unions are getting organised, threatening such bosses with mass blacking of products and contracts. Every employer should be warned: "You will intimidate anyone taking sympathy action at your peril."

The tremendous lead from the top in the T&G, ASLEF, NUR and ISTC to black coal movement should now be backed up by mass meetings in all areas, addressed if possible by striking miners. We have issued a special leaflet to South Wales steelworkers reminding them of our blacking of steel movement in their 1980 strike, sacrificing earnings for their cause because we knew that fewer steel works meant fewer outlets for coal.

We are calling on steel workers to black coal movements now so we can get agreement between the NUM and steel unions on the amount and type of coal needed to keep blast furnaces ticking over. If we lose, more steel plants will go, if we win we can together ensure the investment and development needed for steel and rail freight as well as coal.

The panic measures from the ruling class won't stop the strike spreading. After the NUM NEC, the threat of legal action under Tory anti-union laws will be heard again. They are holding back at present so as not to forge further unity amongst the miners.

If the NCB or any individual employer goes for injunctions and seizure of union funds the entire labour

THERE WERE about 200 to 300 pickets at Dawmill colliery facing about 500 to 600 police. We noticed them singling people out. Then the bus arrived with the local miners.

The pickets pushed forwards the police lines to try to get near the bus. I stood at the back of the line because of an accident I'd had, but the police pushed me into the thick of it.

Then the snatch squad moved in. I was grabbed and dragged 100 yards being tripped up all the way and punched in the ribs. They pushed me into a van.

Four policemen held me, searched me and punched me in the face and sides. Then I was taken to Nuneaton police station with the seven other boys arrested. All had been grabbed for no reason at all.

I think I had been singled out because I had a batch of leaflets and had handed over a letter from the lodge secretary at St John's to the lodge secretary at Dawmill colliery seeking permission to distribute leaflets in the pit.

The beans and the grub at the station were horrible but the spirits among the men were good. We were singing working class songs as they drove us away.

### By a St Johns colliery picket

movement must respond with solidarity action immediately. Plans must be underway at once with leaflets and meetings putting forward the issues and the action needed. In every area solidarity committees should be initiated by local Triple Alliance members, trades councils, or Labour Parties.

An injury to one is an injury to all. United action for victory in the battle for jobs and dignity! The battle lines are drawn and we can't afford to lose.



Arguing for the strike at South Celynon, Wales

Photo: Dave Sinclair



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