

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 702
1 June 1984

25p

Unite with miners



THE ARREST of Arthur Scargill must not go unanswered. Like thousands of other miners during this strike, Arthur Scargill has been arrested on a trumped-up charge of "obstruction". The fact that no one was being obstructed is of no concern to the police.

There will be a widespread belief that this arrest was a deliberate, preplanned move by the police, not just to impose a fine, but, as with other miners, to try and impose stringent bail conditions that would keep him well away from picket lines, and therefore stop him carrying out his duties as the president of the National Union of Mineworkers. In the event, the magistrates rejected the police request and granted unconditional bail.

This is one of the biggest ever struggles in Britain to save jobs, if not the biggest. Miners are being faced by unprecedented intimidation and brutality by the police with riot shields, dogs, baton charges, mounted police, mass arrests and by terrible financial hardships, all for the crime of fighting for jobs and the future of their communities.

The strike was provoked by Thatcher and the ruling class, after they had made the most careful and painstaking preparations. In 1981 the government stepped back from a confrontation from the NUM, but only to lay the ground for a battle with the miners on a day and in circumstances that they would choose.

According to the *Times*, Thatcher set up a secret committee to prepare detailed plans for a battle with the miners.

This is an answer to all those who say that somehow this strike should be "non-political"; it has always been



Police intimidation at Orgeave, Yorkshire on 29 May (report page 3).

Secret plan

AN NCB Scottish area document marked "Secret 85/86 Budget" has come into the possession of the Scottish Area NUM and *Militant* supporters in Lothian.

The document, which projects the Scottish Area's manning levels, tonnage etc. through to 1986, shows that the Coal Board expect to cut the Scottish workforce by some additional 4000 jobs.

The Scottish coal field has already been decimated over recent years with the closure of Kinneil, Bedlay, Cardowan, Sorn and

Highhouse. Now, during a radio interview given on Radio Forth, Bert Wheeler, Scottish Area Director of the NCB has made it absolutely clear that more job losses are on the way, although the figure of 1500 is being advanced to disguise the board's real intentions.

Wheeler has claimed that the Barony colliery in Ayrshire is in danger of closure, through geological difficulties becoming worse because the strike has allowed the working face to deteriorate and the development to almost close. Similar arguments were used by Wheeler in respect of Bogside colliery during the national overtime ban,

which preceded the strike. These claims are obviously untrue; in fact it appears from the document that both the Barony and Bogside colliery had been earmarked for closure in any case.

Closures and redundancies

The document also reveals that the board are still determined to push through the closure of Monktonhall by the end of June 1985. Yet this colliery has held British and European records for coal production and has phenomenal reserves of coal in the Musselburgh bay area.

Substantial reductions in manpower are also outlined for Killoch, Seafield and Bilston Glen collieries, with job losses at all remaining Scottish pits. The resolve of Scottish miners will only be

hardened as these facts come to light. Already the occupation of the NCB Scottish Area headquarters in Edinburgh by some 80 miners, protesting at the Board's refusal to pay out annual holiday pay, marked the beginning of a new tactical campaign of miners in Mid and East Lothian.

Although the token occupation only lasted 10 hours, the police were obviously at a loss as to what action would oust the men. Similar activities can be expected following the latest revelations. There can be no doubt that similar plans exist in all the other areas

By Chris Herriot
and Gordon McKinley
(Chair and vice-chair
Mid and East Lothian
Trades Council)

Donate to Militant

THE LABOUR movement is crying out for a daily paper. The Labour Party and TUC say they cannot afford one. We say we cannot afford not to have one.

Militant can no longer cover everything in a weekly paper. We could report on issues and disputes involving all different sections of the working class if we came out more frequently.

With £156,254 in the bank we are only a short step away from finally securing new premises. Once in we could then seriously prepare for a daily paper. But first we need the rest of the necessary money. Rush us a donation straight away and look forward to reading the ideas of Marxism—every day!

American bank crisis

Wall Street Panic

FOR SEVERAL days, the fate of America's eighth biggest bank hung in the balance. On "Black Thursday", 24 May, the London Stock Exchange experienced its biggest panic fall for ten years.

All over the world the exchanges were taking a tumble. Wall Street was at its lowest level for thirteen months.

The Continental Illinois Bank crisis threatened to spark off the biggest financial collapse since the Creditanstalt Bank of Austria went bust in 1929 and led to the Wall Street crash.

Only loans totalling \$7.3 billion from other banks and the Federal Reserve Board enabled it to stay in business, but the whole episode sent shivers down the spine of the entire capitalist class. No sooner had Continental Illinois been shored up than rumours began that the even bigger Manufacturers Hanover Bank was in difficulties. All the big banks are tied together by a thousand financial threads, and if one goes bust, large chunks of the financial establishment would go with it.

At the root of the crisis is the massive budget deficit built up by the US. The Reagan government is spending some \$200 billion a year more than it gets in taxes, a "Keynesian" approach which is the exact opposite of the sound budget Reagan claims to stand for. The difference has to be made up by borrowing. In 1981 the state was borrowing 3 cents for every dollar it spent—by 1985 it will be 20 cents.

The inevitable result of this increased demand for money capital is a rise in interest rates. Not only is the American government borrowing more, it is paying more to do so. The budget deficit is reckoned to be guzzling 90% of America's private savings. By sucking in cash, it is actually depriving US industry of potential funds for investment from within America by "crowding out" the money market. The rise in US interest rates has forced every western government to jack up its own rates for fear of a massive outflow to the US. The interest rate "war" heaps new burdens on the world economy and on the peoples of the underdeveloped countries in particular.

If rates keep rising, countries with huge debts, like Argentina, Brazil and the Philippines, will simply not be able to pay the interest. Elaborate steps have been taken to "reschedule" the loans so that the books can be cooked to make no reference to "non-performing" loans.

The total debts of the third world countries now totals \$700 billion, ten

countries alone owe \$500 billion, and for every 1% that interest rates rise, they have to find an extra \$4 billion a year. Sooner or later the banks will have to stop pretending that this money will ever be repaid.

Meanwhile, mere rumours of default by the debtor countries are enough to start a panic. Continental Illinois, with \$2.3 billion of "problem loans" at the end of the first quarter of the year, and Manufacturers Hanover, with proportionately more loans outstanding to the six main third world borrowers than any other, were always likely targets.

As a measure of just how vulnerable they are, the panic was actually provoked by a comment on a TV show on 5 May, when a panellist, Robert Novak, said, "it would take some calamity like the collapse of Continental to make the Federal Reserve loosen its monetary policy". Japanese depositors started to withdraw their funds and European and then American ones followed suit.

For American big business, a "boom" has

credit more available within America, the cost would be a movement of funds from US banks, a fall in the value of the dollar and inflation. It could only be done therefore if accompanied by deflationary measures by Reagan—either further cuts in public expenditure, or increased taxes, or both. He has no wish to do either this side of the election in November.

Eventually, however, he or his successor will have no choice; in a capitalist society, it is the laws of the economy which are sovereign. When this happens, most probably in 1985, it will mark the end of the fragile "boom" of the past year. And, as always when the American economy catches a cold, its weaker rivals catch pneumonia. There will be a new and deeper recession than that of 1979-1983.

The political effects of this will be enormous, nowhere more so than in the US itself, where workers, who, at least a lucky few of them, have been given a glimpse of a better life, will once more face soup kitchens and begging. For millions in the debtor countries it will mean starvation.

Bank crises are not in themselves death blows to the capitalist system. In the last analysis, governments will have no alter-



Chaos in Wall Street, New York, in 1929, when fortunes were lost in minutes.

been taking place. In the first quarter of 1984, production rose at an annual rate of 8.8%, though much of the growth has been in service rather than manufacturing industry. The capital investment for this expansion was being borrowed from the banks, who while deprived of funds from within America, were attracting huge deposits from the rest of the world at high interest. Last year, Continental Illinois got 40.5% of its funds from Eurodollar deposits.

There is no way all this can continue without an explosion of inflation. If the Federal Reserve were to act to bring interest rates down and make

native but to bail out the banks which go under. But they are a very sensitive indicator of the underlying trends. The Continental Illinois episode shows that even in its "boom" periods, capitalism is incapable of providing any secure future for the working masses, nor the small businessman who would be ruined in a banking collapse.

Only the socialist transformation of society, with the banks nationalised under workers' control and management, can show a way forward out the present nightmare.

By Pat Craven



Coke convoy with police escort, from Orgreave to Scunthorpe.

Unite with miners

from page one

political. It began by cynical Tory political calculations—it must now be brought to an end by the traditional solidarity of the labour and trade union movement. Thatcher wanted an industrial "Falklands", to defeat the miners and prepare the way for an even more savage assault upon the rights and conditions and jobs of the British working people. Victory in this strike for the miners would therefore be a victory for every worker in Britain; it would turn the tide in the struggle for jobs and against the attacks of the Tories.

According to *The Guardian* (30.5.84), the NCB are in fact now preparing to concede the withdrawal of the immediate plan for 20 pit closures. If this is true, it is only because of the magnificent stand of the miners, the wider solidarity, the effect already on coalstocks and, above all, the effect on the morale and combativity of the wider labour movement. If the strike is strengthened, a full decisive victory is possible. Demands should be made publicly for specific guarantees of investment in every pit and workshop to ensure the preservation of jobs in the British coalfield.

Despite all their carefully laid plans, Thatcher and the Tories would have already scurried into an ignominious defeat but for the fact that a section of the miners are still working. The campaign to convince the non-striking minority to fight actively alongside the striking majority must therefore continue.

Regular mass propaganda must be produced, explaining the issues, again and again if necessary, spelling out the fact that no pit is safe. This propaganda, week by week, day by day if possible, should be taken to every

non-striking miner by a well-organised campaign of door-to-door deliveries, meetings in welfare clubs and pubs, and also by street meetings. Striking miners in non-striking areas face particular hardships. While the battle continues to strengthen the strike in these areas, therefore these striking miners must be given every possible financial help and assistance by the National Union and by the wider labour and trade union movement.

The whole labour movement in Britain must now begin to rally around the miners. The Australian Miners Federation, and seamen, have shown the way by their magnificent solidarity which could even possibly put the jobs of Australian miners, and seamen at risk. This magnificent support must be matched by the whole labour movement in Britain.

At local level, direct approaches should be made, backed up by arguments and mass leafletting, to steelworkers, lorry drivers and power station workers. The leaders of the TGWU and the ISTC should back up this campaign with a national internal drive in support of the miners. Wherever possible mass meetings should be organised to call for solidarity, addressed by striking miners.

In the power stations where the national leadership have refused to stand by the miners, direct approaches should be made to the shop stewards' committees. Coal-fired power station workers should be asked to black coal, and workers in oil-fired and nuclear power stations should be asked, at the very least, to generate only the normal amount of electricity.

Following the brutality of the police on the picket lines, the NUM have now put out a call for support on picket lines by the wider labour and trade union movement; this call must be taken up energetically in every area. Conferences of shop stewards should be organised, specifically to prepare for such solidarity action. These conferences should be called either directly by the NUM, by local trades councils or by the Broad Left Organising Committee.

This strike also now demands national action and a national co-ordinated drive for solidarity by the Trades Union Congress. It would be naive however to put too much faith in the TUC, given its role recently in the ASLEF dispute, in the battle over the Stockport 6, over GCHQ and, more recently, Murray's attempt to sabotage the one-day strike organised by the Yorkshire and Humberside TUC. The left unions should therefore come together independently to organise solidarity.

If the NUM were to put out a call for a conference of union executives to discuss in detail a plan for solidarity action, then such a call would receive massive support. The NUM could lay before such a conference in detail all that was needed in solidarity action, to stop the movement of coal and win this strike.

High on the agenda of such a conference would be the calling of a one-day general strike, which, if it was organised, would involve the members not only of the left wing unions, it would inspire the rank and file of every union in Britain. It would result in a magnificent show of strength of the entire labour movement around the miners and prepare the way for an historic victory.

By Brian Ingham

Miners' dispute

'Just like Gdansk'



The riot police march in at Orgreave, Scunthorpe.

THE BATON charge has returned. This brutal police method of attacking pickets, synonymous with the industrial battles of the 1920s, has become a standard tactic of today's police. It was used at Warrington and was used with the utmost force at Orgreave on Tuesday.

The baton charge has nothing to do with 'preventing crime'. The idea is to hurt people, intimidate people, frighten people.

Below, Wendy Brown of Rotherham LPYS graphically describes how this was used on the Orgreave picket line on Tuesday:

We arrived at 7am. There was already about 1,000 pickets with many more ar-

iving by the minute. By 8.30am, police began to move us into two groups. In the end there were two main groups of miners about 300 yards apart, with mounted riot police in the middle ground. Only six pickets were allowed at the gate. About 9am the other group began shouting and trying to get up to us, but they were herded back into the car park and rendered useless.

Mass picket

They tried to separate us even further. We were near Scargill and he was attempting to co-ordinate the action through a megaphone, telling us to separate when the horses came through, then rejoin again.

By 9.30am more pickets arrived, about 7,000 in all,

and then the real battle began. It was the most terrifying thing I have been through in my life. It was like something from Gdansk. What made it worse for me was that it was all happening in the village where I'd lived most of my life.

Mounted police were charging in swinging their batons wildly. I was with Sheila, another YS member, and a girl I went to school with who, funnily enough, I hadn't seen for 10 years. At one point we just had to hold on to each other as the police just kept charging at us.

I saw an elderly miner of about 60 have his head split open by a baton. They kept rounding us up into groups of 600 and charging at us. If you tried to get away they rounded you up again.

The riot police would march straight up to you shouting 'one two, one two' and provoking the miners: "Come on then, have a go".

Snatch squad

It wasn't all one way though. The police line was broken at one point and if it hadn't been for idiots at the back throwing all sorts of things which kept landing on the lads at the front, we probably could have blocked the gate. But the front men had to keep getting out of the way of the missiles.

And one snatch squad policeman went too far and got snatched himself! They had to send police horses in to get him back—he was in a far from healthy state when he emerged from the picket.

Photo: John Harris (IFL)

Bosses endanger plant

IF THE future of Scunthorpe steel works is jeopardised, it will be the fault of BSC management, not the miners. They have been prepared not only to put the safety of the works at risk but also the steel workers themselves.

Despite past practice and agreements by the unions, management have attempted to maintain production of hot metal.

An internal BSC circular, dated 23 May, shows the seriousness of the situation. It is from MD Ward (presumably Danny Ward the area director) to all 'Red Grade' managers (the emphasis is ours):

"Queen Victoria (one of the blastfurnaces) was damped down on 5 April. The furnace at present appears to be in a reasonably stable condition. Since that time operations have continued on Queen Mary/Queen Beth with iron output limited by supplies of fuel to an average 19,400 tpw (tonnes per week) over the last three weeks. This has involved very lengthy off blast periods together with a reduction of blast volume to the minimum possible for continued operations. We have no precedent for operation over such a lengthy period in this condition."

It continues later: "It has become evident that opera-

tion in such circumstances cannot be allowed to continue and the danger to plant is reaching an unacceptable level." This circular shows that management are pushing the furnaces to their limits.

Blastfurnaces have to be kept banked up with coke even if they are not producing, otherwise they become useless. In all previous disputes, from the miners' strike in 1972 to the steel strike of 1980, this was done at Scunthorpe in agreement with the unions. Yet in the current dispute BSC is using the allotted amount of coke to produce metal at the possible expense of one of the furnaces.

The management are also afraid of showing the effectiveness of the miners' strike. In past disputes which affected the plant—such as the miners and lorry drivers etc—steel men were laid off. Yet at the present they have been ordered to take their holidays now, are found alternative work, anything rather than lay them off.

And suspicion over management's 'commitment' to keep the plant working were aroused long before the dispute. In the past coal stocks at the site had always been kept at a quarter of a million tonnes. Yet from October last year, this was reduced to 100,000 tonnes.

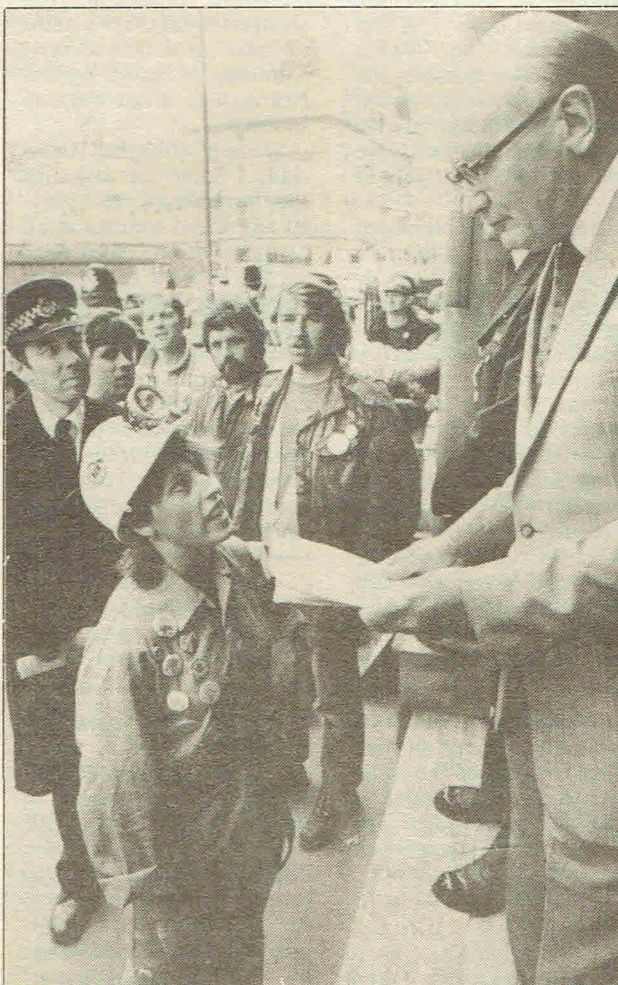


Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

Miner's daughter and Aylesham LPYS member Tracey Owen hands in a petition signed by thousands against pit closures to the NCB headquarters in London, on Tuesday, May 29. This followed a demonstration called by the LPYS and supported by the Kent NUM, which was joined by hundreds of miners wives and support groups. The next day, Kent and North Derbyshire miners occupied the HQ.

Yorks police kept back

IT WAS noticeable at Orgreave that the South Yorkshire police were kept away from the battle, and held in reserve. Some were very bitter at what was happening.

One policeman told us his father was a miner and was in the picket somewhere. He said they didn't want anything to do with it—they had to live in the communities; what had happened today would never heal. He'd come into the police force to fight crime, not his family.

He said he hadn't thought much about a trade union for the police before but this had shown the importance of proper trade union rights for policemen.

Another policeman said, pointing to the riot squads: "Those bastards have been brought up from London. They're up here to harm you. They're nothing to do with us."

By Derek Morely
(Rotherham LPYS)

Orgreave-BSC to blame

THE PRESENT situation at Orgreave coking plant has been deliberately set up by BSC management. They want to drive a wedge between the Triple Alliance unions.

The fact that Orgreave has stood out as an example of what can be achieved by close liaison between the trade unions—in this case the NUM in Yorkshire, the TGWU at Orgreave and the NUR and ASLEF at Tinsley—has meant it being singled out as a prime target for attack. It was originally agreed that as a means of maintaining safe operating levels at Scunthorpe steelworks 15,700 tonnes of coal would be allowed to be moved by rail from four Yorkshire pits to the coke ovens at Scunthorpe.

Dispensation

At that time it was agreed that if ready made coke was required from outside, then a dispensation would be sought and granted on condition that the coke came from Orgreave and was moved by rail. Management at Scunthorpe was well aware of this outlying agreement.

By 15 May it was apparent that at least one of the blast furnaces at Scunthorpe was beginning to be in danger of a collapse. What didn't emerge was that this was due to iron production levels being maintained in the other blast furnaces, rather than an even 'damping down' procedure being carried out. At this stage nothing was done through the proper channels by the steel union to seek coke from Orgreave.

By 21 May the situation had deteriorated. It was made known to the unions through the area director Mr Danny Ward, that coke was going to be moved by road from Orgreave. Tuesday 22 May was occupied by much frantic phone calling on the part of ISTC officials, while BSC management busied themselves with threats to the TGWU at Orgreave that it would close as soon as the strike was over if the membership failed to cooperate. On Wednesday 23, scab lorries with massive police protection began to ferry coke to Scunthorpe.

All this needs to be considered alongside the fact that a joint trade union meeting was planned for

Thursday 24 May, at which a dispensation would have been granted. BSC management were well aware of this meeting and did not want it to take place. They were also aware that the immediate response of the NUM to the organised scabbing at Orgreave would be total blacking of all coal to Scunthorpe.

Shield for management

A number of important questions arise. Why did the steel unions at Scunthorpe do nothing through the established channels until the last minute, effectively providing management with a ready made pretext? Why was it not made clear that iron making was being continued in excess of minimum safety levels? Again sadly the unions provided a shield for management.

But most importantly why did BSC management insist on moving coke by road when they knew that this would lead to a total blacking of the coal that Scunthorpe was receiving, and when they also knew that a further 24 hours would have led to a dispensation from the NUM?

BSC desperate

The answer of course is that the BSC are desperate to force a split between the miners and the other Triple Alliance unions. The potential strength of the Triple Alliance make BSC management and their Tory backers quake with fear.

Contrary to claims on Danny Ward's part that his job is to 'keep Scunthorpe open', the reality of the situation is that BSC management are prepared to risk the future of Scunthorpe in a vain attempt to undermine the growing support for the miners.

It is now up to the ISTC and the National Union of Blastfurnacemen members at Scunthorpe to quickly repair the frayed relations that exist between themselves and the NUM by making a firm statement that all scab coke ferried in from Orgreave will be immediately blacked.

By Geoff Bright
(Tinsley NUR)

Miners' dispute

Newport dockers back the strike

THREE WEEKS ago (issue 699) Militant printed a photograph and caption which misleadingly implied that a Russian coal shipment was being unloaded in through Newport Docks. In the following issue Militant printed a correction.

To set the record straight, Tommy Doherty and Roy Shepherd, Chairman and

Vice Chairman of Newport Registered Dock Workers TGWU branch, spoke to Paul Traynor for *Militant*:

All coal blacked

"All movement of coal through the dock is blacked, except with the agreement of the NUM. We've been liaising with the miners right from the start of the dispute. We're in constant contact.

"We're strongly organised and fully support the miners. If there's any ques-

tion over import and export of coal we're in touch with the miners straight away. The North Quay which was in your photograph is normally full of coal, now it's just scrapings.

"Our links with the NUM go back a long way. In 1980 during the bust-up over imported coal we impounded the Casparia coal ship for five weeks until the NUM, NCB and the government came to an agreement on the proportion of imported coal to local coal.

"As a result of that agree-

ment we lost 1 1/2 million tonnes of coal imports—a lot of work. We're sometimes in a difficult position on things like coal and steel imports, but we have to take sides.

Weekly collection

"We're doing what we can to help the miners. We have a weekly collection from about 230 men which raises around £450, which we give to the NUM co-ordinator who organises buying and distributing food."

Photos: Barry Spicer.



The Clowne and Barlborough Womens Section. Feeding miners is important but not the only activity.

How the women organised

MILITANT SPOKE to Sue Alberry, Kit Pashley, Pauline Proffitt and Pearl Waller of Clowne and Barlborough Women's Action Group.

"CHESTERFIELD had already set up a Women's Action Group so we went along to a meeting to see what was going on. We got a shop by lobbying the parish councillors, we knew there were shops empty.

"We got it on the Thursday and by the Friday we started doing breakfasts. We've fed the children at Easter for two weeks and on

Mansfield appeal

Dear Friends,

I wish to appeal for donations for the Mansfield Solidarity Support Committee. The committee is composed of women delegates from each colliery where miners are on strike.

The committee's object is to provide money for the purchase of food for the many soup kitchens that have started during this dispute. All the effort that has gone into this committee has been at the initiative of the women.

We have delegates from 18 areas where miners are striking in Notts. We, the miners' wives, are determined not to

allow our families and men to be starved into submission, we will use our collective skills in this dispute and I can assure you with our backing the miners will win.

All donations will be acknowledged with our official receipt and a letter. An S.A.E. would be appreciated, but it is not necessary.

Weekly rota

"We organise a meeting every Saturday afternoon, last Saturday we organised a rota, 15 are involved. We've helped start quite a few groups elsewhere. Cresswell, Doe Lea, Silverhill and the other day two ladies from Killamarsh wanted some information. After the strike we'd like to stick together and if anybody else had a strike we'd be glad to help."

allow our families and men to be starved into submission, we will use our collective skills in this dispute and I can assure you with our backing the miners will win.

All donations will be acknowledged with our official receipt and a letter. An S.A.E. would be appreciated, but it is not necessary.

Fraternally yours,
Jacky Naylor
Treasurer
Mansfield Solidarity Support Committee
c/o Jacky Naylor
29 Big Barn Lane
Mansfield
Notts, NG18 3LT

LPYS mass meeting

THERE WAS football-like enthusiasm for a joint LPYS/Young Miner meeting in the village of Fitzwilliam in Yorkshire—nearly 300 people attended, a good cross section of the village.

The chairman's remarks brought thunderous applause: "Our road to victory lies in the power and solidarity of mass picketing. It's going to be a long battle that can only be won by halting coal at every power station, every dock yard, every steel plant.

"It's no good digging the garden or polishing cars, because if we want a job for ourselves, a future for our kids, if we want to stop the Tories destroying our communities, then don't sit back. Get out and fight, get out on the pickets."

Rousing cheers came also for Mrs Turgoose of the Miners' Wives support group and Richard Clarkson of Wakefield LPYS and editor of *Young Miner*. He explained why young miners were fighting for their future and how youth had been harassed and arrested by police. He said a sign of the support amongst youth for the miners was well illustrated by the sale of 300 *Young Miner* on the doorsteps of Fitzwilliam.

By Mick Conway
(Ackton Hall NUM)



Feeding the pickets.

Industrial gypsies

THERE ARE over 400 out at our pit out of 1,400. Most are 'on the sick' and only about 80 are registered as strikers and turning up at the picket.

Many men at our pit think they are all right. They say to us "You're mad; there's work here". They are not looking ahead, they have closed their minds to the danger and accepted the lies of the NCB.

Eight out of 11 pits in South Notts are 'unprofitable', according to NCB criteria. If these pits close then men transferring over will make profitable pits 'unprofitable'. Even profitable pits could develop unforeseen faults and if they do not receive extra investment in machinery they could

become unprofitable.

They should be remembering why most of them had to come to Nottinghamshire in the first place—only 10% of those working at Cotgrave are Nottingham born. The rest of us come from Wales, Scotland, Northumbria etc because pits were closed there. We are industrial gypsies, but this time unless we fight there will be no jobs at all.

The police have been hard on us. There have been 11 arrests today for really silly offences. The police will not even let us stand on the roadside near the pit because they say the verges are part of the highway. Once an inspector stopped us playing cricket and arrested the batsman for having an offensive weapon ie the bat—a Yorkshireman of course!

Coal is being moved by many scab lorries although we have turned back lorries from regular NCB equipment suppliers who are

respecting picket lines. Another heartening fact is that pithead stocks are dropping fast. Although 1,000 are working, because many key men like faceworkers are on strike, production has slumped (it takes six months to train up a faceworker). Contrary to press reports Nottingham is not working 'normally'.

We are struggling financially. Some of us with families have still not received any social security at all after ten weeks—even what we are entitled to. We are relying on donations from the labour movement as there is no support from the branch committee and little from the area. We must thank the efforts of the supporters of *Militant* who brought us our very first contribution and their help since in raising funds.

By Terry Martin
and Wynford
(Cotgrave NUM,
South Notts)

Around the country

STUDENTS FROM Essex university in Colchester have been fully involved with the miners' fight at Wivenhoe. Several have been arrested and some threatened with eviction from the campus for giving flying pickets a bed for the night. The authorities have now threatened the withdrawal of the Student Union's lease on their buildings if it continues to offer the NUM support.

By Alec Game
(Essex University
Labour Club)

OVER 70 people attended a joint meeting called by Kilnhurst NUM and Rawmarsh LPYS. Speakers included Shareen Blackall for the Young Socialists, Bob Gilbert of Kilnhurst NUM and Pat Wall, president of Bradford Trades Council.

By Mick Mulcahy
(Swinton LP)

THE NALGO Broad Left in the East Midlands put pressure on the union's District Council to support

the miners. A resolution on the 12 May council meeting which condemned the union executive's recent donation of £10,000 was defeated. The meeting went on to agree an excellent £2,000 donation.

By John Merrell
(East Mids Gas HQ
NALGO)

THAMES VALLEY LPYS were joined by miners from Cotgrave colliery in Notts to raise cash. Over £130 was raised with donations from workers at BL in Cowley, taxi drivers at Reading rail station, and even a pin stripe executive surreptitiously put a fiver in the bucket!

THE KIRKBY Miners' Aid Committee had a good response to a food collection on 25 May. We managed to fill up four vehicles with food after a door to door collection. Earlier £282 was raised in Kirkby town centre (in an area with 30% unemployment) and Knowsley NUT, (despite their own battles) raised £106.

By Jim McGinley
(Chair, Knowsley North LP)

LOTHIAN LPYS and Militant supporters have been at the forefront of collecting for the miners. At one of the

local breweries, where a Militant supporter is convenor, union members are paying a pound a week levy, and the LPYS has held street collections raising between £30-£50 each time.

By Andy Clachers
(Scottish LPYS)

A MINERS' rally has been called for Saturday 2 June at the Market Square, Topaz, Bury, starting 1 pm. Speakers include Malcolm Gregory, Bold NUM, Mike Lee, LPYS, Christine Sullivan, a miner's wife, and Cllr Derek Boden.

THOUSANDS JOINED a miners' support march through Cannock, Staffs on Saturday. The march swelled to twice its original size as it passed through the town, numbering 5,000. NUM general secretary Peter Heathfield addressed the march, with Dennis Skinner MP also getting a great reception. There were also cheers for Merseyside dockers Larry Cavanagh who called for a general strike. He said this time it would be different: "In 1926 workers had illusions in the TUC—now they have no illusions in the TUC!"

When steel workers struck

THE TORIES came to power in 1979 intent on taking on the unions. The plan, drawn up by Tory MP Nicholas Ridley, was to start with what they thought were weaker unions, especially using the nationalised industries as the testing ground.

The 13-week steel strike in early 1980 was the first major strike of the Tory plan. The miners strike mark the beginning of the end of the plan and the government.

There are obvious links between the two industries, and many common features of the strikes. In both cases the Tories thought they had the upper hand at the start. They were wrong twice over. The miners, like the steelworkers then, have unlimited energy and determination, making huge sacrifices and travelling the country to fight for their rights.

Class divisions

The only reason the steel strike ended before a full victory was the retreat of the leaders. The miners have the advantage of a more determined leadership.

Since 1980 the class divisions in society have grown, the Tories have learned from the past, making the police more of a force to take on workers' struggles. They have learned semi-military manoeuvres, national control has increased, and their equipment has been improved to take on our class.

The Tories have also introduced a long list of anti-union laws and taken away benefits to try and starve strikers into submission. But the lawyer's pen is no match for the pickets' will. The Tories make great talk of upholding law yet none of the recent laws have been used for fear of provoking a wider strike movement. The Tories remember what happened to Ted Heath!

The working class have learned lessons, too. The

By Bill Hopwood

mass support for the miners shows the increased anti-Tory mood, while the growth of miners' wives support groups is a historic step forward for workers' unity in battle.

However one group, the right-wing union leaders, seems to have learned nothing. They are scared of the lawyers' pen and claim, despite the facts, that workers are not prepared to defend their rights. They have given the miners no more practical help than they gave the steelworkers.

The NUM, like the rank and file steelworkers, have to get round the barrier of the TUC's passivity by mobilising the support shown in the magnificent donations raised at work, in Labour Parties, in street collections and from individuals. This support has to be built upon by visiting workplaces and holding conferences locally and nationally to plan for action.

Rank and file in forefront

The steel strike was pushed forward by the rank and file strikers. At first there was some confusion in the ranks but as the battle developed the unity grew. The strikers had huge energy, travelling Britain to picket stockholders and even tiny ports. They gained international solidarity.

What was lacking was a leadership equal to the members. The leaders lacked determination and a strategy for victory. They made major concessions to British Steel instead of leading the final stage to



Miners support the steel workers in a rally in Cardiff, 1980.

victory.

Bill Sirs, secretary of the main steel union ISTC, in effect says "we didn't ask the miners to fight for us so why should we fight for them?" He was wrong in 1980 and he is wrong today. The Triple Alliance grew out of the steel strike as the three industries steel, rail, and coal are linked together.

This important step however has remained too much a meeting at the top. What is needed, especially now, is a real unity of the workers based on workplace delegates meeting together to decide joint action.

The key to outright victory then and now is hitting profits in private industry. The Tories have wasted millions of public money to try and beat the miners, but when private profit is hit the Tories will run to negotiate. In 1980 the steel leaders gave up just as the final squeeze started. Miners must ensure the squeeze goes on.

To hit private industry quickly needs the mass involvement of miners. The lack of mass meetings in all

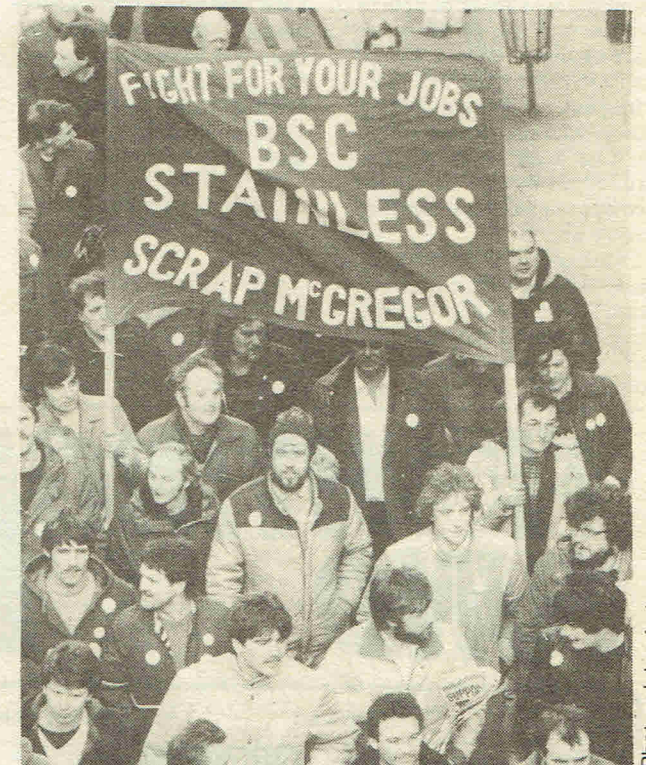
localities was a weakness in the steel strike; steelworkers were not involved and the running of the strike was not in the hands of the pickets. Mass involvement is the key to mass picketing especially of the power stations.

Practical support

Miners' delegations going to every factory and workplace to explain their case would win support. Workers sympathy would become practical support.

By these methods the lies of the media can be defeated. A major failing of the steel leaders was the lack of a clear policy for workers in the industry. Miners today are fighting for their future but the plan for jobs, pits, investment, production, pay etc needs to be spelled out clearly.

In other words a Miners' Plan for Coal to answer MacGregor's plan for dole. This could be linked with the wider issues facing the working class of destruction of jobs in other industries.



Members of the rail, steel and coal unions march in 1983.

The miners and their families all have shown unrivalled determination. A clear strategy and leadership

will unite the huge support for the miners fight. This is the way for a miners victory and a step forward for all.

Video kills the media slurs

THE MINERS' Campaign Tape Project is a series of eight videos covering different aspects of the strike from the viewpoint of the miners themselves.

They are produced by independent technicians in the union ACTT and film and video workshops to counter TV and press propaganda. They have been endorsed by the NUM.

So far four films in the series are available and can be hired free of charge by the NUM, and for about £5 by other labour movement organisations.

"Not just tea and sandwiches"

The first film "Not just tea and sandwiches" is about Women's Support Groups. Miners' wives themselves describe the problems and

hardships they face, particularly from the DHSS withholding payments. As one woman put it, what they need is not charity like the ruling class give to appease their consciences, but solidarity from working class people to working class people.

NCB butchery

The second film, "The coal board's butchery—no pit is safe", describes the decimation of the industry, and how Scargill was ridiculed when he revealed the NCB's plans 2 years ago. Miners tell how they were moved from pit to pit as they closed down, only to be moved on again in 6 months or 2 years. Miners were being hit to help the NCB make profits, but as they say in the film "if they can't sell coal at a profit—that's their problem—miners are paid to produce coal, not to sell it." Another miner points out

that nationalisation didn't go far enough. While the coal is produced at a loss, firms in associated industries make a fortune out of coal in their monopolies of distribution, machinery and so on.

I thought the third film, "Solidarity—trade unions support the miners" the best of them all, interviewed NUM members show that their union is the vanguard of the labour movement. Old film of Salfley Gates and the release of the Pentonville 5 demonstrate the strength of the movement and describe the atmosphere during those victories.

Other workers at risk

Alongside film of solidarity action for the miners, Dennis Skinner and Arthur Scargill show that if the miners lose, the Tories will attack other unions and that each pit closure means redundancies in associated industries.

The final film "The strike and the industry" gives facts and figures on the coal industry. Unfortunate quotes from MacGregor and Thatcher about the future for coal are placed alongside facts and film of what they have actually done.

Political dynamite

These tapes would be dynamite if they were shown on television—but that is about as likely as the Sun printing the truth. It is up to the labour movement to organise meetings, particularly for people involved in the dispute, to counteract biased media coverage. All LPYS and Labour Party branches, unions, strike committees and Womens Support Groups should get hold of the tapes.

They would be particularly effective as a basis for discussion, each tape lasts just 10 minutes and can be hired from your nearest

Revenge on MacGregor

THE MINERS' strike is a marvellous opportunity for steelworkers to repay old scores and send the steel butcher MacGregor packing. If steelworkers show weakness in taking solidarity action now, then it will be all the more easier to shut a major strip mill, either Ravenscraig, Llanwern or Port Talbot, despite the recent investment in the plant.

With a desperate economy depressed even further, the demand for steel would be reduced, no matter how competitive a steel plant maybe. If the product cannot be sold then it will be shut. It is as simple as that.

We have a crazy situation in Port Talbot where unsubsidised coal is imported from around the world, when we have enormous untapped resources of the best

quality coking coal on our doorstep in Margam. My own union, the Electricians Union met recently and voted almost unanimously to organise a £1 levy of all the members in the plant.

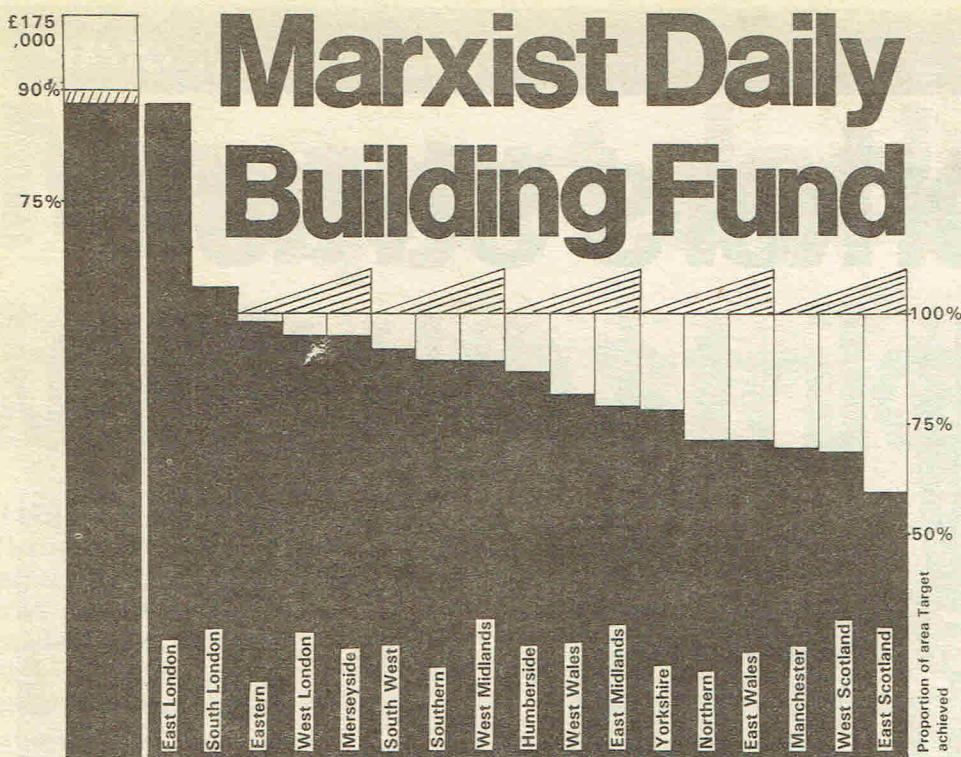
This is just the tip of the iceberg. There is a far greater reservoir of support amongst other unions in the plant for the miners; if only it was properly tapped and organised.

By Richard Morgan
(ETU BSC Margam personal capacity)

Article first published in *Militant South Wales Strike Bulletin* No 1.
(Bulletin available, 5p plus p&p, from R Davies, 181 Hanover Street, Swansea)

Anne McKay reviews the Miners' Campaign Tape Project

NUM area HQ free to miners or from Platform Films, London 01 278 8394 or Trade Films, Gateshead (0632) 775532 to other Labour organisations. All tapes are VHS.



AFTER PASSING the £150,000 mark last week we are slowly creeping towards the new target of £175,000. With £4,227 in this week our total is £154,802 which leaves a further £20,198 to raise.

We need the weekly amount to increase substantially if we are to get the money in time to move. When we have raised the full amount we should be able to move into the premises we are buying. Then we will be able to move towards a more frequent and ultimately a daily Marxist paper.

The huge sum already raised shows how determined our readers are to see that come about.

One of the problems with a daily paper will be distribution but we will overcome that by getting the paper into every workplace. The distribution and retail of

newspapers is quite a profitable business. Martin Newsagents has announced first half-year profits of £2.9m with a further £300,000 made over Easter alone. This explains why Guinness have made an offer of £48m for the business—obviously there's some money to be made there.

Distribution

We have yet to see whether big newsagents like this will be prepared to take a daily paper committed to its nationalisation and the

abolition of the profit system as a whole. It's unlikely! Whether they do or not we will see that our paper continues to reach new areas and build its influence and support.

This week's contributors include: Paul Shenton, Preston, £100; Elaine Crosbie, Broadgreen, £80; Lynn Williams, an unemployed single parent in Dearn LPYS, South Yorkshire, £24; Andy and Liz Scott, Maidstone, £30; Lynne Cuthbert, Caerphilly, has given £300 redundancy money. An unemployed reader in Motherwell, M Cansick, has given £20, Hertsmere YS, £15; Mark Billington, Borehamwood, £40; £255 came from Bristol including £45 from Julia Hagerty.

FIGHTING this week **FUND** £3217

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
Eastern	801	28.6%	2700
East Midlands	534	16.4%	3050
Humberside	545	16.4%	1700
London East	614	18.1%	3500
London West	577	16.5%	2100
London South	510	15.3%	2850
Manchester & Lancs	796	23.9%	3700
Merseyside	1101	33.2%	4800
Northern	555	16.6%	4050
Scotland East	402	12.0%	2450
Scotland West	542	16.3%	3300
Southern	1156	35.7%	4400
South West	359	10.9%	2050
Wales East	373	11.6%	2100
Wales West	249	7.5%	1950
West Midlands	981	29.4%	3800
Yorkshire	668	20.2%	4500
Others	8139	24.7%	12000
Total received	18901	56.3%	65000

THE TREMENDOUS work being carried out by *Militant* supporters all over the country does not go unrecognised. The Littleton Colliery Strike Committee, Cannock, has promised to give £100 to our fighting fund once the strike is over. These miners see that the fight goes on and the labour movement needs to be armed with our ideas to ensure victory.

We have raised thousands of pounds for the miners' strike funds but we have to raise money for our own work as well. Without funds we could not carry out all the necessary tasks such as helping the miners in this disputes.

This week £3,218 was raised but we still need to raise

over twice that every week if we are to achieve our target. Every area must ensure that there are fund raising activities organised over the next few weeks so that the money comes rolling in. Sporting comrades should follow Dick Robson and Alan Andrews who have sent in £43 as the first installment of sponsorship money for completing the Worthing marathon.

Donate

There is plenty of time to organise a jumble sale or a party, preferably both. Take the appeal sheets round your workmates and ask them for a donation. If we explain the role of our paper then workers will be prepared to give us money. The raffle

tickets should be an easy way of making money and pushing your area's column along.

Remember, also, to have rattling tins with you at every paper sale. £3 was raised in one tin in Paisley and £3.95 in Birmingham. If this were repeated by every seller we would sail past the target.

This week's donations include:

- N Smith, Hull UCW £30; H Whyte, Paisley NALGO £10; Alan, Swinton LP £7.35; M Waik, Upton Park £5; G Kreiger, SPD Germany £8; B Clare, Glasgow NALGO £3; M Millar, Glasgow NALGO £2; D Dawson, Stafford Poly £3; ex-'Wing & Webb' Women Workers, Cannock £2.20; C Gould COHSE Trainee Nurse, Islington £1; J Gilbert, Disabled Miner, Mansfield £1; S Williams, Cardiff £1.35.

ADS

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

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

Now available on cassette: all centre page articles from issues 668-692. Send either seven blank C-90 cassettes or £6.30 payable to 'Militant Tapes'. Also available on cassette, last two issues MIR. Send either two blank C-90 tapes or £1.80. All orders to: 'Militant Tapes', 26 Ashton Terrace, Harehills, Leeds 8, or phone: (0532) 493440.

'Militant Turn Left for Workers' Unity and Socialism' T-Shirts—£3.25—white, yellow, navy, dark green.

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

SOCIALIST YOUTH PENS Available with logo and slogan 'Get the bosses off our backs'. 20p each or 15p for ten or more. Order from: *Socialist Youth*, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT—cash with orders.

HEAR Dave Wetzel (Chair, Greater London Transport Committee). 'Socialists need Esperanto for international understanding'. Monday 4 June 6.30 pm, County Hall, London SE1.

9th South Wales Militant summer camp. August Bank Holiday, Friday 24 August—Monday 27 August.

August Bank Holiday, Friday 24 August—Monday 27 August. Beautiful surroundings. Excellent introduction to the recent struggles of the international working class. Superb holiday meals and snacks provided. Plus video and other camp entertainments for both young and old.

Talks on: Marxism and the trade unions, Central America, Ireland, Middle East and Marxism and the Labour Party.

Cost only £12.50 per person (including snacks). £2.50 per child (5-16 yrs) FREE UNDER 5's. Day trippers a minimum of £3 donation per day to the Fighting Fund. Venue—Horton, Gower, Near Swansea.

Book now. Due to past successful camps the first 250 adults will be our full quota.

Further details from, and cheques payable to 'Swansea Summer Camp'—181 Hanover Street, Swansea. SA1 6BP. Tel Swansea (0792) 463623. During day phone Swansea 466631.

Registered Promoter: D. Smith, 14 Station Road, Brightlingsea, Colchester, Essex.

MILITANT SUMMER DRAW

1st Prize — £500 Holiday in resort of your choice

2nd Prize - Video worth £300 3rd Prize - Camera worth £100

4th Prize — 5 individual prizes of £20 worth of socialist books

PRICE OF TICKET 10 PENCE

All cash, counterfoils and unsold tickets to be returned to I. Mentmore Terrace, London, E8 3PN by first post Saturday 7th July 1984. The draw takes place on Saturday 7th July 1984.

Printed to conform to Part II of the Lotteries and Amusements Act, 1976 & regulations made thereunder and registered by the Promoter. Also all other Lottery Acts in Force.

McKay's Printing Service (T.U.) 72-74 Camberwell Road, London SE5 0EQ Telephone: 703 - 5825/6

Nº 018171

Get your raffle tickets from your local Militant seller

SELLING Militant



Picket line at Aberthaw power station. Photo: Barrie Jones.

THE GROWING confidence of working people and the understanding that the Tories can be beaten is being reflected in new orders for Militant. We received new orders from UCW members in South West London after a discussion at UCW conference, where over 330 copies of *Militant* were sold.

New orders are coming from all parts of the country from Blairgowrie in Per-

thshire to East Surrey. Not only are we getting new orders we are also seeing existing orders increase in number with our supporters in Cork, Dundee, Bexhill and Hull increasing their orders in the last few days.

Join our team

Hundreds of papers are being sold at union conferences not just at the largest but even at the section conferences such as the NUR shopmen and perma-

Meetings

For events in your area contact your local Militant seller.

HULL: 'Liverpool and the miners—Kick out the Tories—Socialism in our Time'. Speakers: Terry Fields (MP Liverpool Broadgreen), Stuart Borthwick (Youth Delegate Yorkshire Main (NUM)). On Friday June 1, 7.30 pm at Trades and Labour Club, Beverley Road.

MANSFIELD: Militant Readers Meeting, Mansfield Library, Westgate, Mansfield. 'Save the pits' Monday 4 June 7.00pm. Speaker: Terry Fields MP, Ian Isaac (S Wales NUM EC, personal capacity).

WANDSWORTH: Why the Miners and Liverpool Council must win. Speakers: Terry Fields MP (Liverpool Broadgreen), Notts miner, Mick French (Secretary Wandsworth Council JSSC). At: Lower Hall, Battersea Town Hall. On: Wednesday 6 June 7.30pm.

WELWYN GARDEN CITY 'What Militant stands for'. The Meeting Room, Peartree pub, Welwyn Garden City. Monday 4 June 8.00pm

SUNDERLAND: Marxist Discussion Group. At: The Labour Party rooms, 5 Grange Crescent (Stockton Road).

Thursday 31 May at 7.30 pm—Marxism and the British labour movement.

For further details, contact Kath Eglington at 4 Alice Street, Sunderland.

Militant 'save the pits' T-shirts. Black background with red & white illustration. Available in sizes M & L. Price £4.00 + 50p p&p. Bulk orders £2.50 each for 10 or more.

Cash with order. All proceeds to Fighting Fund. Orders to: Eddie McParland, 80 Troughton Road, Charlton, London SE7.

WOMEN'S MINING PAMPHLET

Militant Miner—'Women Fight to Save the Pits'—printed and published by Aylesham Women. 70p (incl p+p) from Robbie Segal, 10 Westbourne Gardens, Folkestone.

ment way conferences where there were record sales. In all the main towns and cities we have sellers of *Militant* but to beat the Tories and win the battle for socialism we need sellers in every street! Why not join the growing team of *Militant* sellers? Bulk orders can be obtained (minimum 5, post free) from 'Militant Circulation', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone 01-986 3828.

By Dave Farrar

Reagan out!

IF LPYS branches are lost for ideas on how to build support for the protest against Reagan's visit in June, they should look to the activities of the Young Socialists in the North East.

The Northern Region LPYS have called a special 'Day of Action' for Saturday June 2 which in turn will ensure a high turnout for the massive London demonstration against Reagan on June 9.

The day of action kicks off with an open air rally at Eldon Square, Newcastle, with speakers from the LPYS, trade unions, the NUM and Latin American socialist movements. It

won't be all speeches though. There will be stalls with socialist books and magazines on sale, with two local bands, the Reptiles and Chinea performing on stage.

Youth festival

Activities will continue into the evening with a 'youth festival' at the City's Guildhall. A debate will start the evening off between the YS and the Young Tories on 'Should Reagan stay in Britain', which should prove very entertaining given the hammerings the Young Tories have received in the past. Then a disco will be held with a real ale bar open till late—£1 waged, 50p for unwaged.

Preparations for June 2 have shown there will be a good response to the day of action and the protest on June 9. NUPE agreed to produce many of the leaflets. Area public meetings have been held and the LPYS petitions against Reagan's visit have found no shortage of signatures. During a lobby of the council in Gateshead a group of miners took the petition and filled out forms asking for people interested in the LPYS and the campaign against Reagan.

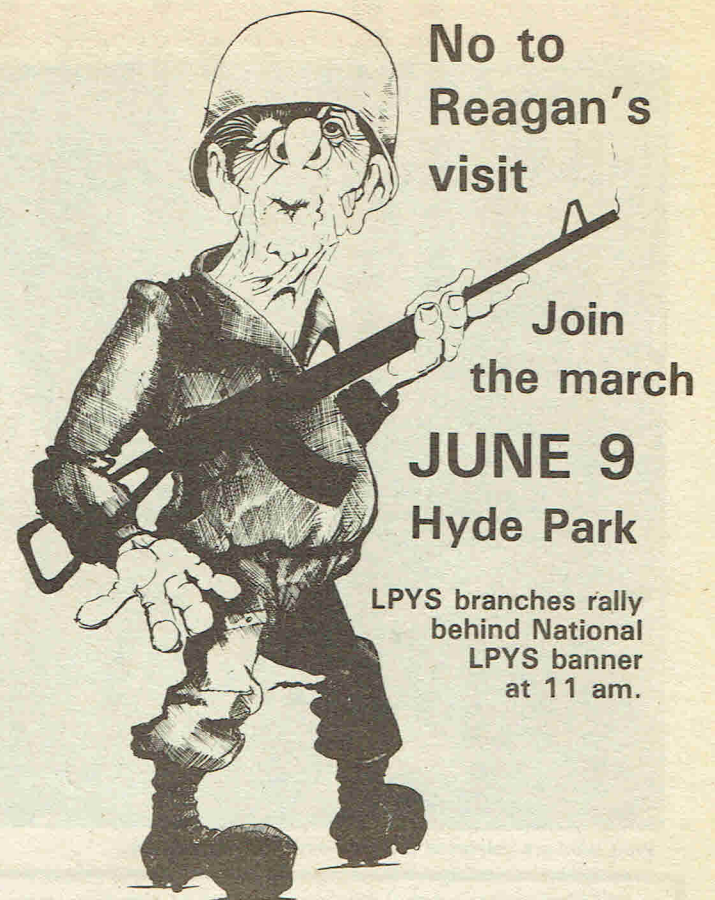
The President's brain may be missing, but when it comes to building support for June 9, the Northern region LPYS have got their heads screwed on!

Say it with dollars...

RONALD REAGAN doesn't just represent the millionaire class of America—he's a millionaire himself. A small part of his fortune comes from gifts

from 'admirers' who Reagan just might remember when he's formulating policy. Last year alone he received £5,400's worth of presents. These included a £120

leather jacket, a £357 pair of cowboy boots from a shoe manufacturer and a £180 string tie with a gold clasp. Another supporter with a more realistic view of the President donated a hearing aid.



PNL—no 'freedom' for fascism

REACTIONARIES everywhere have applauded the High Court's ruling in favour of Patrick Harrington.

Mr Justice Mars-Jones ruled that this National Front member must be able to attend lectures at North London Poly, and he later ordered lecturers to name students protesting against the fascist's presence.

The judge's intervention, through the court tipstaff backed by riot police, has been hailed as a great victory for freedom of speech, academic freedom, etc. From Tory mouthpieces like *The Times*, now an up-market version of *The Sun*, this is predictable.

But reservations about resolute action against Harrington from within the labour movement and the NUS reveals a failure to grasp the real issue involved.

Neil Kinnock and Gerald Kaufman for instance, speaking for Labour's front bench were reported in *The Guardian*, (23 May) as supporting the right of "loathsome minorities" to express their views in open society.

Indeed socialists defend the right of all political groups, including the Tories and other reactionary trends, to express their views and campaign for support. But fascists are a different question entirely.

If they succeeded in their aims they would destroy all democratic rights. If they came to power, as the bloody history of Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco makes clear, they would smash the organisations of the labour movement which fought to establish democratic rights in the first place and which remains the only real guarantee of our democracy.

Harrington is indisputably a leading member of the fascist National Front, and the vicious tactics used by these thugs in both the NLP and the surrounding area make the fundamentally anti-democratic nature of their aims brutally clear.

The NF, together with other fascist elements, has published hit-lists of "enemies"—people marked out as opponents and targets for attack. Bookshops, community centres and advice bureaux have been smashed up or burnt out. Black and

Asian people, including children and old folk, have been brutally assaulted, in some cases fatally.

No one can be allowed the "democratic right" to carry on this kind of activity.

As always, the NF in North London use loathsome racist tactics. These are especially offensive and threatening in the NLP which has a high proportion of Black and Asian students. The labour movement has a duty to defend them against racist attacks. But racialism is not just a threat to black people, it is a deliberate weapon aimed at splitting and under mining the labour movement itself.

Booting Harrington out of the college, however, would be a blow to "academic freedom" according to the judge—and to some Labour voices as well. They appear to have forgotten that Hitler burned the books and purged "Jewish" professors. After Pinochet murdered democracy in Chile he applied the same methods to academic life there.

The methods used by the court to uphold academic freedom, moreover, are totally authoritarian. The tipstaff smashed his way into the college escorted by police in full riot gear. They occupied the college, curbing the movement of hundreds of students, and they prevented students in the lecture attended by Harrington from walking out in protest.

Not only that but the tipstaff actually intervened in the lecture and told students not to attempt to relate the Philosophy of Locke to recent politics—as this might be provocative to Harrington! This is police-state thought-control, not academic freedom.

It is vital that the labour movement upholds a policy of excluding members of fascist organisations from the colleges. Events at NLP make it clear that this is necessary if democratic rights and any element of freedom are to be preserved. Some are saying that action against Harrington will make him appear the "injured, innocent party", and play into the hands of the NF. The answer to this is that the labour movement must conduct a campaign to bring it home to people what is really at stake.

SUPPORT THE MINERS—MERSEYSIDE LPYS OPEN AIR CONCERT AND RALLY

Sunday June 10, 1pm at Walton Hall Park, Liverpool.

Bands appearing:

- The Farm
- Western Promise
- The High Five
- Pete Wylie (from Wah)
- Newtown Neurotics
- The Faction

Speakers: Terry Thomas (Vice President, South Wales NUM), Steve Sullivan (Sutton Manor NUM), Derek Hatton, LPYS speaker. Admission free but a collection will be made for the miners—give generously!

Supported by Liverpool City Council and Merseyside County Council.

Fight racist threat to schools

LAST MONTH in April 500 Asian youth boycotted Batley High School in a mass walkout against racism. Asian pupils had been beaten up, racist comments are apparently made by one or two teachers, and discriminatory separation has taken place.

A separate class for Asian pupils exists, class 'X-one'. Black pupils are lumped into it and it is labelled as a backward class (suggesting the myth of racial inferiority). Also Asian pupils are released earlier at the end-of-term break, as NF influenced aggro-seekers conduct their attacks then. This positive discrimination has only provided fuel for the racists.

Ex-pupils of the High School who have joined the NF are trying to recruit pupils, and it is reported that they have one or two members in the school.

Three days after the walkout a public meeting of Asian parents and some pupils took place. Feelings ran high and protests were made at some speakers on the platform as pupils fought against any cover-up of the facts. However, an Asian Parents' Association was formed and a number of demands were made, including the scrapping of 'X-one' and end of term leaving.

One report said the police indicated they could not give the students special protection (maybe Yorkshire miners would contest the consistency of police rulings).

Police were on stand-by-out-



Black and Asian youth are facing increasing attacks by racists, not only on the streets but in the schools as well. Photo: Militant.

side the High School as the term ended in April, as rumour was that some older Asian youths were going to the school to give protection against further attacks.

The LPYS were also there to help, and hand out leaflets for a public meeting they had

organised on the miners' dispute. They appealed for a pupil to attend the meeting on the platform as well, to explain the background to the walkout.

By Mohammed Jasat
and John Vasey
(Batley LPYS)

Coleraine—stop the NF

THE NF are planning to hold a rally in Coleraine, Northern Ireland on Saturday June 9. The Labour and Trade Union Group and the Young Socialist have initiated a counter mobilisation against the NF, planning a counter demonstration in Coleraine on that day. Already there is growing support for the anti-fascist campaign in the Northern Ireland trade union movement.

Ballymena Trades Council

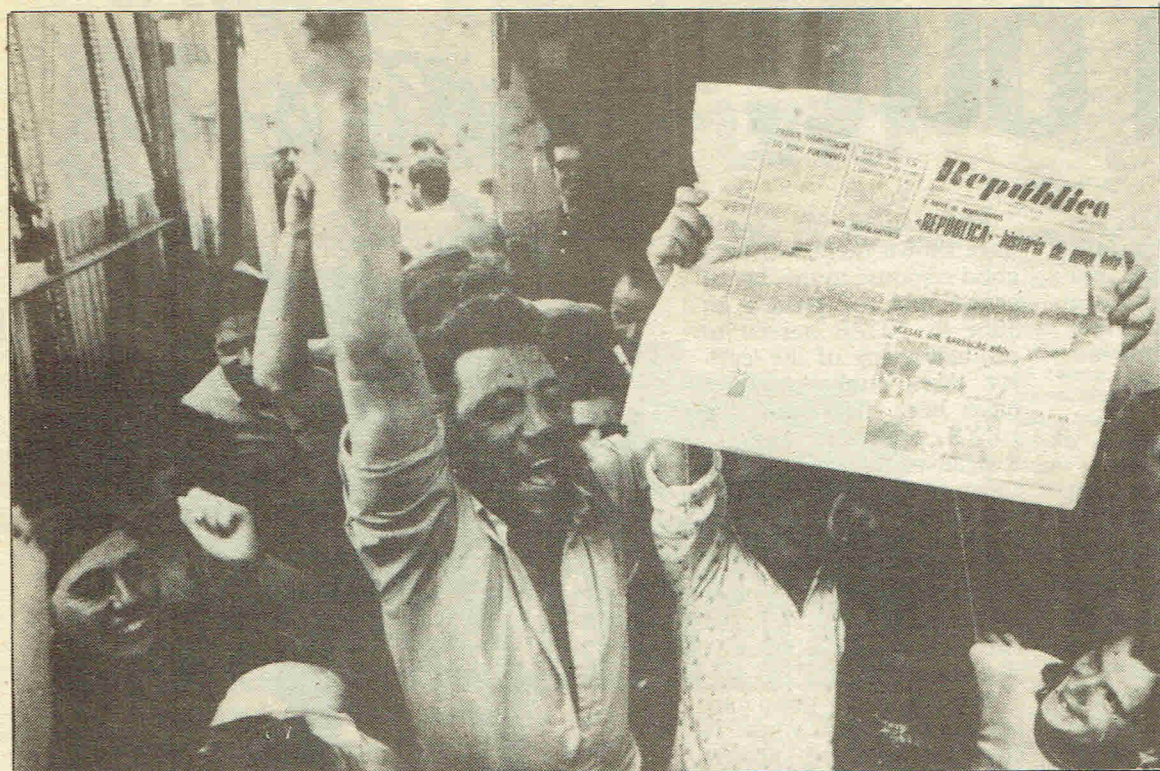
are backing the counter-demo and other Trades Councils are hoped to follow suit. The Northern Ireland TGWU and the local AUEW district committee have taken posters publicising the anti-NF mobilisation.

The campaign is also appealing for support from Scotland and other areas—contact the campaign at 4 Waring Street, Belfast or phone Belfast 233032.

us?

about

what



Print workers celebrate the take-over of their factory.

TEN YEARS ago this summer, Portugal was passing through a period of revolution.

As the long period of post-war economic upswing came to an abrupt end, the events following the overthrow of the Caetano regime gave the ruling classes of Europe and the rest of the world a foretaste of the shocks that were awaiting them in a new period of capitalist decline.

In this article WILLIE GRIFFIN looks at the lessons of the 1974 Portuguese revolution.

The banner headlines of *Militant* after the 25 April overthrow read "REVOLUTION IN PORTUGAL". As the opening lines in the article explained;

"All the forces of world reaction are watching with horror the revolutionary storm which is sweeping Portugal.

"They understand from their class point of view that the events there threaten the regime in Spain, and the stability of Europe, Africa and Latin America.

"The removal of the old hated regime of Caetano and Tomaz by a military coup provoked an upsurge on the streets of the main towns.

"Demonstrations of hundreds of thousands surged through Lisbon over the weekend with hastily made banners proclaiming "Power to the workers", "End Colonialist wars", "End capitalist exploitation", "Peace, bread and freedom" and "Peace, bread and socialism".

After 48 years under the whip of fascism and dictatorship the Portuguese workers moved determinedly to end the squalor and misery of their lives. Strikes and sit-ins spread like wildfire, factories were occupied and the old fascist managers evicted. Printworkers and journalists sacked the old fascist editors, many taking over the newspapers themselves.

Torturers seized

A crowd of over 5,000 surrounded the notorious Craxious prison securing the release of all political prisoners. Groups of armed workers roamed the Lisbon streets flushing out members of the fascist secret police, the PIDE. An estimated 10% of the population had suffered at the hands of these torturers.

They were utterly despised by the workers and popularly known as "animals officered by intellectuals"; now the workers had their revenge on the "Portuguese Gestapo".

Workers seized government buildings to use as union offices. The Communist Youth took over the former headquarters of the fascist youth movement and only relinquished it after impassioned

appeals from their leaders. On May Day 1974 between 500,000 and 750,000 thronged through the streets of Lisbon. The whole of society was affected by the revolutionary mood.

Not only the workers but peasants, housewives and students joined in; most significant was the active participation of rank and file soldiers and sailors in uniform. "Sailors demonstrated with workers on May Day, carrying banners calling for socialism. Most ominously, for the Junta, a letter in the journal 'República' signed by soldiers, sailors and airmen on active service in Guinea demanding peace." (*Militant* 14 June, 1974)

The symbol of the revolution was a red carnation. Not only did everyone wear a red carnation in their lapel, they also flowered from the rifle barrels of soldiers and sailors. In other words power lay in the hands of the working class. What began as a coup d'état on 25 April 1974 opened up a process where the masses were brought on the scene in a period of revolution and counter-revolution in Portugal.

Today the lessons of Portugal are a closed book to the leaders of the Socialist and Communist Parties throughout Europe, but there are rich lessons for every serious worker, especially Young Socialists, fighting for the transformation of society. The most fitting way to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Portuguese revolution is to begin to seriously study the events and draw the lessons of the revolution.

Portugal was (and still remains) the most backward and impoverished country in Western Europe. 40% of the population of 9 million were dependent on agriculture for their living: this was not only the highest in Europe but high even by Latin American standards. 40% of the population were illiterate and 2.5 million Portuguese were forced to emigrate to escape the threat of unemployment or of a compulsory four years conscription.

Inflation was running at 20-25%, 13 years of bloody colonial wars in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau had dragged

Portugal to the brink of economic collapse. Two-fifths of the government budget was spent on the armed forces, mainly to finance the colonial wars; 55,000 Portuguese troops were pinned down in fighting against the war of liberation in Angola alone.

Revolution always begins at the top, or as Leon Trotsky, who with Lenin led the 1917 Russian revolution once said, "The wind always blows the tops of the trees first". The crisis showed the split between the more far sighted representatives of capitalism, who understood the impossibility of winning the colonial wars and continuing in the old way, and the old imperialist guard who wanted to continue as they had done for 50 years.

The crisis in society was most acutely reflected in the armed forces. The process of demoralisation was explained in *Militant*:

"Gradually the will of the ordinary Portuguese soldiers to fight was undermined. Desertion spread. The young workers and peasants were loth to leave their native land and fight an interminable war, not in their interests. Those in Africa were increasingly unwilling to venture into the bush. The mood of disaffection spread to the junior officers and NCOs nearest to the rank and file." (*Militant* 14 June)

Surgical instrument

These junior officers were organised in a secret society called the Armed Forces Movement (MFA). It is worth quoting *Militant* at length on the nature of this movement.

"The MFA grew out of the barren soil of fascism. It represented the ideas of the educated conscripted youth, dragged into the endless nightmare of the African colonial wars, doomed to death, disease or crippling wounds in the lost cause of the Portuguese empire, stagnant in a society drained of its lifeblood by conscription and emigration.

"In organising the coup which served as a focal point of a whole population groaning under the burden of an obsolete administrative bureaucracy, it became the surgical instrument removing the cancer. But the MFA was never more than a small secret society of officers.

"It resisted the most reactionary generals but it did not involve the rank and file, the sons and daughters of the poor workers and the peasants who it excluded from all knowledge of its activities... It is in effect an officers' freemasonry, composed of the younger generation of the privileged." (*Militant* 21 March 1975)

It was the MFA who organised the coup of April 25 1974. But they placed at the head of the new provisional government General Antonio de Spínola. Spínola had been dismissed by Caetano after the

PORTUGAL

The revolution



What lessons

publication of his book "Portugal and the future". This book had been widely (and wrongly) advertised as advocating the withdrawal of Portugal from Africa, earning Spínola the allegiance of the younger officers and the reputation of being "a liberal" and "a democrat".



General Spínola.

In fact Spínola had fought alongside Franco in the Spanish civil war and volunteered for Hitler's armies on the Eastern front. He had earned a reputation as "the butcher of Angola" and was responsible for the murder of freedom fighter Amílcar Cabral in Guinea.

On top of this he was director of the two biggest monopolies in Portugal, CUF and Champalimand. Indeed Spínola was as *Militant* put it "an archreactionary from the tip of his jackboots to the glint of his monocle."

But the Portuguese revolution had also revealed that the working class was the most powerful force in society. In the following months over 1.5 million from a workforce of 3 million would join a union. The Communist and Socialist Parties had the support of the over-

whelming majority of society. Overnight they became mass organisations. In contrast the ruling class had no viable political party.

Yet the workers did not take power. Far from it—the government passed into the hands of a military Junta headed by generals of the old regime. The provisional government included capitalists and even former fascist ministers. How on earth can this be explained? Leon Trotsky explained how a similar process took place following the first flush of victory in the February revolution of 1917 in Russia.

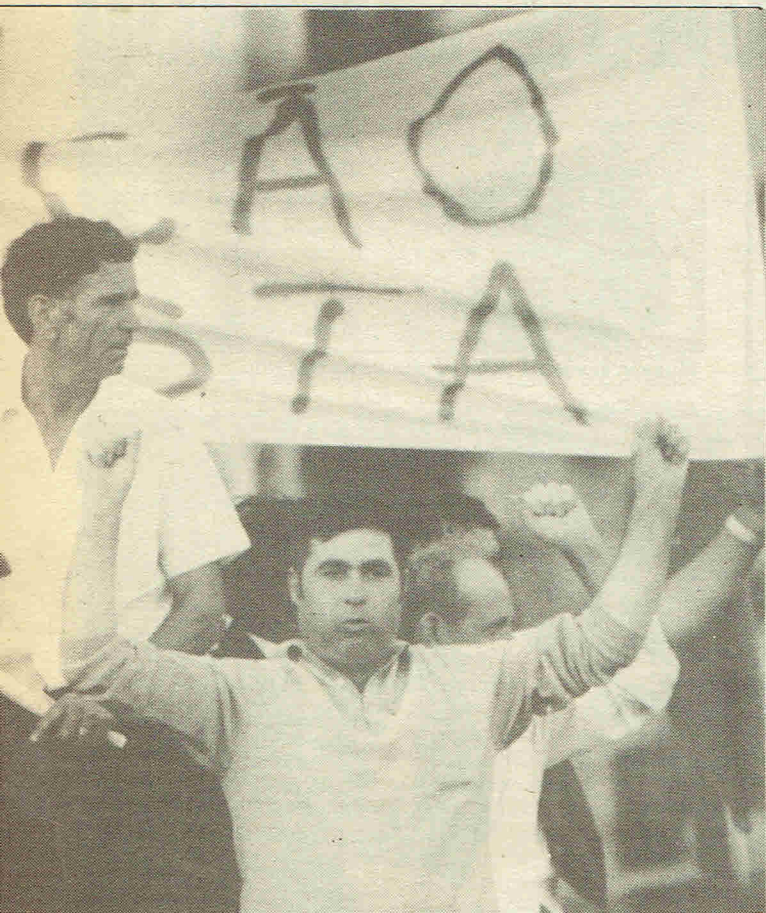
"However even in those very first days of victory when the new power of the revolution was forming itself with fabulous speed and unconquerable strength, those socialists who stood at the head of the soviet were already looking around in alarm to see if they could find a real boss. They took it for granted that the power ought to pass to the bourgeoisie.

"...(They) were worrying only about one question. Will the bourgeoisie—politically isolated and hated by the masses, hostile through and through to the revolution—consent to accept power into their hands? Its consent must be won at any cost. And since obviously a bourgeoisie cannot renounce their bourgeois programme, we, the socialists will have to renounce ours." (Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution*)

Drawing further on an analogy between the Portuguese revolution and the Russian revolution of 1917 *Militant* at the time stated;

"In every great revolution there occurs in the initial stages, the equivalent of the 'February days' in Russia 1917. With the overthrow of the Tsar and emergence on the stage of political life of the popular

AL 1974 onary storm



May Day demonstration—Lisbon.

s for 1984?

masses, down to the most backward and illiterate strata of the peasantry, the illusion was created of unity of all the social classes on the programme of democracy.

"The natural feelings of the masses of relief and the sense of immediate victory, made them an easy prey to the phrasemongering of the Mensheviks and SR's. (Social Revolutionaries) who joined hands with the liberal capitalists in the provisional government." (Militant 14 June).

More treacherous

The reason why the Portuguese revolution was not carried through to completion was that the leaders of the workers parties acted as a mighty brake on the revolution. The role of the Communist (CP) and Socialist Party (SP) leaders was more treacherous than that of the Mensheviks in 1917.

The defeat of the old fascist regimes had been brought about by the mass movement of the working class. Just as the masses were flexing their muscles and beginning to understand their own power the leaders of the CP and SP argued against independent working class action. They opposed campaigning for a workers government with a socialist programme.

Instead, they argued for a government to include representatives of the 'liberal' and 'democratic' capitalists, and advanced the slogan "For the unity of the people and the armed forces". Spinola was held up by the CP to be a model democrat. In reality, as events in the ensuing months revealed, Spinola was waiting for his opportunity to carry through a counter revolution.

After an attempted coup in July that fizzled out, a few months later he was back to his old tricks; "by

September Spinola was again plotting counter revolution, using a bullfight as a rally for reaction with matadors charging into the arena with flags unfurled proclaiming "Glory to Spinola" (Militant 21 March 1975).

But again the attempt to rally reaction backfired and instead provoked a further mass movement of the working class. A horrified and helpless *Financial Times* reported, "soldiers stood by watching as armed civilians searched officers at road blocks set up around Lisbon." (2 October 1974).

They gloomily recorded, "General Spinola seriously believed that he could defeat the young officers of the MFA and went as far as to call in a battalion of paratroopers to Lisbon. However the young paratrooper captains declined to accept his orders." (FT 23 October).

Despite the fact that it was crystal clear that there was no basis for reaction, the CP, which was the dominant party amongst the industrial working class with an apparatus of 1,000 full-time organisers in Lisbon alone, attacked workers who struck for higher wages, justifying this with claims that the strikers had been provoked by 'ultra-lefts' and that they 'opened the door to reaction'.

"Sordid plan"

After 25 April, big business faced an avalanche of strikes and an aroused mass movement. The response of the CP leaders was to attack big business for conceding wage increases. The CP daily *Avante* stated on 24 May 1974, "The big monopolists and financiers who previously had refused categorically to raise the wages of the workers now offer a minimum salary of £130 a month or more

when it is known for example that the establishment at this time of a monthly salary of even £100 per month would be incompatible with the level of national income.

"The aim is evident and cannot deceive the working class and the people. The big monopolies can give out generous remunerations quite outside the financial capacity of the non-monopolist sectors, not to benefit the workers and the people, but to stir up popular discontent against the small and medium firms providing their ruin and failure of the national economy. It is a sordid plan hatched in the caverns of big capital".

Lenin's telegram

Militant drily commented on the sophistry of the CP leadership:

"Lewis Carroll, the childrens humorist, once conjured up a nonsense riot in his dream world, a demonstration under the slogan of 'Less bread, more Taxes', but the Portuguese CP have actually held such a demonstration." The article concluded, "The ruling class must have sighed with relief and thanked god that at least they still had the Communist Party." (Militant 21 March 1975).

The reformist leaders of the Socialist Party played fundamentally the same role as their counterparts in the CP, to act as a brake on the working class. The Socialist Party lacked the traditions and discipline of the CP and under the pressure of the mass movement swung to the left.

Socialist Party leader Mario Soares, had in 1968 sent a petition to Caetano on taking office which "acknowledged the danger of extreme right wing reaction if reforms were made too rapidly—but promised full support to Dr Caetano if he pressed ahead with a policy of amelioration" After 25 April, the same Soares stated "The Socialist Party stands on the basis of Marxism." *Militant* explained this dramatic conversion. "The Socialist Party, tossed around helplessly on the waves, lurches from one policy to another, and when the storms are blowing to the left, its leaders have no option but to remove themselves or jump off the boat."

Compare the approach of Lenin in Russia in February 1917 to that of his "followers" in the CP and the "marxist" leaders of the SP in Portugal after April 25 1974. Lenin's first telegram from exile to the Bolsheviks in Petrograd read; "Our tactic no trust and no support of the new government: Kerensky (leader of the provisional government WG.) especially suspect. Arming of the Proletariat is the only guarantee: immediate elections to the Petrograd City Council: no rapprochement with other parties."

If the CP and SP leaders had been genuine Marxists they would

have issued the call; "No trust in the provisional government: Spinola is especially suspect. Arming the Proletariat is the only guarantee. Immediate elections to a revolutionary national assembly: no rapprochement with the other parties; For the Socialist transformation of Portugal: for the Socialist Federation of Iberia."

If such a revolutionary leadership had existed at the head of the workers movement in 1974, a genuine workers democracy would exist today in Portugal and most likely in Spain as well, standing as genuine examples of a new society to the workers of the world. But the lack of a genuine marxist tendency meant that the Portuguese revolution took a much more complex path.



Prime Minister Soares.

In the 12 months following the overthrow of Caetano, there were no less than 3 attempted counter revolutions—each backfiring and instead provoking a mass movement of workers giving a mighty impetus to the revolution.

In March 1975, after a third unsuccessful attempted counter revolution, bankworkers occupied their workplaces and the government decreed nationalisation of the banks. With the banks, 80% of industry came into effective public ownership. *The Times* in Britain carried an editorial on Portugal, mourning the fact that "Capitalism is dead". What the good Christian gentlemen of *The Times* never calculated on, was the miracle of capitalism being resurrected by the reformist leaders of the workers' movement.

The "miracle" for the rich and privileged happened because there was no conscious Marxist leadership to guide the revolution. The false policies of the Socialist and Communist Party leaderships allowed the capitalist class in Portugal and internationally time to recover its breath and regroup. In reality power was handed back to the bosses by the workers' parties.

The nationalised sector of the economy has by now been cut down to below 50%, but the strength of the working class is such that all the attempts to

eradicate all the gains of the revolution have failed. Openly capitalist governments and "socialist" led governments of the likes of Soares have hit hard at the working class as they applied IMF "solutions", but the potential power of the working class is still there.

If such a revolutionary leadership had existed at the head of the workers' movement in 1974, a genuine workers democracy would exist today in Portugal and most likely in Spain as well, standing as shining examples of a new society to the workers of the world.

The Portuguese revolution, coinciding with the first simultaneous world post-war slump was a watershed in the European revolution. It signalled the downfall of not only Caetano but Franco in Spain and the military regime in Greece. The power of the working class swept away the remnants of fascist dictatorship, leaving Western and Southern Europe free of dictators for the first time in 300 years. In Africa, the Portuguese revolution dealt a fatal blow to the already dying imperialism in Angola and Mozambique.

Now ten years later, capitalism is facing a more serious crisis than in 1974. The threat of revolution continues to haunt the ruling class—most immediately in Latin America. In Chile, Argentina and the other great Portuguese speaking nation Brazil. The crucial lesson of the Portuguese revolution is the decisive role that the leadership of the working class plays.

Rotten ripe

All the conditions for carrying out through the socialist transformation of these countries are ripe bar one...the lack of a revolutionary leadership. In the opening lines of his pamphlet the Transitional Programme written in 1938 on the eve of World War II, Leon Trotsky stated; "All the talk to the effect that historical conditions have not yet ripened for socialism is the product of ignorance or conscious deception."

"The objective prerequisites for the proletarian revolution have not only ripened but have begun to go somewhat rotten. Without a socialist revolution, in the next historical period at that, catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind. The turn is now to the proletariat, ie chiefly to its revolutionary vanguard. The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership."

Today in the nuclear age these words have a more ominous ring than in 1938.

It is the task of our generation to succeed where our forerunners failed in the 1930s. It is our task to solve the crisis of leadership within the labour movement and in doing so leading directly to the socialist transformation of society.

Special feature on Southern Africa

Inside Zimbabwe

COLIN BARBER interviews a Zimbabwean trade unionist currently in Britain for a short visit.

WHAT DO you think of the general direction since independence?

It is hard to tell. Looking at the ruling party, ZANU, you cannot really tell what the future will be. Just now the government is fighting for a one-party state, but the key issues in the country are land, starvation and unemployment.

The ex-guerrillas, who have been de-mobilised, have got no jobs. There is hunger; people are dying.

In Mashonaland one person was found to have died from eating plastic paper—another had to eat roots from grass. The *Herald* recently reported how when one minister visited an area in Mashonaland it took an adult woman five minutes to try to stand up to greet him because of hunger. And hunger is much worse in Matabeleland.

What is the government doing to rectify this?

It looks as if the government is spending very little money on sorting it out. Look at the money being spent for a luxury conference house, or ZANU offices—there is a lot of money donated to the the government, but they do not seem to want to give this money to alleviate the drought.

The government should give more land, spend more money, introduce more irrigation schemes, build more dams. I know of people in the Midlands, where cattle are dying in great numbers, suffering very badly. People grind bones to make mealie meal.

It is even worse in Matabeleland. But unless you are a relative or close friend, people will never tell you the truth. If you are heard talking about Matabeleland you are arrested. So it's only the people who really trust you who talk to you about it.

I've heard a lot of things about what is happening there. My area borders Matabeleland. It is very bad—shooting people, including pregnant women.

People are told if they don't give information then children will be killed in front of their eyes. Last year children were taken from their mothers and thrown into a dam.

Also dissidents go around eliminating people who they think have given information. They come back after the army has gone.

I know someone who was shot. He was sleeping outside at his in-laws. In the morning he was dead with pools of blood all around—this was in an area close to my home town in the Midlands. I talked to someone who saw the body.

Who are the dissidents?

It's ZAPU (opposition party) dissidents, but not just them—it's other demobilised guerrillas too. They know the land where they came from is poor—they will get

“Our problems stem from workers not being involved in liberation struggle”

nothing from it. And they know they won't get a job—they've been too busy fighting for liberation to get qualifications.

I've heard ex-guerrillas talking about it. “I've never been to school” or “I've lost the chance of going to school because of the armed struggle, but now I'm being demobilised where will I go to?”

What is the scale of unemployment among young people?

I don't have the percentage, but it's grown enormously. The government is even utilising this situation, and recruiting some of these as informers for the secret police. In cells of ZANU some unemployed may be given a small allowance, perhaps \$10 a week, and told to be the ‘Eye of the People’ (the Ziso Revanhu).

Others have been promised jobs after they've been arrested. I know a friend's brother, who was out of a job for a long time. To save himself he went pick-pocketing.

When he was arrested, he was asked either to face a prison sentence or join Ziso Revanhu. He joined—he felt he had no alternative. Some are forced to go to Matabeleland.

They don't get much—each time they co-operate they get paid. So they are dependent on the government. Most of the criminals in Harare are Ziso Revanhu. Almost every ‘tsotsi’ I know.

What about land—the key social question raised in the independence struggle?

There is widespread squatting especially in Mashonaland but it's been smashed up by police, threatening to arrest people, etc. People resent the fact that unused land lies vacant.

Yet the government advises caution, because they have to buy back land taken in occupation. People's cattle are dying—but they are kicked off unused land.

These farms were taken from us by white settlers and now, even after independence, we have to go to the extent of buying it when there is starvation. The government is buying farms, but very slowly.

People have drifted to towns, squatting in Harare. But the government has rounded them up, women etc, and taken thousands to an open place very poor, a long way from Harare—terrible. The recent round-up of women was awful; some women were just taken from



There is still great support for ZANU coupled with unease and bitterness at recent developments.

work, unaccompanied, as part of the drive against prostitution.

The government lies. It says people are lazy and just want to go to town—but I don't think anyone would want to live on plastic paper in town.

Is there suspicion that the fruits of independence have been taken by a small group—whilst the people who fought the war are unemployed?

Quite a lot. Mugabe says he's a socialist and attacks corrupt ministers. But when crowds want to support him he refused to see them. Ministers run their own companies and have large bank accounts.

Soccer players are given high positions. I've nothing against them, but how can they be compared to people prepared to sacrifice their life, who are unemployed. The soccer players are taken into the National Army to promote that. They are preferred to ex-combatants; it's resented by them.

What is the situation like inside ZANU?

No clear socialist alternative is put. Groups who oppose the current leadership tend to do so on ethnic grounds—‘we want our group at the top, not yours’—rather than any socialist basis. They just talk about socialism.

I'm a member at cell level;

about a hundred should attend a cell meeting. The issues discussed are controlled from above. One ZANU member to whom I mentioned socialism, told me it was not our job at the bottom to talk about it, it was for the people at the top to decide.

Mugabe is still respected, but there is growing bitterness. Recently we tried to hold a local cell meeting on the budget. Very few party members turned up, and whilst we were waiting to start, one party member said to me: “Don't you know ZANU has got horns on; it's a beast now”.

In Harare people call ZANU police ‘Madzakudzaku’ (the previous name for Muzorewa supporters). That's quite an insult.

Some people don't think Mugabe is a socialist. When people went on strike after independence, they were told to go back. Now workers are arrested for going on strike. The government says that you have no permission to go on strike. You have to notify them one month in advance, and then you can only go on strike if it's agreed by the Minister of Labour.

What is the situation in the unions?

The government talks about unions; it does not encourage people to join. At work, I just heard about unions. Nobody asked me to join. I had to go and ask



Mugabe signs the compromise Lancaster House agreement.

people how to join.

Attendances at meetings are very poor. There is no real discussion going on. It is just on what trade unions leaders have achieved. At the first meeting I spoke at (about why so few people came), someone came up and showed me a copy of *Asinimali* (Marxist paper). I found it very good and interesting.

There's little democracy in the unions. I've been in my union five years and never seen elections. New executive members just appear. When there are elections they are kept secret. Some unions still have the same leaders as there were under Smith.

At some meetings there are government observers; they are never introduced. People won't talk much then.

I've never heard of any.

What links are there with South African workers?

They have to be built from the ground up, the workers are looking for a way out. But our problems stem from the fact that the workers were not involved in the struggle to liberate our country.

What should the labour movement do internationally?

It should help Zimbabwean workers forge links with South African workers.

Also it must help explain what socialism really is, because workers don't know. Because Mugabe shouts about socialism, they think that, if that is what socialism is, give me capitalism. They have not seen what socialism is—yet.

Gambian socialists need support

AFTER AN attempted coup in the Gambia in West Africa in 1981, a state of emergency was imposed allowing the regime to crack down on all opposition. Five socialist activists are known to have been rounded up and sent to court or detained without charge. Another nineteen persons are also said to have been arrested after long periods of surveillance.

Last week 6 young socialists were freed by the courts after the prosecution failed to substantiate charges but they still remain detained under the state of emergency. Further information from Movement for Justice in Africa (Gambia), UK Branch, c/o 87 Hereford Road, London W2.

Overthrowing apartheid: workers' power or guerilla action?

By Jim Chrystie

THE LIBERATION struggle in South Africa is entering a new phase.

The most graphic illustration of this was the Nkomati agreement signed in March between the apartheid regime and the government of Mozambique. A policy of ferocious military aggression had forced Mozambique to its knees. Under the terms of the Nkomati accord Mozambique banned all bases, transit camps, propaganda and communication facilities for the South African liberation movement, the African National Congress.

Similar treaties have been, or are being forced upon, almost all of South Africa's neighbours. At the same time inside the country new constitutional changes are being implemented.

In the West, governments and businessmen have tried to claim there is a 'new realism' in South Africa, a rapprochement between South Africa and its neighbours, and even the beginning of an evolutionary path towards ending apartheid.

Reasons for change

Nothing could be more mistaken. The changes being implemented by the apartheid regime are tactical adjustments in order better to preserve the racist system of exploitation in the years ahead. "Adapt or die" was how Prime Minister Botha explained the changes to his all-white electorate.

The adaptations do not go anywhere near altering the basic structure of apartheid, but some change had become necessary because of the dramatic revolutionary developments inside and outside the country over the last decade.

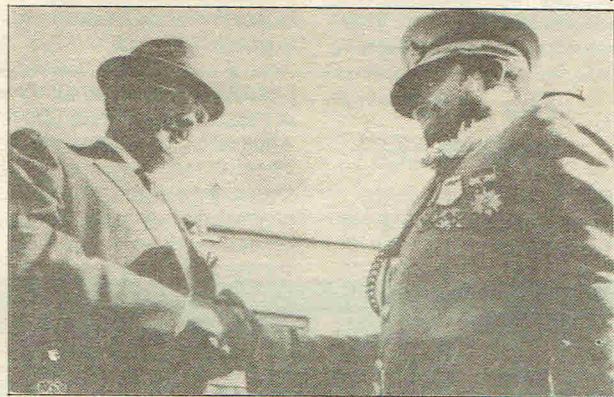
Ten years ago Angola, Mozambique and Rhodesia could act as buffer states, resisting the wind of African nationalism. Now they have all been replaced by African governments. In Angola and Mozambique, landlordism

and capitalism have been overthrown, and in Zimbabwe the Mugabe regime was exactly the administration which the South African regime did not want.

Soweto revolt

Inside the country all these victories against colonialism were greeted with jubilation by South African blacks, especially amongst the young. When the South African army was forced to ignominiously withdraw from Angola in 1975, slogans and even meetings of support for the MPLA government appeared in Soweto.

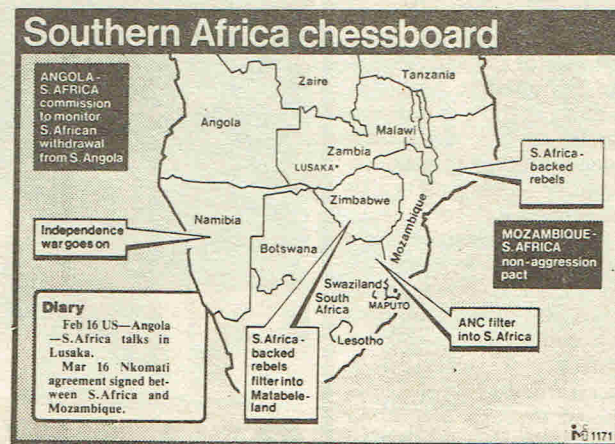
In 1976 Soweto itself exploded, as the youth with sticks and stones took on the whole armed might of the South African war machine. This 'whirlwind before the storm' marked a turning-point in the struggle inside South Africa. A new generation had picked up the



Nkomati accord between Botha and Mozambique's Machel (above) undermines guerilla strategy.

gauntlet of struggle, which had been forced from their parents' hands when the African National Congress had been banned in the early 1960's.

The Soweto revolt moreover confirmed the central role of the African working class in society. Before 1976 there had been considerable industrial action, notably in the Natal strikes of 1973 and the migrant workers strikes of 1974 and 1975. Now as the youth of Soweto took to the streets, the black workers responded in the greatest mobilisation to date of the liberation



struggle in South Africa.

Up to one million workers took part in political general strikes aimed not just at the apartheid regime, but at the capitalists who hid behind it. Since then, despite lulls and pauses, there has been no day of rest for the South African ruling class. The focus of activity has shifted from one arena to another. It has moved from factory

years and spread to new areas of support. Despite repression the South African regime has not been able to crush them.

It has been forced to try and control them and give them some legality. And they then try and portray this abroad as 'reforms'. In reality it shows the real weakness of the apartheid system.

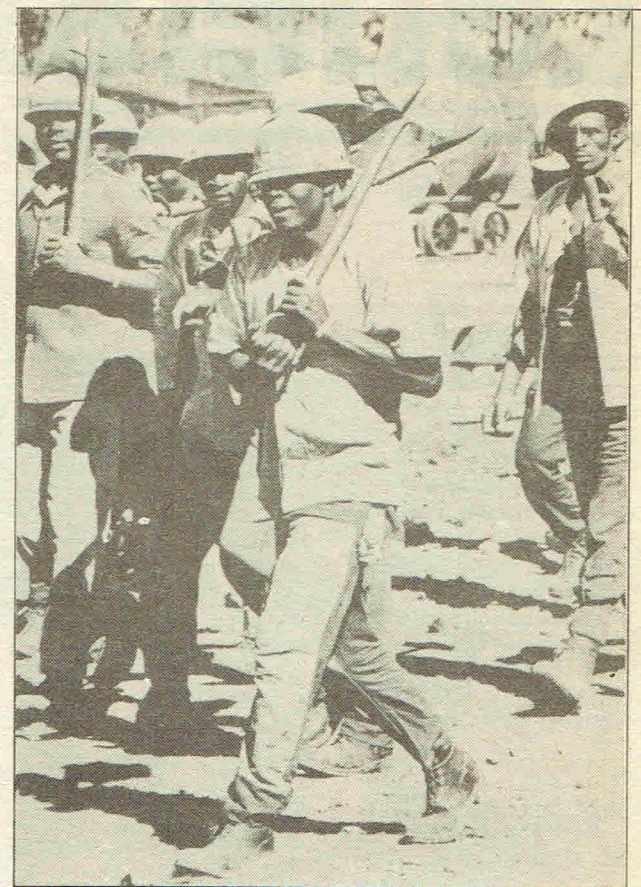
The so-called constitutional reforms are in reality preparation for a more stream-lined state, better able to deal with this growing challenge. Already the

Dictatorship

powers of the military have been increased, and the National Security Council, which it dominates, is the key political decision making body in the country. When Botha was elected Prime Minister, one leading politician commented: "he'll have us all in army uniforms within a week."

Behind the talk of reforms for the Asians and Coloureds, the drive behind the new Constitution is the increase in Executive powers. Far from being a strategy of sharing power, it is designed to concentrate power in fewer hands.

No activist can be under the illusion that such a regime can be gradually reformed and that the South African ruling class will peacefully relinquish power. The only question in front of the liberation struggle is whether its overthrow will flow directly from, and be



The real grave diggers of apartheid. (Above) South African mine workers.

based upon the mass movements of workers, or whether it will be brought about by small bands of guerillas, separate from the working-class.

ALTHOUGH THE economy declined by three per cent last year, this year's Budget increased defence spending by 21% to £2,086m. Police expenditure rose 44% to £437m and the official figure for secret services by 25% to £46m.

After the Nkomati accord who can seriously advocate the strategy of guerilla warfare as a way of ending the apartheid regime? Separate from uprisings in the towns, the concept of liberated rural areas never bore much relation to reality in South Africa, the most industrialised country on the continent where the majority of the African population live in the towns.

Armed struggle

South Africa is no Mozambique or Angola. Even the advocates of guerilla warfare have moved away from that parallel.

But instead they have practised a strategy of urban

guerilla warfare. Heroic individual acts of bravery cannot tragically disguise however the strategy's political bankruptcy.

Some of the leaders of the ANC see guerilla warfare not as a strategy for overthrowing the regime, but as a bargaining counter. They think they can use sabotage and urban warfare to negotiate the regime into ending apartheid.

Preparation

This was always the politics of dreamland. And the Nkomati treaty has now shattered the illusion of a gradually expanding guerilla war.

Now the African National Congress will have no base for 'infiltrating' small teams of fighters for short periods of action.

A new strategy is required, preparing for armed struggle—not separate from the workers' movement, but as part of an overall struggle to overthrow apartheid-capitalism and replace it by workers' power.

INQABA YA BASEBENZI, Journal of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the ANC. Issue No. 13 "Lessons of the 1950s." Please send payment with orders, 75p (incl. p&p), to BM Box 1719, London WC1N 3XX

Behind the talks

DESPITE SECONDARY differences there is a convergence of interests between the South African and the Thatcher regimes. Both wish to preserve the ability of capitalist firms to extract massive profits from a suppressed working class.

Britain remains South Africa's most important economic partner. It is the largest foreign investor in apartheid, and the third most important trading partner, surpassed only by Germany (also on Botha's visit) and the USA.

The London talks are like-

ly to centre around the prospects for Namibia. Thatcher is likely to argue for South African concessions so that a Lancaster House style compromise can be fixed up with the liberation movement SWAPO.

In return the South Africans will be pressing for more support from Britain. In particular the South Africans have been demanding the closure of the African National Congress' office in London, and the delivery of eight "Coast guard" spy planes to boost their surveillance of the South Atlantic.

The Thatcher Connection

WHEN SHE became Prime Minister Thatcher called for a "progress towards ending the isolation of South Africa in world affairs".

One of her family has taken her literally. Poor Mark, never one to turn down the chance of making a fast buck from the Gulf of Oman to the shores of Hong Kong, did not seem to understand. His African exploits nearly ended in self-imposed permanent isolation in the Sahara.

But Denis saw a more pro-



Profiting from apartheid.

fitable light further south. He is a Director of Quinton Hazell, a British company operating in South Africa. The EEC Code of Conduct Report found that although the companies pro-

fits had risen 21% to £173,000 the numbers of their black workers living below the absolute poverty line had more than doubled from 149 to 351.

Business links

THE EEC Code of Conduct for foreign firms is voluntary, limited and lacks teeth. But some of the information gained is interesting.

★ Only 29 of 139 British companies who reply recognise non-racial trade unions

★ 103 British firms still have totally segregated facilities.

★ Pritchards, the private cleaning firm, are one of the worst employers. 115 of their 718 black employees officially work a 72-hour week, at 28p an hour.

Letters

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

Secretary for Unemployment

Dear comrades,

Peter Morris, the Secretary for Unemployment visited Alton Towers Leisure Park in the Midlands and praised the whizz kid millionaire John Broome for the employment he had created.

What Morris didn't say was that management had banned trade union membership, paid wages below the poverty line and treated its workers like the 19th century mill owners did.

On the day of Morris' visit a group of local trade unionists visited the Leisure

Park to give out leaflets telling workers their union rights. While the Tory secretary of State got the red carpet, the trade unionists were shown the door.

The Cheadle branch Labour Party in Staffs have organised a public meeting to publicise the plight of Alton Tower workers. If you want a "great day out", as the Alton Towers ads say, don't go there until workers have got union recognition and decent pay.

Yours
Alan Pratt
Cheadle Labour Party

Scottish jobs

Dear Comrades,

A team from Glasgow university produced a report which shows the future for the town of Motherwell. Since 1978 only 650 jobs have been created and most of these have been in the unskilled and semi-skilled areas as well as jobs for women. In contrast to this, over 13,000 skilled jobs were lost in the same period and the present redundancy rate is 3,000 jobs per year.

The report estimates that 80% of 1983 school leavers will be unemployed by the end of this year, despite the 'Youth Training Schemes.' The only way out, the report states, is in an increase in investment in Ravenscraig Steelworks and manufacturing industry. Another good reason why the steelworkers at Ravenscraig must unite with the miners in defence of jobs for this depressed area.

Yours fraternally,
Susan Riley
Motherwell LPYS

Never too old

Dear Editor,

Militant sellers in Swaythling have recently been conducting a sales drive.

At one block of old people's flats the warden said "They are all old people here and won't be interested in that." We sold eight papers and two people immediately said they would buy a paper every week.

One eighty year old bloke bought a paper and promised to come to our next meeting. At the meeting he gave £2 for the fighting fund and then came on the YS day

of action the following day, where he said, "I'm very impressed with the young people here. They are so well versed... I never knew young people talk like that; it's marvellous, I'm coming next week and you can certainly count me a *Militant* supporter."

Fraternally
Michael Ingram
Basset
Southampton

A good Trier

Dear Comrades,

There was a marvellous friendly atmosphere at the FA Cup final. Watford and

West Midlands bosses

Dear Comrades,

Nick Worth's letter (issue 698) on the devastation of jobs in the West Midlands was backed up by a recent article in the *Financial Times*. From this report it was quite clear that local industrialists themselves were sceptical of the optimistic talk of economic recovery coming from the Tory government and the CBI.

One company director commented: "To talk about growth is a bit sick." Another whose company supplies gears and components for the agricultural and automotive industry said: "Yes there is business about, but it's because our competitors have gone bust. I cannot see any upturn in the economy."

On the question of investment or lack of it, a descriptive piece about one West Midlands businessman gave a graphic illustration of British capitalism's backwardness. As the boss walked through acre upon acre of silent, empty factory space, he pointed with pride to an expensive machine that his workers had restored; after a customer's tip off that it was on the scrap heap of a West German competitor!

Yours fraternally
Gordon McKinley
GMBATU Scottish
Council
(Personal capacity)

Everton fans mixed freely. When we told the scousers we were members of Watford LPYS, many of them joined us in a chorus of "Maggie Out!". Clearly the campaigning work of *Militant* in Liverpool has had its effect.

I would, however take issue with one of the 'toffs' supporters. He claimed that Karl Marx was an Evertonian when in fact, as all socialists know, Karl was born and bred in Watford.

Yours fraternally
Hornets supporter
Simon Rogers



Photo: Jacob Sutton

No haloes on Alistair Graham—but maybe the odd Knighthood?

Graham's ballot hypocrisy

Dear Comrades,

Having just returned from the CPSA conference to the police state of Nottinghamshire, I feel compelled to write to let readers know the hypocrisy of our General Secretary.

A motion calling for total support for the miners was passed by conference with the qualified support of Graham and the right-wing executive. Graham's

qualification was that there should have been a national ballot.

Strange, you may wonder, why Graham the following day called on conference to reject a motion calling for the TUC General Council delegate to be elected annually by conference. Although the motion was passed with a 40,000 majority, it just fell short of the 50 majority required.

The fight is not yet over, in fact it's just beginning. CPSA members around the country must unite to rid not only our union, but the whole labour movement of Graham and his 'new realism'.

Yours
Christopher Hughes
CPSA, Branch Executive
Committee Prison Dept.
(Midland Region) (personal capacity)

The other Graham...

Dear Comrades,

The American Evangelist Billy Graham was in Bristol all last week preaching to crowds of tens of thousands at the Bristol City football ground and on the Sunday the YS went down to hand out leaflets for a public meeting.

When we'd given out all our leaflets, we sat and watched. The atmosphere was

incredible. I wasn't at all surprised at the huge numbers who were overwhelmed with emotion and went forward "to be cleansed of their sins" as the 2,000 voice choir sang on and Graham urged them forward. What a speaker he is!

Meanwhile the YS gave out about 2,000 leaflets and we were received very well—except by Graham's 'counsellors', employed to do the 'follow-up' on the converted. They informed us that "only Mission England

stuff is to be given out here". We replied "Jesus was a socialist."

The difference between us is that as socialists we do not believe, as those thousands of people were told, that a better life is only attainable somewhere called 'Heaven' after you're dead. As socialists we are fighting for a better life here, now, on earth.

Yours fraternally
Mandy Beckingham
Bristol

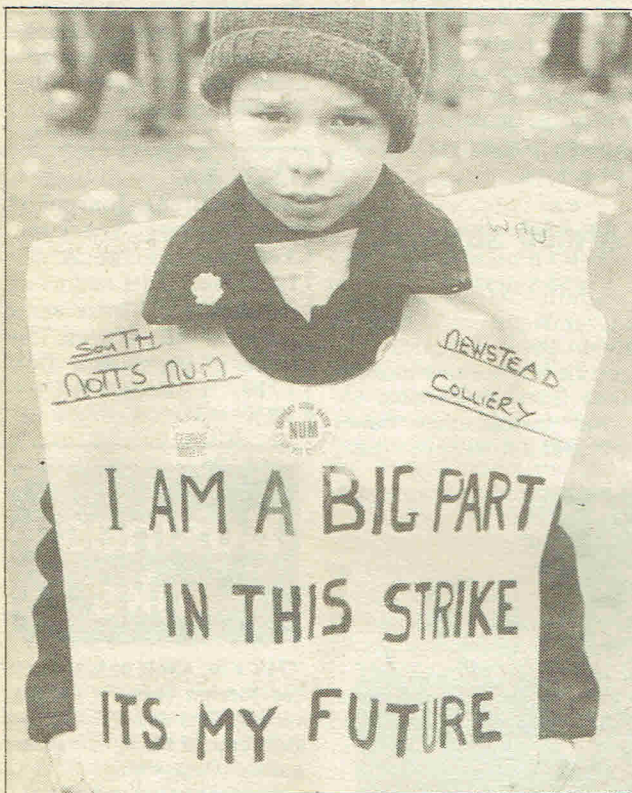


Photo: Jacob Sutton

Early Learning system

Dear *Militant*,

The pupils at our school are arguing with each other and with the teachers over the miners' strike. They are also feeling the pinch more than anybody else because they are missing the things

they like doing. Some of the pupils do not understand what is going to happen after the strike is over. Most of the pupils know if the pits close they are very unlikely to get a job anywhere else in the North East Derbyshire.

Yours
Gavin Hadfield (15)
and Darin Alberry (12)



No kidding

The EETPU's new boss, Eric Hammond, has obviously been reared in the Chapple tradition and I don't mean the solid old non-conformist religious background of the Welsh valleys. He got an approving write-up last week from "Simply awful" Peter Simple in the *Daily Telegraph*.

"We in this union" said Hammond, attacking the miners, "are not prepared to use our strength to bring down elected governments. Who do these nursery revolutionaries think they are kidding" (sic). Without the law and parliamentary democracy, he continued, the trade unions are defenceless.

With Tory trade union legislation stripping us of the legal right to fight back and the response of leaders like Hammond in signing away their members' right to strike, it's clear who is leaving the movement defenceless. Final proof of that fact is the approval they get from the likes of the *Daily Torygraph*.

But be warned Hammond, a system which attacks workers in this way and a labour leadership which fails to fight back will indeed produce a generation of revolutionaries.

Controlling education

"Independently of all higher considerations... the necessity of educating the children of the working classes is loudly called for... to prevent a multitude of immoral vicious beings... from growing up around us."

—Leonard Horner, one of the first Factory Inspectors, condemning the full-time employment of children about 150 years ago.

Very Civil

Kate Losinska, President of the Civil and Public Services Association always gives the standing orders committee of the Civil Service Conference (covering civil service members only) a bottle of champagne at the end of their two day conference, since they deal only with "bread and butter" conditions of service issues and not political ones. The 'political' problems go to the main standing orders committee. Because of their political bias she usually omits them from her conference gift list.

This year they ruled out of order motions which sought to freeze senior officers' salaries, spoke against a move to remove Graham and put the right wing NEC's GCHQ motion at the head of the agenda. Guess who got a bottle of champers this year for the first time? Yes, main standing orders committee. Do you think it was something they said?

BLACKBURN EXPULSIONS

IN A desperate attempt to divert attention away from new evidence from his former secretary linking him directly with the witch-hunting activities of Michael Gregory, Jack Straw MP has come out with the absurd and slanderous allegation that Blackburn *Militant* supporters are now "teaming up with the Liberal/SDP Alliance."

Straw interjected this smear against four of those expelled from his local party into the commons debate in the early hours of last Wednesday morning, the meeting-day of Labour's National Executive at which the expulsions were again due to be raised.

Straw's ex-secretary, Edna Roberts, wrote to Labour's National Executive saying, "No doubt you will have the Gregory Report when you consider the six expelled Militants. Unfortunately your copy will not be the same as mine. Page eight is the crucial factor in this document. For Michael Gregory, who compiled this document, did not even know the names of some of the people he was betraying."

Smokescreen

"...my copy contains the surnames of those Gregory apparently did not know and were filled in by Jack Straw." The so-called 'evidence' upon which the right wing justified the expulsions was, on Edna Roberts's documented account, full of inaccuracies and alterations (as *Militant* has consistently stated), some directly from the hand of Jack Straw.

The only public statement we have heard by Jack Straw which referred to all to the expulsions was an attempt to smear four of the expelled.

Whilst most Labour MPs

in the House of Commons on 22 May were busy fighting the Tories' attacks on local democracy Jack Straw joined Liberal MP David Alton in attacking *Militant*, after being congratulated on the expulsions:

"I am glad that the hon gentleman (David Alton MP) mentioned the matter (Militant Tendency). Four of the people expelled from the Blackburn branch (sic) of the Labour Party attended the count on 3 May for the municipal elections as scrutineers for the SDP-Liberal Alliance... Does the hon. Gentleman agree that it is worrying that members of the Militant Tendency are now teaming up with the SDP-Liberal alliance? What exactly will the SDP-Liberal alliance to clean up the Blackburn branch of the SDP-Liberals?"

Jack Straw knows very well that *Militant* supporters were asked by Labour wards to work in the local elections and did so, despite being expelled. Straw himself shook hands on polling day with one of the six, Des Mulcahy, who had manned a Labour Committee Room. It is totally false to suggest that any *Militant* supporters in any way worked with members of the SDP/Lib alliance, to whose policies we are totally opposed.

Four *Militant* supporters did go into the count on



Photo: Militant

Neil Kinnock justified the register of 'unaffiliated organisations' and then the expulsion of the *Militant* Editorial Board on the grounds that it was not a witch-hunt, but look at the activities of his front bench spokesman Jack Straw and the rash of expulsions and smears.

tickets allocated to the Alliance. As a formality they signed the usual declaration, but at no time did they act as scrutineers for SDP/Lib candidates. It was undoubtedly a mistake but they did so because, despite their loyal work for the Labour Party, right-wingers refused to give them tickets. In the count they discussed with Labour Party members and collected a large number of signatures for their petition calling for re-instatement.

Witch-hunt

Despite the new evidence, the NEC refused, by 15 votes

to 9 (not 14 to 12 as we incorrectly reported last week) not to reconsider the expulsions.

The right-wing majority's determination to continue the purge underlines the urgency of stepping up the campaign against the witch-hunt. Labour Parties and trade unions must send loud and clear messages to the NEC that the Labour ranks will not tolerate their undemocratic tactics.

STOP PRESS: At his own Ewood ward, where he has boasted a basis of personal support, Michael Gregory suffered a shattering defeat

on Tuesday (29 May).

Gregory turned up and confirmed that he was resigning the chair, but his wife moved the expected motion of no-confidence in the Secretary who has strongly opposed Gregory's tactics (see report below).

In a heated argument, with Gregory blowing his top and attacking ward members personally, the issue became one of no-confidence in Gregory himself. His motion was defeated by 8 votes to 4.

The meeting was attended by worried and embarrassed EC members, including Eric Smith and Martin Guinan, a neo-Stalinist who has

energetically pursued the witch-hunt. Their previous encouragement for Gregory has rebounded on them with a vengeance.

Gregory's treachery on the council and his underhand manoeuvres in Ewood are now linked in the minds of ward members with the question of his denunciation of *Militant* supporters. Most of them feel with some bitterness that they were unscrupulously hoodwinked by Gregory and that the question of the expulsions, which were justified by his uncorroborated allegation, must now be reconsidered.

No Labour whip for witch-hunter!

BLACKBURN LABOUR Party members are alarmed at suggestions that Michael Gregory, who voted to defeat the Labour council a few days before the local elections, may now be allowed back into the Group by right wingers anxious to patch up a face-saving compromise with their former protégé.

After the elections, in which Labour failed to improve its majority of one on the council, Gregory wrote a grovelling letter asking to be re-admitted to the Group.

"I regret most strongly the embarrassment which may have been caused to Group Officers," he said—after he had discussed counter-proposals on the re-organisation of the Direct Labour Organisation with Tory and Liberal councillors and inflicted defeat on Labour just before polling day!

Independent

Moreover, "my feelings on the actual restructuring of the DLO remain the same," though he had made a "mistake" in going against the Group. Gregory promised that if re-admitted he would abide by Group democracy. But most Labour Party members will agree with his own comment: "that may seem a hollow statement"!

Gregory's seat has been moved, and he will now sit as an independent. However, there have been discussions between the Group leaders and Gregory, although party members have been kept in the dark about them.

Renegade

It would be a scandal if there was any proposal to re-admit Gregory to the Group. Clearly councillors have egg on their faces. They used Gregory to provide muck to throw at *Militant* supporters. Then he slipped his lead and did the dirty on them. Understandable embarrassment about this, however, does not justify welcoming back a renegade.

This is especially so when Gregory has remained true to form in the Branch Labour Party in Ewood, the ward he now represents as an "independent".

Gregory did not attend the ward meeting following the elections, but told them he wanted to retain the chair. Following criticism of his actions at the meeting, Gregory's wife later told members that he was going to resign the chair. Members were amazed to get notices for another meeting, from the vice-chair, with a no-confidence motion against the secretary, one of those who voiced strong opposition to Gregory!

Gregory is facing growing animosity from members who previously believed that he was attempting to build the party. Those who know what is going on are disgusted at his personal attacks on ward officers and councillors who condemn his tactics. They credited him with recruiting new members, but now believe his only concern is manipulating their support—and to drive them out if they go against him. One described him as a "political mercenary".

Ewood has been unable to canvass effectively for the Euro-elections because, according to party members, Gregory recently tore up the canvass cards in a fit of temper. This is the character on whom the right wings' discredited case against *Militant* supporters rests. They made a big mistake in thinking that such a manoeuvre would undermine support for *Militant*'s ideas.

Disgusted

On the contrary! Gregory has opened the eyes of many who voted for expulsions out of misguided party loyalty. Like Mrs Edna Roberts, Straw's former secretary, who has revealed some of the manoeuvres, and repudiated them, they are disgusted at the negative, poisonous atmosphere

created by the narrow-minded witch-hunters.

Obviously councillors—and Straw—are worried about their positions. But their failure to increase their precarious council majority is not the fault of *Militant* supporters.

The failed because they increased rates by 49% while, unlike Liverpool Council, they have put up no real fight against Tory cuts. Instead of fighting for socialist policies, they have been expelling socialists. Instead of campaigning, they have been trying to drive out the campaigners.

More and more party members and trade unionists recognise this. That's why local support for *Militant* is growing apace, while every week throws up new embarrassment for the witch-hunters!

Exeter

THREE EDITORS of *Exeter Labour Briefing* are threatened with expulsion from Exeter Labour Party. The GMC ordered them to stop producing the magazine under that name. They refused to change and the EC of the party has passed a resolution calling for expulsion of the three. The issues will come up at GMC on 15 June, day after Euro-elections.

Plymouth LPYS fight back

THE CHAIRMAN and secretary of Plymouth Sutton Labour Party have declared that the local YS branch is suspended. They have also said that YS delegates will be unable to attend the GMC to argue their case, and that YS correspondence must be sent to the constituency chairman.

At a meeting on 30 April, a vote of no confidence in the YS Secretary (a 'Clause 4' supporter) was to be moved. The motion would have been carried. A new chairperson was also to be elected. The Youth officer said there could be no vote without a show of Labour Party cards. He never said this when votes were held before. On those grounds the AGM also was invalid, and an emergency AGM was agreed. Before it could be held the YS was

suspended.

The YS secretary clearly supported these moves. He said the YS was "irrelevant" and that its suspension "is a good thing for me". The constituency secretary said the YS are "like nursery children". He told me, "you will obey my orders—or else get out of the Party." Meanwhile, in neighbouring Drake YS, another prominent 'Clause 4' supporter was caught defacing YS posters advertising a Miners' Public Meeting!

Militant supporters in the YS will not be intimidated. We have elected new officers, and are challenging this unconstitutional suspension until it is overturned.

By Rachel Harris
(South West Regional Youth Committee and Sutton LPYS)

Labour Student smears

A SYSTEMATIC smear campaign is being conducted against *Militant* by the ex-leadership of the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS). They falsely accuse *Militant* supporters of intimidation and violence at the recent NOLS conference.

This is a blatant attempt to hide their manoeuvring and ballot rigging and must be clearly repudiated by the whole labour movement.

The 'Democratic Left' NOLS leaders are now calling for a new conference with fresh delegate

elections for December-January 1984-85. This concedes that a number of delegates were completely bogus and could not be recalled to a summer conference properly scrutinised. But it will also hamper the work of NOLS.

For that reason protests should continue to be sent to the NEC. A summer conference, democratically organised, could provide a new socialist leadership of NOLS able to mobilise students to aid the struggles of the labour movement.

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Bathgate occupation

THE DREAM of providing thousands of jobs in West Lothian with the opening of the British Leyland (BL) plant in Bathgate was finally transformed into a nightmare both for the 1,800 remaining workforce and the future of the community, with the announcement on Tuesday 22 of the closure of the plant.

The Scottish TUC has set up a steering committee to look at the situation. This could be used to take the opportunity to link up the fight to save BL with the fight to save the pits. It is an urgent task.

Social consequences

"Industrial genocide" was the way one worker described the proposed closure. He was right, but the social consequences in an area already ravaged with 20% unemployment would also be devastating.

If the plant closes, the sur-

rounding towns of Bathgate, Armadale, Blackburn, indeed the whole of West Lothian would be transformed from a once thriving community into a waste land.

Slow death

One senior shop steward outlined the run-down of the Bathgate plant: "In 1978 we had 6,000 men but due to redundancies—3-400 at a time we now only have 1,800 left—that is shop floor workers and staff together. They have issued us 90 days' notice, with 516 men being paid off on 20 August.

"They are going to transfer actual buildings to the Albion from September 1984 to March 1985, meaning another 3-400 men on the dole, then they intend to close us in 1986. We are all very angry and we are solid, we are fighting for the community, if BL goes West Lothian dies".

Another senior shop steward told me, "We are fighting for Scotland's industrial base, we are the last vehicle manufacturing plant in Scotland, they are not closing us because of markets but because they have moved their models down south. They have moved the tractors to Marshalls of Gainsborough, cars to Motor Panels, Coventry, replacement vans to Freight Power and six or seven models to BL in Lancashire—that's the problem.

Militancy

"We had an excellent response from the men on the shop floor and once they had decided to take action the staff decided the same—we are fighting."

The fight is now clearly on, it is vital that the BL workers now link up with other local struggles. The proposed closure of



BL workers at Bathgate lock-up and sit-in.

Photo: John Harris (IFL)

Ravensraig steelworks in 1986 means also the closure of Polkemmet. The fight for coal is already on. It is clear that the fight is now a joint one, it is a fight for jobs—yes, for an industrial base—yes, but also a fight for every community in West Lothian.

Messages of support to: Jimmy Swann, convener JSSC British Leyland,

Bathgate, West Lothian. Donations to: Joint Action Committee, West Lothian District Council, Southbridge Street, Bathgate, West Lothian.

By Joe Owens
(Polkemmet NUM)

DEMONSTRATION, Saturday. Assembles 10am at Whitdale and marches to Whitburn miners welfare.

MILITANT MEETING
Save British Leyland, save the pits
7.30pm Thursday 7 June, Blackburn Community centre. Speakers from BL, NUM and Militant

Rail pay victory

BRITISH RAIL Chairman Bob Reid and the government could not handle a work to rule or strike by railworkers at the same time as the miners' strike. That was shown by their increased offer three times in two weeks, plus no productivity strings.

Nevertheless a temporary victory has been won on the backs of the miners whilst the chance to inflict a decisive blow against a government determined to continue its attacks at a later stage has been lost.

Four thousand jobs are planned to go in BREL. The BRB Corporate Plan intends the shedding of 16,000 jobs in the next couple of years. The government has cut grants to the rail industry by £200 million this year. This is the battle we still have to fight.

It was widely reported that the pay deal would give rises of between 4.9% and 5.6%. In fact everyone will get an increase of 4.9% on basic rates of pay. The 5.6% refers to the increase in the Minimum Earnings Level (MEL) from £84.85 per week to £89. The MEL is the level to which very low paid rail workers' wages are topped up when their weekly take home pay falls below that level. All increases will be payable from 16 April and backdated.

Joint action

The government were worried about taking on the two main rail unions together—an unprecedented and historic unity which must be built on. TSSA must be brought into this pact as well.

This year also there was the real possibility of NUR and ASLEF members in both British Rail and London Transport fighting together. Our fellow members on LT are also facing a similar pay offer, of a very small rise in return for cuts in staff and similar productivity demands. The settlement on British Rail doesn't resolve their pro-

blems, while once again the prospects for joint action have receded.

In the immediate term railworkers must continue to keep the pressure upon the ASLEF and NUR leadership to ensure no further retreats over productivity. The strings attached to this deal have not so much been dropped altogether, as dropped back.

Unfortunately this deal is too much like the one signed to avert a strike in August 1981. As many railworkers will recall, it was the signing of those agreements to separate "understandings" on pay and productivity that gave the Board a foot in the door and led to all the subsequent problems over flexi-rostering and manning levels,

Defend conference

The deal on pay and productivity this year flies in the face of ASLEF and NUR policy. In particular the NUR at last year's Annual General Meeting carried a resolution, against the advice of the general secretary, which clearly called for the union to cease involvement in productivity deals including OMO/DOO.

Worryingly, there are moves afoot to overturn this decision at the NUR's forthcoming AGM. However, there are also powerful branches with resolutions reaffirming the union's commitment to last year's decision.

It is vital that steps are taken and pressure applied to ensure that both the NUR and ASLEF use their power to oppose the BRB productivity proposals and their attacks upon jobs and conditions. The forthcoming NUR and ASLEF conferences must be used to hammer out a clear strategy and programme for defence of the industry and jobs,

By Andy Viner
(ASLEF, Kings Cross, personal capacity)

CONFERENCE REPORTS

EETPU

WHOLE SECTIONS of shop stewards reacted with anger and disgust to Eric Hammond's attack on the miners at the EETPU industrial conferences. What the Fleet St press did not report was the shop stewards' who walked out of the Electricity Supply conference when Hammond, general secretary elect, criticised fellow trade unionists in struggle, or the demand by shop stewards who remained, for unity with the miners.

In the Local Authority conference, shop stewards were prevented from leaving

when Hammond began his speech, but when he ended, the silence was deafening until appointed full time officials were rushed in to provide the applause. On the other side there was a storm of applause when Hammond read out that Scargill's objective was to bring down the Tories!

'Traitor'

In the engineering conference shop stewards requested a collection be taken for the miners but this was refused by the leadership. The firemen who were holding the conference twenty miles up the road in Bridlington threatened to come down and picket Hammond. Ken Cameron FBU general

secretary condemned Hammond as a "traitor to his class".

Democracy

The overwhelming majority of EETPU members throughout Britain support the miners. What is now required is an active campaigning and democratic Broad Left to democratise the EETPU and make the leadership accountable. Linked with socialist policies this would be an unstoppable force for change. This was underlined by the excellent response to *Beacon*, journal of Militant supporters in the EETPU. 139 were sold, along with 50 Militants sold.

NUS

THE NATIONAL Union of Seamen's conference voted for an emergency proposition. Item 8 of the proposition says "EDM agrees that any industrial action shall commence, on a date be decided by the EC, with all UK ferry services stopping for 48 hour periods and that the EC shall determine the dates and forms of further industrial action."

Hotting up

The strike went ahead last Tuesday 30 May and is likely to result in the loss of at least 70 of 120 daily cross-Channel Islands. Most P&O and Townsend Thoreson ferries were expected to be cancelled on the Wednesday and Thursday. The union has warned of an extension of the action.

Concern at the conference that ferry men would be left to fight alone, without the support of deep sea members was squashed when the delegate representing 13,000

members on the QE2 stated that everyone of his members was prepared to take strike action over the Sealink issue. Escalation to deep sea workers may be necessary. Its other affect would be on North Sea oil rigs with the a spin-off affect for the miners.

By Julie Harris

UCW

THE UCW conference Postal section held their pay debate a week last Wednesday. The conference almost unanimously rejected the Post Office offer of 4% with strings and agreed to give full authority to the Executive Committee to call any industrial action necessary to achieve a reasonable pay settlement.

Alan Tuffin, General Secretary, said that the bottom line for a settlement was at least the retail price index with no strings, plus a 3-hour reduction in the working week! In the next week or so meetings will be held with the Post Office and if these prove unsatisfactory, which seems likely, then industrial

action will be started. The mood of the members is clearly behind industrial action.

Later on Wednesday the demand for full pay at 18 for all grades was overwhelmingly carried. Militant supporters, Trevor Harris of Ipswich Amalgamated and Phil Waker of East London Counter moved and seconded, getting a great reception. The motion was carried against the Executive's recommendation. Tuffin said he was so impressed by the movers that despite the EC's recommendation he gave it his personal support.

Also agreed was support for industrial action to stop the threatened closure of 5% of Crown Offices (ie. not sub offices) in London. The Clerical and Counter Section voted unanimously for industrial action to stop closures.

Miners

Undoubtedly the high point of conference was during Thursday when Jack Taylor, Yorkshire miners' president, addressed conference and received three standing ovations in addition

CPSA

Militant supporters on the CPSA National Executive Committee are pressing for the removal of Alistair Graham from the TUC General Council.

The Broad Left national committee meets this weekend and is expected to discuss calls for a special delegate conference to discuss the issue and pick a candidate.

The first meeting of the new NEC took place on 25 May. It reversed the decision of the outgoing NEC to hold a referendum on the conference decision to reject a no-strike deal with the Tories.

to £10,000 from collections and donations from the Executive and a pledge of support from the general Secretary.

The changed mood of this conference was reflected again on Friday when conference voted that a branch ballot rather than the executive will decide the UCW's choice to replace Len Murray as leader of the TUC.

Broad Left

Many resolutions expressing Broad Left policies were passed, and others, like the call to censure the TUC and UCW leaders over the NGA dispute, were only narrowly defeated. The union is on the move and may well take industrial action in the next few weeks over the pay claim.

The Militant Public Meeting attracted 70 delegates from the IRSF, SCPS and UCW Conference £569 was collected for Militant including two £100 donations from UCW delegates.

By Brian Beckingham

POEU- learn privatisation lessons

THE PRIVATISATION of British Telecom marks the beginning rather than the end of the struggle to defend the jobs of POEU members. BT management are continuing their offensive against the union and against jobs.

The union, and in particular the leadership, must quickly learn the lessons of the dispute and prepare for future struggles. It is significant that the sections of the membership who most understand the need for struggle and are most determined to defend their interests are the members who were involved in the privatisation industrial action itself. The fact that the majority of the membership were not involved in the action, during the most traumatic period in the union's history, indicates the need for the left to review its future industrial action strategy and to call for all-out strike action if necessary.

Divide and rule

The failure of the NEC to show firm leadership in not recommending continued blacking of Project Mercury at a crucial stage in the campaign has led to the Broad Left reviewing its NEC slate. The testing out of individuals and different political trends in the movement is an inevitable, though sometimes painful, process.

Management are fine tuning their divide and rule tactic. The pay offer incorporates the principle of different percentage increases for different grades agreed by the previous right wing leadership. We should not allow any further erosion of

the wages of the lower paid grades. The derisory pay offer itself does not come anywhere near the 8% claim and reflects government interference in the negotiations.

Conference should stand firm for the claim, and for parity across the grades and the businesses. All forms of local productivity, whether in bonus form or otherwise should also be rejected. Local productivity is one step nearer local pay negotiations. We need look no further than the problems in the current NUM dispute—with the Nottingham Area local productivity scheme being in part a cause of the division in the union—to see the threat we face.

Fight for jobs

The fight on jobs looms large in all areas of Telecom, Posts and Girobank. The NEC must start to campaign amongst the membership on the basis of a 'fight for every job'. We must continue to resist early voluntary retirement or voluntary redundancies—which only serve to condition the membership into believing that job losses are an inevitability.

It must be pointed out that we can benefit from new technology only if it leads to shorter hours, increased annual leave, sabbaticals etc, and at the same time maintains jobs. We should demand a new technology agreement as a means of achieving this objective. The drastic reduction in apprentice intake must also be viewed with alarm. If a high technology based industry



Central London meeting of POEU members during last year fight against privatisation.

Photo: Stephano Cagnoni

such as BT cannot provide jobs for school leavers then the youth of this country can only look forward to a life on the dole.

The NEC has woken up to the danger of YTS and is recommending no further support for the YTS scheme, which itself was a factor in undermining apprenticeships. Management reorganisation and the devolving of authority, with local management becoming strictly financially accountable is a further tactic to divide the union. This must

be continually borne in mind when considering changes in union structure. Organisational changes must therefore be preceded by a full debate on democratic accountability and maximum involvement of the membership at each level.

Amalgamation

The amalgamation with the CPSA P&T group which should be quickly followed by amalgamation with the UCW, will be an historic step towards trade union

unity and will considerably strengthen our ability to fightback against a hostile management supported by an equally hostile government.

The members must be backed by a firm, determined and campaigning leadership prepared to lead the fight in defence of our jobs, pay and conditions.

By Roy Wembourne
(POEU, POR Branch,
personal capacity)

Militant Readers' Meeting
Thursday 7 June, 7.15 pm
Kings Arms, Talbot Street,
(Near Blackpool North Station)
Speakers:
Kevin Roddy (CPSA NEC)
Phil Lloyd (POEU, Swansea)

Broad Left Meeting
Sunday 7.30pm
Speakers: Tony Mulhearn
(President Liverpool District
Labour Party)
Jack Taylor (President
Yorkshire NUM)
Imperial Hotel, Blackpool.

Decision time for GMBATU

AT A time when trade unionists' eyes are fixed on the miners' fight to save jobs the GMBATU annual congress at Torquay is faced with the responsibility of formulating policies to counter the government's attacks on jobs and organisation through trade union legislation and privatisation of the public sector.

This congress is also a rules revision congress and the mood for change is shown by the 300-plus rule amendments submitted by branches for the preliminary agenda. The demand for greater lay participation is demonstrated by the number of motions calling for five-yearly election of all officials, a totally lay executive, and all the delegation to the TUC and Labour Party conferences being involved in deciding how the union will cast its vote.

'Piratisation'

The section on privatisation will be of even more vital importance than in previous years. The Executive document on privatisation goes into the background and lists areas of the GMB membership that are under threat: Local Authorities, Gas, NHS, Electricity, Shell, British Shipbuilders and ROF.

The document sets out current policy and the union's action of opposition. For the membership's sake we can only hope that the Executive's willingness to authorise industrial action in defence of the jobs and conditions that have been built up by past struggles, is not demonstrated by the lack of prominence it is given in their plan.



David Basnett GMB General Secretary.

If so the Executive could well find itself tail-ending the movement instead of leading. Where industrial action is taken it is important to extend this to other areas of membership.

The GMB membership is often told, quite rightly, what a powerful union they are part of. The Executive has a duty to mobilise that power in defence of members now facing the

threat of privatisation.

The Executive Council's special motion on TU legislation recognises the threat the Bill poses to trade union rights and to the union's ability to defend the members' interests. The measures the Executive proposes in response, however are not clearly spelt out and seem totally inadequate.

Realism needed

It is proposed to look at what rule changes might 'minimise the impact of this legislation'. They propose to 'conduct a major campaign' to 'inform the members' of the dangers of the Bill. Does the Executive believe that 'public opinion' alone can force the Tories to repeal it?

Instead of looking for legal loopholes the Executive would do better to ask congress for a mandate to refuse to co-operate in any way with the Tories' blatant attempt to shackle the union, and to fight any resulting legal attacks with industrial action. It should also say loud and clear that it will refuse to pay any fines imposed under these laws.

A major part of congress, both inside and the hall and elsewhere will be taken up with the Executive's review of the union finances, struc-

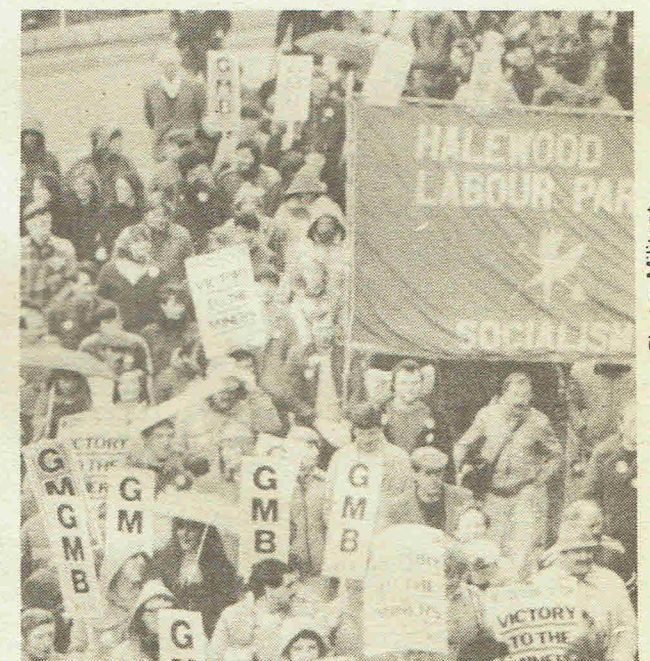
ture and services, set out in 'Decision 84'. This looks at the fall in membership since 1979, spells out the financial implications and provides a 'survival kit' for the next few years.

This approach of accepting the Tories' right to carry on attacking members' living standards unchallenged, and the union taking a low profile in the fight against the Tories for the rest of the government's term of office, is rampant throughout all the Executive's thinking.

In Decision '84 (indecision?) this manifests itself in contributions which talk about taking a defensive stance for the next few years—of accepting a further loss of membership of 50,000 over the next two years, and accepting a further five years of anti-trade union legislation.

'New deal' needed

This is hardly the spirit to attract workers looking for organisations to fight on their behalf—to defend their living standards. In fact it was the 'moderation' of the GMW in the 50s and 60, and the 70s in the public sector, which accounted for its failure to attract members to the same degree as other unions. To propose to members, many of them low



GMB members are in industries under threat from the Tories. Above, local authority workers march in Liverpool.

paid, that benefits will be frozen or reduced, that officer cover will also be cut in a period when they have a greater need for support services, and in return the contributions will be increased, is a recipe for rejection.

Confidence in members

The increase in industrial disputes throughout the country, in large as well as a small workplaces, shows that the mood of workers is to take up the bosses' challenge. GMB members have not and will not be isolated from this movement, as shown by the members in the shipyards

and in Liverpool. Support from various GMB leaders for the miners is welcomed—it must be built on by congress, with the union swinging all its resources behind the miners.

Delegates know what needs to be done to obtain and safeguard the conditions demanded by the membership. This government must be replaced, with a Labour government determined to change the system and implement socialist policies. Our decision '84 should be to oust the Tories.

By a GMBATU
conference delegate

Militant

Workers must smash apartheid

BRITISH MINERS do not produce the cheapest deep-mined coal in the world. One country does it cheaper — South Africa.

But before the media rushes around calling for British miners to accept South African conditions, they should look at the cost of apartheid coal. Last year 831 miners died in coal and gold mine accidents, according to the official figures of the employers organisation, the Chamber of Mines.

One hundred and twenty nine of those deaths were in the coal mines. Last September, 68 coal miners died in one accident alone, at Hlobane Coal Mine. The death rate from accidents is officially 1.49 per thousand South African miners.

Profits from oppression

If miners protest about these conditions they face ruthless repression. In the last seven years 100 miners have been killed during industrial disputes.

It is these facts which give the lie to all claims that apartheid is being fundamentally changed. Cheap, racially oppressed labour built capitalism in South Africa. It still provides South Africa with its competitive edge in world markets today. The mining industry is crucial to the economy as it provides the revenue which fuels the system.

Apartheid is not the illogical prejudice of some reactionary whites 6,000 miles away. It is highly profitable. It enables anthracite coal for example to be sold in South Africa at around £30 a tonne, about a quarter of the British price.

It is the super profits to be made from this exploited

Photo: Richard Gilbert (IFL)



Anti apartheid picket against Botha's visit to London.

workforce which interests British businessmen. They and their representatives, such as Tory Chairman Gummer, may weep crocodile tears about the moral indignities of apartheid, but it doesn't stop most of them investing money in it.

Most of the South African mines are quoted on the British Stock Exchange. When Labour MP Dave Nellist 8 February put down a Parliamentary motion calling for an "investigation into the health and safety policies of, and the wage rates paid by British companies and their subsidiaries in the South African industry", the Tories' response was smug complacency. Tory MPs Ian Lloyd and Nicholas Winterton put down a rival motion praising "the immense achievements of the South African mining industry".

Just last week City tycoon David Hargreaves bought up the Ingogo mine in South Africa so that he can import anthracite coal into Britain. Thatcher may criticise apar-

theid, but it has not stopped her husband's profitable directorship of Quinton Hazell's whose South African subsidiary pays poverty wages (details page 11).

Tories have a vested interest in claiming that reforms are taking place, but it is moonshine. The migrant labour system, which is the bedrock of the mining industry is fundamental to apartheid and there is no talk of reforms there.

New repressive laws

In March, the week after the much-proclaimed peace treaty with neighbouring Mozambique, new laws were introduced affecting nine millions of the African population. Anyone now who had "illegally" left their rural reserve looking for work would now be subject to a £3,000 fine, and if they were living in a squatters' camp, up to two years in prison.

Such a system cannot be reformed out of existence.

The bosses will not allow their profits to be taken away peacefully. It is the task of the labour movement to give its support for those struggling to end this system and replace it by a socialist society which ends both apartheid and the capitalist system upon which it rests

By Jim Chrystie

(See overthrowing apartheid: Workers' power or guerilla action — page 11)

"WE LIVE LIKE DOGS"—the struggle of black mine workers inside South Africa.

Order now and build links between British and South African mine workers.

For sale or hire from: SALEP 28 Martello St. London E8 3PE. Hire: £10 LPYS. £20 Labour Party/Trade Union Branches. Buy: £20 LPYS, £30 Labour Party/Trade Union Branches.

DEFEND LIVERPOOL COUNCIL—NATIONAL FIGHTBACK CONFERENCE. Saturday 23 June, at the Philharmonic Hall, Hope Street, Liverpool.

Write to Andy Pink, Conference Arrangements Secretary, Room 41, Central Support Unit, Liverpool City Council, Municipal Buildings, Dale Street, Liverpool L69 2BH.

Name

Address

Organisation

National backing for Liverpool

SUPPORT FOR the policies of Liverpool City Council has not come only from the local area.

In Etrick and Lauderdale District, five Labour candidates stood on the Liverpool programme in the recent elections, and received a good vote, with two getting elected—and this is in David Steel's constituency!

To mobilise nationwide support for the Liverpool councillors' stand, and to link it to the struggle of the miners, a national conference has been called in Liverpool on 23 June.

Within days of receiving notice of this "Support Liverpool Council and NUM Fightback Conference", trade union branches have been organising for a good turn out.

The National Union of Public Employees (NUPE) have circulated all 2,000 branches with material for the conference, and in the Northern Region, every shop steward will have received a notice. There will be at least

one coach from Sunderland Area NUPE, filled from a recent NUPE day school for shop stewards, at which Tony Mulhearn (President of Liverpool District Labour Party and newly-elected councillor) spoke of the council's campaign.

NUPE local authority members in Southwark are also organising at least one coach for the conference. These excellent examples prove what can be done by just one trade union. There is enormous interest within the whole labour movement and delegations are expected to flood in for this vitally important conference. Every organisation of the labour and trade union movement can send up to five delegates at £2 a delegate.

Make sure this conference is raised at your union or Party branch or your shop stewards' committee. Speakers will include Tony Benn, Dennis Skinner, Arthur Scargill, Ken Livingstone and Terry Fields.

By Josie Aitman (Broadgreen Labour Party)

Stop press

THE DAY after the mass picket at Orgreave, a very disturbing incident happened at nearby Catcliffe.

Women manning a pavillion to provide soup for the pickets saw a lone picket running towards them being chased by mounted police, a police motorcyclist and 20 foot police with dogs.

HUNDREDS OF postmen in London and surrounding areas walked out on Wednesday 30 May in protest at the latest pay offer. A thousand UCW members lobbied the Post Office headquarters, many chanting

The picket ran into the pavillion—the police unleashed the dogs, and they charged in. The dogs attacked two of the women. Radio Sheffield reported that one of the women had to be taken to hospital.

Also at Orgreave pickets arrested are not being handcuffed. Instead their hands are being secured by 'tie-wrap', a strong industrial plastic wire used in the pits. These cut into your wrists.

'Here we go', some changing it to 'EDO' (short for Eastern District Office)!

As we go to press it is not clear whether, as management have threatened, the workers will be locked out.



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