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Social security nightmare

- Rent and rate rebates cut
- Benefit withdrawn from 16-18 year olds
- Emergency payments replaced by loans
- Payments for heating stopped



Claimants queue at Bloomsbury DHSS office.

Photo: Dave Sinclair

MY PHONE has not stopped ringing this week. Desperate pensioners and low paid workers have been calling about the brutal effects of the Tories' callous Social Security Act. Many are frantic with worry.

By Councillor Hugh Henry
Renfrew district council

Some have ended up paying out £20 a week extra in rent and rates. "I don't know how I'm going to pay this. I don't have the money," they say.

In Glasgow thousands of despairing tenants flooded agencies with inquiries about how the cuts will affect them. Some left housing offices in tears when they found out how much they stand to lose.

Housing and DHSS offices all over the country saw similar scenes on Grim Monday when the Act came into force. Civil service workers who have to administer the cuts demonstrated against them. Some put up notices asking claimants not to blame them for the government's brutality.

The changes in social security payments are bad enough. But at least their effects will be gradual. But

householders who were on supplementary benefit have to pay 20 per cent of their rates plus water rates immediately.

Worst hit at the moment are low income families, widows, the long-term sick and pensioners. In Erskine, the area I represent, hundreds of householders will suffer badly. I am worried that some will skimp on food or heating or clothing in order to pay their rent.

To cap it all, many families who have had their housing benefit cut also have to pay £3 or £4 extra for their children's school meals. Many kids won't get the meals and their health will suffer.

My callers are sick with worry. But they're angry as well. They are being told to calculate how to ration out their misery, while the Budget gave millions to the rich.

What kind of society do we live in when a millionaire like Sir Ralph Halpern can get a £5,000 a week tax cut, which is more than many families receive in income in a year?

Why is it that the rich need tax cuts as an incentive for their labours while the poor require benefit cuts to induce them to work?

Youth and the social security cuts - p. 5

CIVIL SERVANTS demonstrated as claimants queued on the day the Social Security Act was introduced.

"Out of 772 jobs at the four Nottingham offices, 202 are due to go," union branch secretary Paul Barton told a Militant reporter. "The government claim the changes will make the system easier. It's true computerisation will relieve some of the clerical drudgery, but they won't use the extra resources to help claimants by processing claims quicker or doing more visits, which is what we want."

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Estate sales drive
21-27 April

WHAT ESTATE or streets are you going to canvass in Militant's special campaign of door to door sales?

Don't forget, the campaign starts with our next issue. Order extra papers and make your plans now. How many potential readers are out there waiting for you to call?

Militant

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Hijack crisis

THE HIJACK of the Kuwaiti airliner and the murder of passengers taken hostage will be condemned by workers throughout the world. Such acts do nothing to advance the cause of the working class or oppressed nationalities.

On the contrary they play into the hands of the ruling classes of all the countries involved. They provide the pretext for more repressive measures and divert attention from the state terrorism carried out by the same governments who hypocritically deplore the hijacking.

In 1986 the US government bombed civilian targets in Libya. The Israeli state is inflicting a reign of state terror on the West Bank and Gaza. The Iraqi regime has just killed thousands of Kurdish villagers in a horrific chemical bomb attack. The British Tories have shot dead three Irish republicans in Gibraltar, without any attempt to detain them.

The condemnation of 'terrorism' by these people is hypocritical. The problems of the Middle East are the product of past and continuing imperialist intervention to keep the workers and peasants in subjection by fomenting national and religious differences.

Lebanon, from which some of the hijackers are assumed to come, was originally created as an artificial Christian capitalist state from within Muslim Syria. Its constitution was rigged to ensure that power rested in the hands of the ruling class, while the different religious groups would be thrown into conflict with each other rather than unite to fight the capitalists.

The civil war in the 1970s and the Israeli invasion of 1982, reduced the country to a battleground of warring factions. The workers, peasants and many of the middle class have been reduced to poverty and despair.

The poorest, though by now the largest religious group, the Shia Muslims, in whose name the hijackers claim to act, were doubly exploited both as workers and a religious minority. But they fought back and their militia, Amal, became the most powerful.

Amal's right-wing leadership however, is now in league with the Syrian occupying forces. It is being challenged by the Islamic fundamentalist Hizbollah group.

Just like the Palestinian camps, where refugees have been forced to live in squalor for 40 years, the conditions in the Shia slums of Lebanon have bred a climate of hopelessness. When no socialist lead is being given and amidst despair of finding any way out, the idea of individual terrorism can begin to take root.

But it is a futile and ultimately disastrous course. However heroic some of the individuals involved may be, their methods are totally alien to those of working-class mass struggle.

Rather than educate the working class and mobilise their power to change society, they reduce the workers to the role of helpless by-standers. Their 'military' struggle is doomed to defeat, which leaves the workers more exposed to state repression.

Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky always fought what Lenin described as "impotent guerrilla warfare, terrorism" and "aimless, senseless, sporadic acts of violence".

They were referring to armed attacks on individual capitalists and ministers. They would have condemned even more the hijacking of innocent airline passengers and the kidnapping of people purely on the basis of their nationality.

The problems of the Middle East will never be solved by such methods. The most reactionary regimes and the imperialist powers will be strengthened, exploiting popular revulsion to crack down harder on any groups fighting to challenge their domination.

The alternative to the hijackers is the magnificent struggle being waged on the West Bank and Gaza, involving the mass of the population.

The Israeli army, which has scored spectacular military victories against both Arab armies and terrorist militias, has been reduced to an ill-disciplined rabble by the resistance of the united Palestinian people.

Only such a mass movement, led by the working class with a Marxist programme, can liberate this devastated area of the world, by building a socialist federation to develop the economy and put an end to the underlying economic problems which afflict the workers of all religious and national groups.

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Labour leadership election

Heffer speaks out

"THIS CAMPAIGN gives us the opportunity to halt the retreats in Party programme and to rebuild the left," ERIC HEFFER told Jeremy Birch in an exclusive interview for Militant.

I think it is quite clear that the Party has been drifting to the right, particularly since 1983. The gains that were made by the left are gradually being whittled away.

If we are to stop that drift and get back to sound socialist policies and mobilise the working class to fight for them, then it is essential to have a contest for leader and deputy leader.

If you accept the role of the market that in essence is repudiating the whole basis of socialist politics. It is a faint shadow of Thatcherism.

The Labour Party from 1918 onwards and before that, the ILP, the Social Democratic Federation, even the Fabians, made it absolutely clear that if you are to get the people out of poverty, if you are to get production for use and not for profit, then you have to have the public ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange under democratic control.

If we are fighting for full employment, and there has been a retreat on full employment for some time in the Party, we cannot do it unless we own the basic means of production and plan society accordingly.

Do you feel the leadership and deputy leadership campaign is linked to the new mood developing in the unions, with the health workers, car workers and seafarers?

Because they have been clobbered under Toryism, by legislation and by unemployment, many at the top of the unions have accepted new realism. That means, as it did in the years after the 1926 general strike, they have accepted the position that they cannot win.

This is not reflected among the rank and file who are saying 'enough is enough.' The miners despite all the difficulties are making a stand, and that stand has to be supported. The Party leadership did not give unqualified support to the miners and that was the real test. If the miners had won, it would have transformed the whole situation.

Other workers are beginning to fight back and they need the fullest support of the Labour Party and the movement as a whole.

The press is already beginning a 'dirty tricks' campaign, how do you respond to that?

That's all the more proof that we're absolutely right in what we're doing. If they didn't attack us, if the gutter press gave us praise, then it would be quite clear that we would be helping capital and not labour.

Mass campaign

They realise that we are a serious danger if we get into positions of responsibility in the movement. That we are a serious danger to capitalism and that is why they are carrying out the sort of misrepresentation they have done.

How do you want to see this campaign conducted?

I believe that we should have a series of meetings in the major conurbations, but not only in those areas. We should certainly go to fringe meetings at every trade union conference and put our case.

We will not win unless we can mobilise opinion.

I want to see the fullest discussion inside all the constituency parties and inside the unions. I do not think it is right that a small group of people on a union executive can say they will determine what the membership thinks.

As long as the fullest debate takes place, even if we lose in a particular union, we will have mobilised opinion and we are bound to get a strengthening of the socialist case.

I also think that every one who is standing should be able to write a statement of what they stand for in *Labour Party News*, and that ought to be sent out to every Party member.

It's clear that some people have organised against you, particularly because of the stand you made on Liverpool. Do you regret walking out of the Party conference or making clear your support for the struggle of the councillors?

No, no regrets whatsoever. If it happened again under similar circumstances, I would do it again without any question. I am very proud of what the Liverpool councillors did. The fact that a number of them have been expelled from the Party is an absolute disgrace and they should be brought back into the Party at the earliest possible moment.

This idea that there are groups within the party who organise around newspapers; all I've got to say is that I first joined the Labour Party way back



in 1937 and in all those years there's always been different groups, many of them on the right wing. And anybody suggesting the right don't organise, they're not being truthful.

Of course people have groups in the Labour Party, they always have had. Nye Bevan was expelled as was Stafford Cripps and others before the war because they were members of the Socialist League.

Once the Labour Party stops having people organised around newspapers and for particular policies, then that's the end of the socialist democracy of the Party.

Do you think that the experience of Liverpool, of electoral success with full-blooded socialism, has lessons for the party nationally?

This is something I have been stressing ever since the general election. In Liverpool and on Merseyside as a whole, there was a tremendous swing, because what happened in Liverpool affected the whole of Merseyside.

Where there were candidates that had not supported the struggle of the council, their votes were lower.

We got a spin off in the election from what had happened in Liverpool. People were able to see what a genuine socialist Labour council can do, building houses, sports centres, keeping the rents down, keeping school meals prices down.

They say Liverpool was an exception. Yes, the exception was that in Liverpool they saw a genuine socialist council in operation and that impressed the mass of ordinary people. Therefore if that can be done in Liverpool, it can be done elsewhere.

Police chief insults working women

BEDFORDSHIRE'S CHIEF Constable, Alan Dyer, has insulted every working woman by blaming mothers who go to work for the increase in crime amongst young people.

By Helen Watson, Bedford LPYS

"A woman's place is in the home" he said: "the sooner some of these women realise that being a housewife is a full-time job, the sooner we may be able to get some of these lawless kids off the streets."

Dyer, whose wife Penny has never worked throughout their 32-year marriage, insists: "I'm no male chauvinist... At the moment my wife's having a

three-week holiday... and I'm at home cooking for myself."

He was backed up by local Tory MP, John Carlisle (known as the MP for Johannesburg for his support of the apartheid regime in South Africa) who suggested that working mothers should lose their child benefit.

And this week his Tory government is introducing the worst-ever legalised robbery of mothers through the new Social Security Act.

Single mothers with a child under five are losing

an estimated £5.90 benefit a week. 330,000 children are losing free school meals, putting extra pressure on the family budget and particularly on the women who usually manage it.

Victims

This will hardly encourage women to stay in the home, when they will need more money to make ends meet!

The logic of Dyer and his friends is hard to understand. Women, who are so often the victims of increas-

ed crime, are now it seems being labelled as the cause.

But will the stock-brokers and top businessmen currently charged with criminal offences in the Guinness scandal argue that their mummies worked when they were children? I don't think so.

Dyer and Carlisle are trying to disguise the identity of those really responsible for crime—the Tories and their system.

Nobody would support the muggings and thefts from people's homes, but these crimes are petty com-

pared to the Tories' crimes against the working class, especially the ultimate 'crime' of condemning young people to the dole queues and destroying any hope they might have for the future.

Leading

Working-class women are not prepared to accept the blame for the rise in crime, nor are they going to be forced back into the kitchen. They will be leading the struggle to kick the 'lawless' Tories and their system out.

Sacked civil servant loses home

A CIVIL Service trade unionist and Labour Party member has lost his job, in a blatant case of victimisation.

Ian Williams, a computer operator in the Ministry of Defence, reported for duty at RAF Stafford. Within 15 minutes he was marched off and an official who had travelled specially from London gave him a letter saying he was sacked.

No reason was given. He was forced to give in his security pass and escorted off the camp. His line manager said that his dismissal had nothing to do with his work or his disciplinary record.

This victimisation shows that the state fears the growth of the left in the civil service unions. Management knew that Ian was an active member of the Labour Party and of the National Union of Civil and Public Servants and previously of the CPSA.

Ian Williams has lost his job and probably the chance of future employment. And now that he is unemployed, his landlord has given him notice to quit his home by 24 April.

Attacks like these have been easier in the witch-hunting atmosphere encouraged by the labour movement right wing. This case must be taken up by the labour and trade union movement. Ian Williams must be reinstated and there must be an end to all victimisation of union and Labour Party activists.

By Andy Bentley

Women's rights debated

ON 11 APRIL in Rotherhithe, local Liberal MP Simon Hughes debated with Margaret Creear from Bermondsey Women's Action Group on the Alton Bill.

By Maureen Hearn

80 people heard Margaret Creear describe how appalling social conditions led many women to consider abortion. In South-west 30 per cent of pregnancies end in termination.

Ordinary women in Bermondsey were not hard faced murderers of unborn children as pro-Alton propaganda implies. They were mainly working-class women caught in the poverty trap who did not think they had the means to carry on with the pregnancy.

Late abortions are distressing but they result from NHS cutbacks. Guy's Hospital say they can no longer cope with the demand for abortions.

Simon Hughes dismissed the social questions. He said it was just 'a moral issue — every foetus from the moment of conception had the right to life and the



Standing ovation for Margaret Creear (top right) after her debate with Simon Hughes MP (bottom right). Photos: Dave Sinclair

law had to be used to enforce moral standards.

In the discussion from the floor, a social worker refuted Spuc claims that pro-abortionists wanted to kill off handicapped people. Every woman, she said, should have the right

to give birth to a child, but the needs of handicapped children were ignored by society. They needed tangible help not patronising remarks.

Summing up, Margaret Creear said that she wanted an end to late abortions but

that meant fighting for better social conditions and a well-funded NHS, in other words, fighting for a socialist society.

Liberals like Alton, she said, had spoken on platforms with reactionaries and bigots. Their concern

for human life does not extend to the ordinary women who will die from back street abortions. Their 'liberalism' will also lead to imprisonment and court appearances for many desperate women.



Nicked for selling Militant

WHILE SELLING *Militant* during a regular street sale in Peckham, South London, on Saturday 9 April, Nick Wrack was arrested and charged with obstruction.

He will be pleading not guilty and *Militant* supporters will be campaigning against this harassment.

The irony is that in the snow and rain, the sale had been going more slowly than usual. But after the arrest, sellers decamped to the local police station and, telling passers-by what had happened, sold 15 copies on the police's doorstep!

Prince in right royal row

TORY PARTY chairman Norman Tebbit must feel like a snake charmer bitten by his own snakes. He has been savaged by the usually servile press. Even the *Sun* says: "With friends like Norman Tebbit, who needs enemies?"

Tebbit provoked this tirade by criticising Prince Charles for expressing concern about the unemployed and poverty in the inner cities.

For a loyal Thatcherite like Norman, one thing is more sacred than the monarchy — the Tory government's programme of filling the pockets of the rich at the expense of the poor and destroying the remains of the Welfare State.

They believe that the Prince's remarks imply criticism of their policies. On BBC TV's *Panorama* Tebbit paranoically speculated that the Prince is moving towards "a socialist solution".

But nothing is further from the truth. All he is saying is that the poor will always be with us, but the rich should provide them a safety net against absolute destitution, if only for

reasons of self-preservation.

"It must be marginally bearable to be poor and be part of a community" he said: "but it must be unbearable to be poor without the support of the community."

Like the more far-sighted representatives of capitalism he has caught a whiff of the bitterness Thatcherism is creating. They are conscious that it will spread, especially when the economy moves into recession. "The government are taking some unwarrantable social risks," Sir Ian Gilmour warned in the Budget debate.

Reserve weapon

Another reason for Prince Charles's comments and the media hullabaloo about them is that governments come and go, but the monarchy is a permanent feature of British capitalism. The media value the sanctity of the monarchy more than any politician's reputation.

The thrifty capitalists invest large sums of money in this institution as a reserve weapon to defend their system.

If this can no longer be done democratically, they will use the monarchy as when the Queen's representative dismissed the Australian Labor Government in 1975.

But to play this role, the royal family must cultivate an image of disinterested compassion, standing above squabbling politicians. They could not intervene against workers' democratic rights when capitalism is threatened, if they were too openly identified with the government of the day.

That is why Labour leaders are unconsciously pursuing a dangerous policy when they support the monarchy. Environment spokesperson Jack Cunningham said that "people will want the future monarch to understand very well their problems.... he is demonstrating a real concern for the people of this country."

Labour should not invoke the monarchy against Thatcherism, but oppose the monarchy, not just as a bastion of privilege, but also as a potential threat to the labour movement.

Students back FE rights

THE NATIONAL Union of Students has elected Maeve Sherlock, of the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS), as its new president with 396 votes, against 229 for Lembit Opik, an independent and 217 for Simon Pottinger of the Socialist Students (SSIN).

It was a vote for Labour, rather than the Democratic Left group who temporarily dominate NOLS. But the high vote for the independent reflects the mood of many students dissatisfied with the lack of a fightback against Tory attacks.

Marxists in NOLS will redouble their campaign to democratise the organisation and commit it to a socialist programme, so that students can be offered a real alternative.

In a major step forward, conference supported Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign (YTURC) demands for a £120 a week minimum wage and a guaranteed job for all. It also voted for all part-time further education students to be full members of the union.

By a Militant reporter

Belfast funeral killings

Thatcher uses Ireland to intensify attack on media

"EITHER ONE is on the side of justice in this matter or one is on the side of terrorism", Thatcher said in the aftermath of the killing of two British soldiers at the funeral of IRA member Kevin Brady.

Certainly, millions throughout Britain were shocked by the barbarity of the killings, shown explicitly on TV.

In the hysteria whipped up by the press and Tory MPs afterwards Thatcher brought all the pressure of the state to bear on the BBC and ITV to hand over unbroadcast film to the police.

The TV companies reacted initially by refusing to let the film go, to protect film crews against possible reprisals for appearing to collaborate with the state. Thatcher accused them of "siding with the terrorists". Tory MP David Conway said the decision was "disgraceful", and "the BBC has sunk beneath contempt".

Eventually the BBC's Northern Ireland controller, Dr Colin Morris, was told by the RUC that he would be arrested if he didn't hand over the film.

According to reports, Thatcher even considered using the Prevention of Terrorism Act to get the film released. Yet when John Stalker demanded the release of tapes held by the RUC, as evidence in his inquiries into the illegal shoot-to-kill policies of the RUC, he was stonewalled and then forced off the case.

There was no talk then by Thatcher about the 'obligation' of the RUC to hand over the tapes. When demands were raised to charge RUC officers with the killing of an innocent Catholic youth in a hay-barn, which had been taped, the Tory government said it wasn't "in the public interest".

Now Thatcher insists that the media has a "bounden duty" to cooperate with the state in bringing those responsible for the killings to trial. It was reported in the

By Ben Eastop

Observer that there was considerable unease amongst Murdoch's News International staff about supporting the Thatcher line. According to the report there was speculation that Thatcher even contacted Murdoch to get his backing.

Murdoch's papers dutifully obliged. The *Sun* said on 23 March: "We are all in the front line against terrorism." But the *Sunday Times* (27 March) went further, publishing pictures in explicit detail of the soldiers being attacked, labelling the attackers with numbers and arrows and effectively lining them up for arrest.

Yet it was clear that those who initially attacked the soldier's car, which was being driven straight at the crowd, believed it was another attack by loyalists as had happened the week before at Milltown cemetery.

Immobilised

It was only afterwards, when the soldiers had been beaten up and immobilised, that the IRA took them away and executed them in cold blood.

The *Sunday Times'* active collusion with the state's interests has serious implications for workers' democratic rights. The labour movement must ensure that no-one in the initial crowd is picked out and framed by 'evidence' forced out of the press by Thatcher.

Thatcher's attack on the media is an admission that she has no alternative but to continue, and step up, the use of repressive military and state forces in Nor-



Soldier brandishing gun before being dragged from the car by the funeral crowd.

thern Ireland.

It is not, therefore, in the Tories' interests to ensure that the press and TV can operate freely and inform workers of what is going on. They want to use the media as an instrument of the state and have taken advantage of the situation in Northern Ireland to continue this policy.

It is the same policy which banned the Zircon spy satellite

series and the BBC's radio programme on the secret service and which led to the attempts to silence Peter Wright.

As *Militant* has pointed out many times, sectarian violence gives the state the opportunity to increase the repression. Thatcher's attack on the media is in anticipation of further repressive methods being used in the future.

But in all the press coverage

not one newspaper, except *Militant*, has been able to show the way out of the continuing spiral of sectarian and state violence.

Militant's consistent call for workers unity and socialism is the only solution which can cut across the sectarian divide. Despite the present difficulties, it is the only one which will get increasing support from workers on both sides.

Trade unionist fights against deportation

MARION GAIMA has lived in this country for 14 years. Now the Home Office are telling her: "You're not British". They have issued her with a notice to leave on the basis that she is an "overstay".

Marion, a shop steward, works for Hackney council and has turned to her union, Nalگو, for support in her campaign against deportation to Sierra Leone.

Hackney Nalگو's black worker's officer, Monica Dixon is coordinating her campaign. She appealed for support at the recent Youth Trade Union Rights Conference and spoke to *Militant* about the campaign.

"Marion is still playing her full role as a shop steward in the environmental health department. A lot of people would have just pulled out and said 'it's just me I'm interested in now'. But she hasn't put aside the work she does for her members.

"We are trying to get the Home Office to reassess her case on compassionate grounds. But she's got the 'problem' of being a single woman. It seems that you have got to produce a couple of kids to get

any sympathy".

One reason that Marion turned to her union is that it has already successfully campaigned for two of its members, Mohammed Idrish and Shaheed Syed. The fact that both cases were won shows the role the labour movement can play in fighting racism and state persecution of blacks.

Consistent

"At least Nalگو has been consistent", says Monica, "although there is a lot more that they could do.

"We are asking people to make individual representations to the Home Office on Marion's behalf and to get their union branches to do so.

"She has a date for a reconvened court appearance on 20 April. We want people to join us in a lobby of the High Court in the Strand that morning".

More details of the campaign are available from: Hackney Nalگو, 245 Mare Street, London E8.

By Tony Cross

Bomb threat aimed to whip up racism

AN EXTREME right wing group is believed to be responsible for the car bomb discovered on Pendeford estate in Wolverhampton on Thursday 7 April.

The only explanation for the bomb is that it was aimed at stirring up racial hatred, in a town where Enoch Powell was MP for 20 years.

The evening before, a phone call was made to lure the police to the car but the device failed to explode. A group calling itself the Black Liberation Front claimed responsibility for the bomb, as well as another two bombs and an ambush on a police car in the last 12 months. They've also claimed responsibility for attacks on Labour councillors including a leading black woman councillor in the town.

But black community leaders and even a police spokesman said that they hadn't heard of such a group.

The phone caller linked the bomb to the death of a young black man, Clinton McCurbin, 14 months ago. This seems to be part of an attempt to link his death falsely to the crime wave in the inner cities.

Clinton McCurbin died of asphyxiation while he was being arrested by three policemen in a shop. But in 14 months of



Enoch Powell. Tories are still playing the race card in Wolverhampton.

investigation no-one has been prosecuted and the police concerned returned to duty last week.

The racial tension created by Clinton McCurbin's death was used successfully by the Tories and the press to help to defeat the Labour council which had been in power for 16 years.

The bomb was timed to explode on the same day that Tory minister John Patten was visiting the town, to launch

the government's so-called anti-crime campaign.

The Tories are planning to give £250,000 to Wolverhampton supposedly to fight crime. But the money is being used to experiment with new and repressive policing methods, such as the introduction of video cameras on the main high street linked to the police station. These could easily be used for surveillance of youth and others not involved in crime.

Lack of jobs

But the increase in crime and the development of racial tension is a result of the bad housing, lack of jobs and deteriorating living conditions.

It is the failure of the previous Labour administration to tackle these problems which has boosted the Tories' support, and provided fertile conditions for the deadly activities of the extreme right.

By Diane Simcox

Tory lies exposed

THE GOVERNMENT'S own benefit advisers have slammed the effects the Social Security Act will have on young people.

The Social Security Advisory Committee says it will mean destitution for some young workers and unemployed.

They've proved Thatcher was lying when she said 'only' 12 per cent of claimants would lose from the benefit changes. The real figure is 43 per cent, they say!

Militant's warnings about the act's effects are proved true by the committee's report. It says that cutting benefits to the under-25s will make it nigh on impossible for them to leave home.

A typical 17 year-old in the second year on YTS will be £10 worse off. There is no satisfactory appeals tribunal and the new powers to withhold benefit are "the English version of Workfare". (Workfare is the work-for-benefit system in California described in Militant 887.)

The Tories are damned by the evidence of their own advisors. Now the labour movement must launch a massive campaign to get this evil act scrapped.

By Davie Archibald
Youth Trade Union
Rights Campaign
national secretary

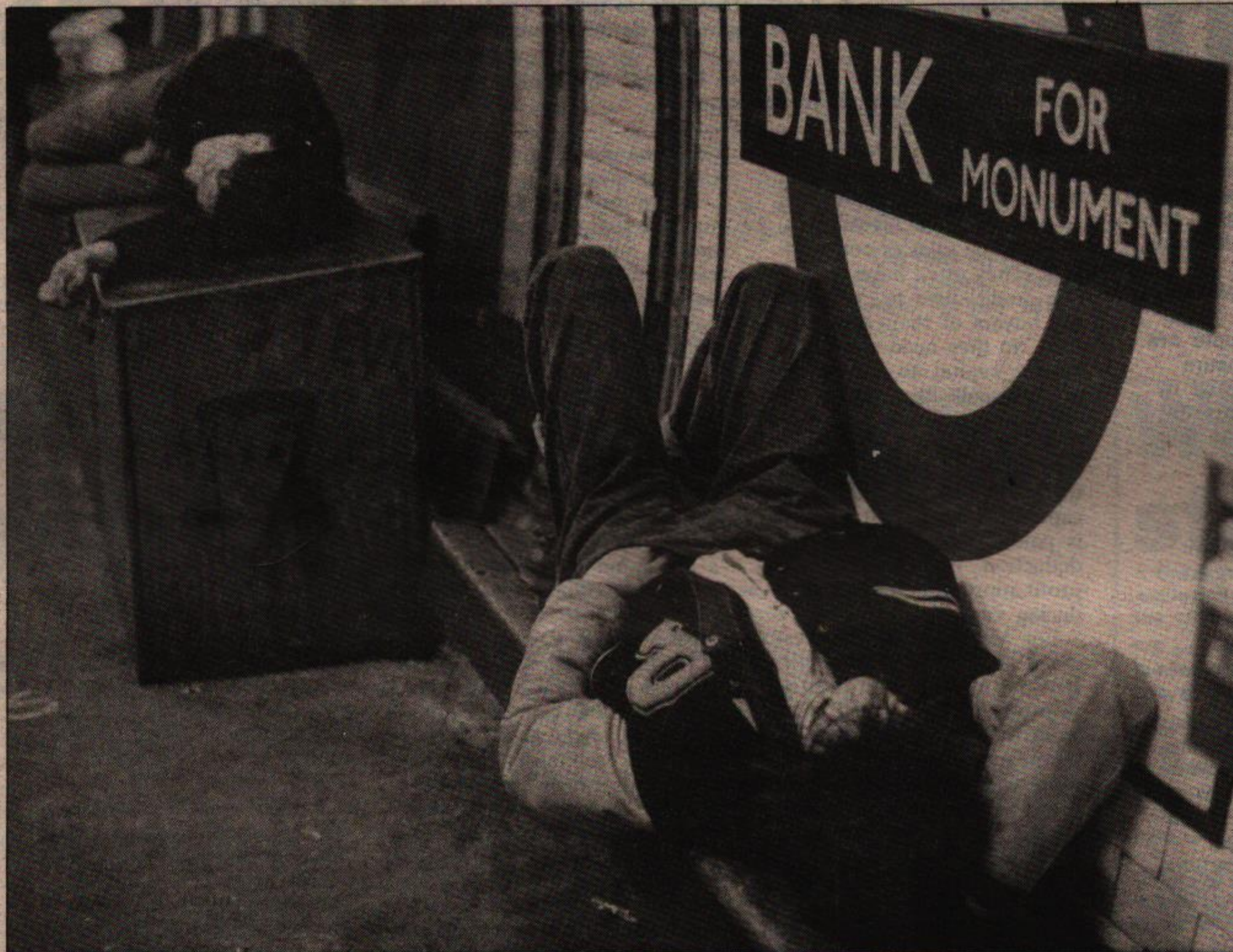


Photo: Dave Sinclair.

Sleeping in a London tube station—thousands of young people will be made homeless by Tory benefit cuts.

THE TRUTH about Tory plans for the New Adult Training Programme (NATP) was let slip in a circular sent to Job Centres by the chief executive of the Employment Services.

Junior employment minister Patrick Nicholls said in the House of Commons on 23 March that no-one would have their benefit stopped for refusing to go on the scheme.

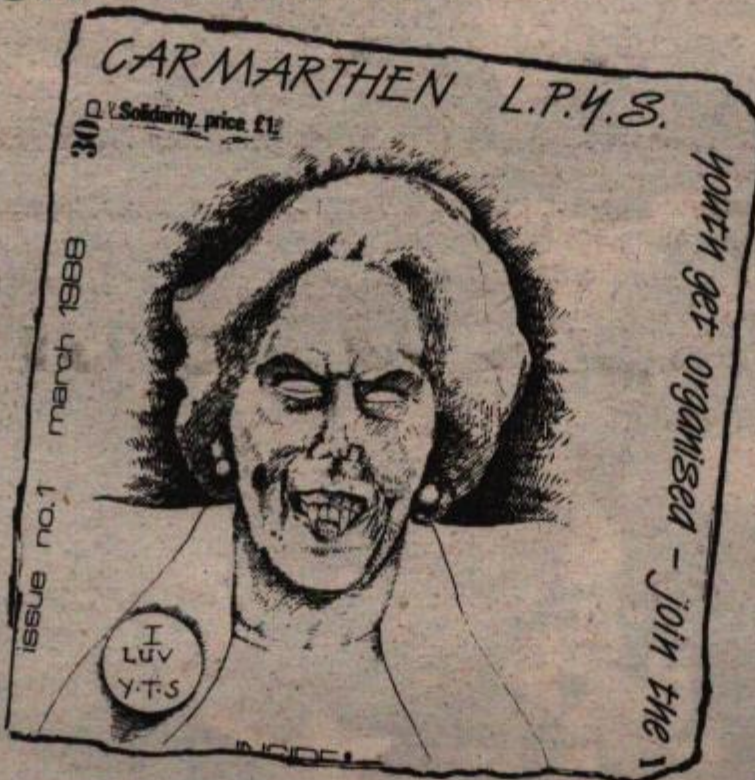
But the circular states that people on the existing Community Programme "will be required to convert" to the new scheme in September.

The government have

denied this and said it is an error due to "sloppy drafting". But their intention is clear—either work for your dole plus £10, or get nothing at all!

Causing a stir in Carmarthen

"DENNIS DEAR, I've had a terrible day at work today! There's a bunch of insolent brats in Carmarthen, known as the Labour Party Young Socialists. They're creating a stir amongst the unemployed and young workers with a newspaper they've just brought out."



The paper Maggie's moaning about is called Carmarthen LPYS and these memorable lines are from its pages (and so is our illustration.). It has articles on YTS, the NHS and South Africa, among others.

In two days, 55 copies were sold and £30 raised for the YS's funds.

If your LPYS or YTURC branch has produced lively material, please send it to us. And don't forget to sell Militant too!

"I'M STRUGGLING at the moment," Harlow Young Socialist Helen Burge told Militant. "But the Social Security Act will leave me with £19 a week."

"At the moment I'm in rented accommodation. My rent is £35 a week and the rent cheque I get to cover that is £7 short. That leaves me with about £24 a week to cover my food and living expenses.

"I got a letter from the dole office saying they were going to change my supplementary benefit to Income Support, which means they think I need £26 a week to live on. As far as I know I still have to pay that £7 a week rent, which will only leave

me with £19 a week.

"At the moment I don't have enough money to go out more than once a week."

Benefits

"My housing benefit was very complicated to work out. You have to go up there to ask them what it means, and even then you're not too sure about how it's going to affect you.

"Most people I know stay in rented accommodation, at maybe £35 for a single room. Some of them are appalling.

"In one place they converted a garage into a bedroom, and partitioned the living room off, but the partition was so insub-

stantial you could hear everything that was going on the other side.

"If you're being educated at an FE college, you can't claim. Even part-timers have to pay the college fee, at something like £40 a term.

"It doesn't give you a chance to educate yourself legally. There aren't any jobs available anyway. So why would they want an educated youth when there are no jobs?"

"The Tories just won't put money into education or the national health service. They would rather pay it out to big business."

Victorian Radio One

RADIO ONE disc jockey Janice Long says the BBC is like a Victorian employer.

Ms Long has just had a baby and is on maternity leave. While other people were sending her congratulations, her employers sent her a letter saying she would not be returning to her late-night weekday programme. They asked if she could manage to combine

motherhood with a half-hour slot on Sundays instead!

She had trouble from management as soon it first emerged she was going to have a baby.

"I had told them I wanted to have six weeks off after the birth and return to work," she told the press. "They told me I would have to take four months off because, being a woman, I would have

post-natal depression, be breast-feeding and would change my mind about working."

The BBC's attitude is typical of many employers who discriminate against women with children.

Janice Long may be able to survive with the salary from half an hour's deejaying a week, but many working class women won't have even this option.

They will be forced back into the home.

Parents should be entitled to at least six months maternity or paternity leave on full pay. Their jobs should be kept open for two years. But those who wish to come back to work sooner should be able to and this should be made possible by the provision of creche facilities free and on demand.

Manchester LPYS demonstration
SAVE THE SHARPEVILLE SIX!

Saturday 16 April

Assemble 11.30 am
at Alexandra Park, Moss Side.
March to city centre. Rally speakers
include exiled SA trade unionist
Nimrod Sejake



Rogue mail

THE UNITED States Army wants to make its biological warfare laboratory in Utah bigger. They are working on viruses that cause incurable diseases, a sign of the grisly weaponry capitalist (and presumably Stalinist) powers are accumulating.

In the short term, local people are most worried about the disclosure that the viruses will be delivered by the post office. If your last gas bill made you sick, just think what this little bundle of fun could do.

It's a snip

"A DAY spent in J F Lazartique's hair treatment centre in the Faubourg St Honore doesn't come cheap" admits the *Observer* magazine. A pot of shampoo costs £18.

The assistants offer their customers smoked salmon, cold beef fillet and a chocolate dessert as part of the service. They ask: "Would Madame perhaps like to drink some champagne?" which you don't normally hear at your local High Street hairdressers.

"The world's most fashionable sophisticates patronise Mr. Lazartique, women like Charlotte Rampling, Nastassja Kinski, Madame Mitterrand and Glenys Kinnock," the *Observer* observed.

Presumably it's part of the Labour listens campaign. Rumour has it that Madame Mitterrand and Mrs. Kinnock salve their socialist consciences by having their hair parted on the left.

Why a Hawke plummets

AUSTRALIA'S LABOR Prime Minister Bob Hawke has encouraged the rich by cutting top tax rates, while jobs have disappeared and workers' wages have been held back by an incomes policy. The trade unions have been attacked for daring to fight government plans for privatisation.

Mr Hawke is now surprised to find he's losing elections like those in New South Wales. (See *Militant* 1 April). He has launched an enquiry into why he's lost popularity.

It couldn't possibly be his Thatcherite policies, could it? The press barons love them. His image must be old-fashioned; perhaps he should pay a visit to Glenys Kinnock's hairdresser.

Back to the drawing board

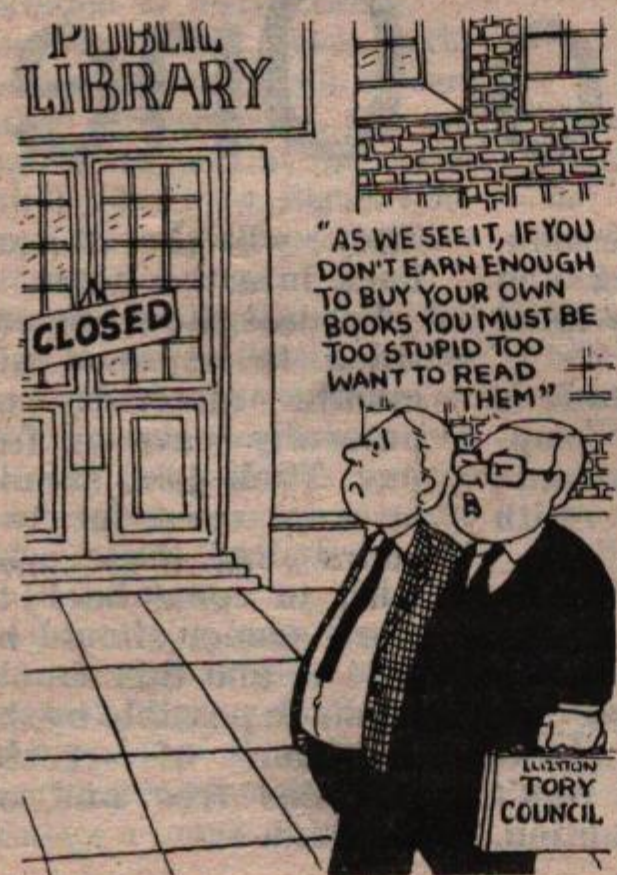
HERE'S A biting attack on Tory councils that are closing libraries and cutting local facilities.

It's been sent out to Labour Party newsletter editors from the party's national headquarters.

But wait a minute! Who's closing libraries in Hackney?

Why, it's a Labour council! Like others who follows the leadership's 'realistic' line, it is putting through Tory cuts.

Some people might be a bit embarrassed if this cartoon was distributed there, mightn't they?



Rent, Interest and Profit

THE CLASH between Lawson and Thatcher over the value of the currency and over interest rates has high-lighted the glaring inadequacies of British manufacturing industry. Thatcher's determination to keep interest rates high threatens to push the growing balance of payments deficit to new record levels.

BOB MCKEE looks at the role interest rates play in the working of the capitalist economy.

CAPITALISTS CANNOT expect to cover straight away all the cost of machinery and plant they have invested in, through the sales of commodities. They often have to provide credit—time to pay—for the buyers of their commodities. So they need a stock of money capital to tide them over. Usually they must borrow this from banks.

When banks lend money they charge a rate of interest for its use by the producing capitalist. When that interest is paid to the banks, it is a deduction from the overall profit appropriated by the producing capitalist.

For Marxists then, interest is not an extra form of profit. It is part of the profit created in production, snatched away from the producing capitalist by the money capitalist. In the same way rent is that part of profit taken by the owner of landed property when leasing sites to producing capitalists.

The level of interest rates is determined by the amount of money capital available for loans and the demand for it. But what determines that demand?

Capitalist production does not develop steadily, it is subject to cycles of growth, prosperity, crisis and depression. During the early part of this cycle interest rates are low, but as production picks up and

the demand for loanable funds rises, interest rates rise.

When production starts to stagnate and commodity sales decline, interest rates can rise even further as more money is borrowed to meet demands for payment that cannot be met by sales' receipts.

High rates

"A low rate of interest generally corresponds to periods of prosperity or extra profit, and a rise in interest separates prosperity and its reverse, and a maximum of interest up to the point of extreme usury corresponds to a period of crisis."—Marx, *Capital* Vol.3.

In the situation of crisis, interest rates reach such high levels that they squeeze all the profit out of the hands of the producing capitalists and into the hands of the lenders of money. So high interest rates can make worse any crisis of profitable production.

But that crisis has to exist in the first place. High interest rates will not damage capitalist production if profit rates and prices are even higher, in the prosperous period of the industrial cycle.

The whole history of capitalism shows that interest rates have risen when profits and prices of production have generally expanded, like 1900-

1920 and 1946-81. They have fallen in periods of depression—1880-1900, 1920-46.

Throughout the post-war years there has been an unprecedented rise in borrowing to finance growth in production. The supply of loanable funds was dramatically expanded by the creation of the Eurodollar market—a huge money market out of the control of national governments and their central banks.

Even that was not enough to satisfy the insatiable demands for loans from companies and governments, searching for ways to boost production and meet the demands of workers for social services and governments for arms.

And in their desperation to find a way out of poverty and backwardness, third world countries have been forced to borrow billions.

With this never-ending demand for credit, world interest rates spiralled to new historical heights.

What has blocked a substantial fall in interest rates after the massive rise in the post-war period, has been the tremendous level of borrowing by the US government to finance its huge increase in arms expenditure. This has driven up world interest rates, as other countries have been forced to follow suit to stem a massive

exodus of funds from their own coffers to the more lucrative US money markets.

From a Marxist standpoint, then, it is clear why a rise in interest rates now indicates a growing crisis and at some stage a financial collapse and slump in production. Since the late sixties the average level of profit rates worldwide has been falling. Even though there has been some limited revival in the upturn since 1982, they are still 50 per cent below their level at the height of the post-war boom.

Deepening crisis

Continual high interest rates or further rises now, in a period of falling profit rates, will make any crisis of production even worse, squeezing further the profit left to the producing capitalist.

Increasingly British and US capitalists depend on their own 'retained profits' for further investment rather than bank loans because they must pay higher interest rates than in Japan and West Germany for example.

A rise in interest rates now is not an indicator of growing profits and prosperity, as some bankers and finance capitalists might like to believe. It is an indicator of a deepening crisis in production.



Labour listens to wrong advice

I WAS recently reading a National Organisation of Labour Students' journal, and came across an article written by Henry Neuberger entitled *Socialist Challenge*. He was economic advisor to Neil Kinnock and is now working with the Labour front bench industry team.

He does admit that at the last general election people had the feeling that Labour

could not manage the economy and did not really understand it. His answer is "to sound as if we know about all aspects of the economy."

Negative

Apparently this "has less to do with policy development...The most important things about policy are negative—that it should not

be obviously foolish or incoherent."

From what he goes on to say about the policy review and modernising Labour's programme, what he believes is 'foolish' is nationalisation and planning.

For according to Neuberger the last year has proved "the adoption—admittedly by the Tories—of the kind of policies we were advocating will cut unemploy-

ment." But the Tories have mainly cut dole queues by YTS, JTS and low pay. And as the interest rate argument shows, their economic 'success' cannot possibly be sustained.

One thing is certain capitalism has nothing to worry about from Henry Neuberger's 'socialist challenge.'

By Tony McNulty
Bootle LPYS

Bristol right wing desperation

RIGHT-WING would-be witch-hunters have stooped to forgery to get their way in Bristol.

Members of Bristol East Labour Party were surprised to be handed an 'emergency' motion at the door when they went to their Annual General Meeting.

The motion condemned *Militant* for distributing a leaflet purporting to be Bristol East Labour Party material. It went on to oppose the sale of papers outside meetings.

It was ruled out of order, but the meeting was peppered with indignant outbursts by right-wingers brandishing the offending

leaflet.

But the most casual glance at the leaflets revealed they were crude forgeries. *Militant* leaflets had been photocopied and printed over with the party's name.

The shadow of the piece of paper with the party's name on was clearly visible! The party's executive has examined the 'leaflets' and recognised them for the forgeries they are.

Is this really the best the right wing can do?

Unfortunately comrades have been expelled on such flimsy 'evidence' as this in other parts of the country, while members who commit serious crimes, such as standing against the party, are left unpunished.

By Bristol East
Militant supporters

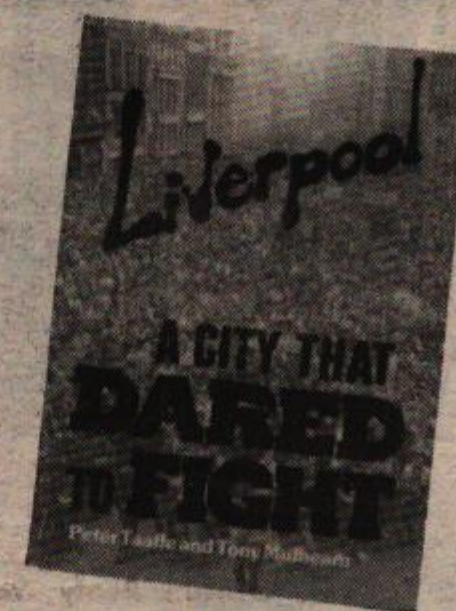
Marxist best seller

LIVERPOOL-A CITY that dared to fight reached a milestone this week, with sales passing 5000 copies. Orders are still pouring in from individuals, libraries, bookshops and trade union branches.

Most rewarding is the enthusiasm the book has received around the world. Readers in Seattle, USA, have ordered 16 copies for bookshops there!

If the momentum is to be sustained, everybody who has bought and read the book should be approached to buy copies to sell in work, to friends and at meetings.

Get your copy NOW. £6.95 plus 90p postage. From Fortress Books, PO Box 141, London E2 0RL.



By Peter Taaffe and Tony Mulhearn
Essential lessons for every worker.
£6.95 plus 90p postage.
From Fortress books PO Box 141 London E2 0RL.

Where to find us

MILITANT has public meetings and discussion groups in most towns throughout the country. Below is a listing of meetings or contacts for further information. If you want to know the nearest one to you telephone the 'MEETING LINE' (01)533 3311 ext 227.

EAST SCOTLAND

For details of meetings contact: Andrea Charles-031 659 6187.

STRATHCLYDE

For details of meetings contact: 041 221 1443.

NORTHERN

For details of meetings contact: Bill Hopwood-091 276 1736.

MERSEYSIDE

For details of meetings contact: Richard Venton-051 260 3111.

Liverpool:

Marxist discussion group
24 April and fortnightly
2, Lower Breck Rd, 7.0 pm.

SOUTH WEST

For details of meetings ring
0272 631471.

Exiled South African trade unionist Nimrod Sejake tours to speak on 'For a socialist South Africa'

Bristol:

3 May Shepherds Hall, Old Market 7.30 pm

Plymouth:

4 May Students Union Lounge Polytechnic 8pm.

YORKSHIRE

Bradford:

19 April
Defend women's rights
The Star Pub Westgate 7.30pm
For details of other meetings contact: Henry Gregory-0709 371250.

MANCHESTER/LANCS

For details of meetings contact: Mike Johnson-061 273 8648.

EAST MIDLANDS

For details of meetings contact: Andy Jackson-0602 623112.

WEST MIDLANDS

For details of meetings contact: Bill Mullins-021 552 7624.

WALES

For details of meetings contact: 0222 736682.

Llanelli:

20 April Take the Liverpool road Wesleyan Hall, Morfa 7.30 pm

Carmarthen:

20 April The DHSS proposals Carmarthen Library 7 pm

EASTERN

For details of meetings contact Teresa MacKay 0473 713179

SOUTH EAST

For details of meetings phone
01 533 3311

Hampshire/Thames Valley
For meeting details phone 0703 786879

Southampton:

Redbridge Marxist discussion group Every Wednesday, 7 Goodwin Close, Millbrook 2 pm.
20 April: Women and the struggle for socialism

LONDON

For details of meetings contact George Roberts-01 739 9123.

Hackney:

20 April
What *Militant* Stands For
Chats Palace, Brooksby Walk, Homerton. 7.30 pm.

Tower Hamlets:

20 April
Stop the benefit cuts
Flowerpot Tenants' Hall Perkins House, St Pauls Way, E3 7.30 pm.

All London:

5 May
Marx Memorial Meeting
South Bank Poly Auditorium, Elephant and Castle, 7.30 pm.

EVERY WEEK *Militant* will publish details of some of the weekly public sales of our paper. If you live in Merseyside, Manchester, the North East or the Southern region you will find *Militant* sellers at:

DAY TIME	PLACE
MERSEYSIDE	
Sat. 11am-1.00	Kwiksave, Kensington.
Sat. 11am-1.00	Broadway, West Derby.
Sat. 11am-1.00	Kwiksave, County Road.
Sat. 11am-1.00	Belvale Shopping Centre, Garston.
Sat. 11am-1.00	Tesco, Aigburth Road.
Sat. 11am-1.00	New Strand, Bootle.
Sat. 11am-1.00	Shopping Precinct, Birkenhead.
Fri. 2pm-4.00	Church Street, Liverpool.
SOUTHERN	
Sat. 12pm- 1.00	The Precinct, Southampton.
Sat. 11am-12.30	Commercial Rd, Portsmouth.
Sat. 11am-12.30	Gosport High St.
Sat. 12pm- 2.00	Ryde High St Isle of Wight.
NORTHERN	
Sat 12pm-1.00	The Monument, Newcastle City Centre.
Sat 12pm-2.00	Stockton High St, Stockton.
Fri 7.30am-9.00	DHSS Longbenton.
Sat 12pm-1.00	Gateshead High St.
Sat 12pm-1.00	Sunderland Train Station.
Sat 12pm-1.00	Wallsend Shopping Centre.
MANCHESTER	
Sat 1pm-2.30	Market St.
Sat 11am-12.30	ASDA, off Rochdale Rd, Harpurhey, opp. Woolworths, Wilbraham Rd, Chorlton.
Sat 10am-12.00	Co-op, Withington Village.
Sat 11.30am	Arndale Centre, Stockport.
Fri 5pm	Yorkshire Bank, Yorkshire St, Oldham.
Sat 11am-12.30	McDonalds, Yorkshire St, Rochdale.
Sat 11.30am	St James St, Burnley.

MILITANT RALLY

ALEXANDRA PALACE
19TH JUNE 1988

12-6pm £6.

Name.....
Address.....

Return to MILITANT RALLY: 3/13 Hepscott Road London E9 5HB. Ring rally hot line 01-533 3311 ext. 227

MAY DAY Greetings

MAY DAY! To all union and labour movement organisations and other readers.

Place May Day greetings to the labour movement in *Militant*. Deadline 22 April.

Rates are: Semi-display; three column centimetres, £8, six column centimetres, £15. Display; one-sixteenth page, £25, one-eighth page, £40, one quarter page, £75.

Cheques/postal orders payable to *Militant* publications. Send to Circulation Department, *Militant*, 3/13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB.

What we stand for

* The immediate introduction of a 35 hour week without loss of pay as a step towards the elimination of unemployment.

* A minimum wage of £135 a week, tied to the cost of living, for everyone including sick and disabled people.

* Reversal of all Tory cuts and a massive programme of public works on housing, education, and the health service etc.

* Opposition to the Tories' anti-trade union laws and reversal of attacks on trade unions.

* Massive cuts in arms spending. Support for unilateral nuclear disarmament, but with the recognition that only a socialist change of society in Britain and internationally can eliminate the danger of a nuclear holocaust.

* Workers' management of nationalised industries. These should be run on the basis of one-third of the places on the management board coming from the unions in the industry, one third from the TUC representing the working class as a whole, and one third from the government.

* Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, including the banks and insurance companies which control 80 per cent to 85 per cent of the economy. This should be through an Enabling Bill in Parliament with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need.

* A socialist plan of production democratically drawn up and implemented by committees involving trade unions, shop stewards, the unwaged and small business people.

* Opposition to the capitalist Common Market, the EEC. For a socialist United States of Europe as a step towards a World Socialist Federation.

HOW I SELL Militant

TWO EXAMPLES from different parts of the country give us a glimpse of the potential for the national door to door sales drive we are launching on 21 April.

A note from a supporter in Bradford spells it out: '...the witch-hunt against socialists in Bradford North has obviously not affected sales of *Militant*. Quite the reverse. In one block of flats on the Thorpe Edge estate in Bradford North, 15 copies of *Militant* were sold in just 'half an hour.'

A seller in Manchester tells us that she discovered the value of door to door sales almost by accident. One weekend when most of the regular sellers were away, she decided to go on a personal sales drive to keep herself occupied.

She was surprised when she rapidly sold 12 and spent a fruitful 45 minutes in political discussion at one door. A number of these sales are now weekly.

The drive on door to door sales should not diminish the importance of selling *Militant* at your workplace. One reader in Durham who works in the civil service decided to chance her hand at selling to her fellow workers.

To start with she took ten copies. Some sellers may have thought she was too ambitious, since it was her first sale there. But she sold eight. Obviously this supporter has a good idea how attractive our ideas are to working class people.

By Gerry Lerner

Become a Militant supporter

YOUR NEXT STEP...
OUR FIGHT IS YOUR FIGHT...JOIN IT!

I wish to become a *Militant* supporter:

Name.....

Address.....

Tel:

or telephone 01-533 3311 NOW!



USA

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Jesse J

Shows the potential for la

FROM Alaska to Alabama, from Maine to Texas, from Puerto Rico to Michigan, the Jesse Jackson campaign for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination is winning the support of millions of Americans.

With only a fraction of the financial backing of his three main rivals, he spent only \$100,000 on 'Super Tuesday' (when 20 states voted) while they spent \$6 million between them. Yet by early April he had won more votes than any other candidate.

In practically every state he wins over 90 per cent of the black vote. This has been his original and most solid base of support.

Black workers and youth who have suffered most from the increased poverty and repression of the Reagan years turn out in their multitudes to vote and work for Jackson. His attack on 'Reaganomics'—which he describes as a theory that the rich have too little money and the poor too much—evokes their overwhelming support.

American blacks suffered many generations of slavery and continue to be treated as second-class citizens. They now see a chance to have a black presidential candidate for one of the major parties for the first time—another racist barrier to be broken through.

But it is not only blacks who are supporting Jackson. In the north-eastern state of Maine, for example, with a high rate of poverty and only 0.5 per cent of the population black, he won 28 per cent of the vote. In Alaska, where the percentage of black people is not much greater, he won outright.

"Jackson was able to provoke white and black workers to stand on their chairs whooping and clapping with his attacks on American corporations"—Boston Globe 28 March.

The movement that is now building around Jackson is a movement uniting workers, farmers and youth of all racial backgrounds. At its core are millions of activists in unions, family farm organisations, tenant and community groups.

They are responding to Jackson's attack on the corporations and the rich. They are supporting him because he has marched on the picket lines of locked-out and striking workers from coast to coast, on the picket lines of farmers protesting evictions, on demonstrations against racism and other forms of discrimination.

This involvement in struggle is pushing Jackson to sharpen his criticism of big business and the rich. The class anger of the workers, farmers and youth that he marches with is speaking through the voice of Jesse Jackson.

His message is summed up in a campaign statement:

"There is nothing wrong with the American worker, the family farmer or small business-person. There is something wrong with the system. Economic violence is no accident. Deregulation, unchecked corporate greed, incentives to merge companies, purge workers and submerge the economy are at the root of the

By Sean Herron in New York

crisis."

He calls for a \$20 billion increase in taxes on the rich. He calls for working-class unity, unity between workers and family farmers, and solidarity with low-paid workers internationally.

He repeatedly stresses: "before, it was white against black. Now it's barracudas eating the little fish. These barracudas eat every small fish they can find, no matter what the colour, sex or age ... and then these barracudas make us turn on each other".

He says: "When a plant closes, the lights are switched off. In the dark we all look the same."

He speaks against putting the cost of the crisis on foreign workers. He calls for solidarity to "bring their wages up, or their low wages will bring ours down".

Jackson demands massive federal programs to build houses, rebuild the infrastructure and clean up the environment. He calls for an increase in the minimum wage, reduced military spending, a national health service, a doubling of education spending, increased child-care facilities, an anti-drug campaign and reform of the anti-union labour laws.

Big business, after a deluge of propaganda from its media, its paid political commentators, its academics and 'experts' of all kinds to deny Jackson's real appeal, is now being forced to admit it. The *Wall Street Journal* on 31 March stated:

"This is the Jackson message of 1988: Farmers and workers of different races, ages, incomes and locales must unite against economic injustice".

The same paper commented the next day that Jesse Jackson's voice "is more typical of the British Labor Party than of American politics". The truth is that Jackson, in his attacks on big business and his active involvement on the picket lines, is well to the left of the present Labour leadership!

The *Wall Street Journal* went on: "When people say Jesse Jackson's campaign has been remarkable, they are usually referring to the fact that a black man is doing so well. Apart from its condescension, this thought misses what is really so remarkable about the Rev. Jackson's campaign, that someone with so left-wing a message is doing so well."

The *New York Times*, after trying for months to portray Jackson as a candidate of the blacks and a few liberals, acknowledged on 31 March: "There is a hunger for change out there that only Mr Jackson has understood and tapped."

In the Wisconsin primary a union leader was quoted as saying: "Jesse Jackson is taking a stand for working people in this country."

The president of the United Auto Workers local in Kenosha, Wisc., where Jackson had walked the auto workers' picket line against the threatened closure of their plant, said: "He stood with us and we are going to stand with him".

And a 43-year-old electrical worker: "He's for raising the minimum wage, equal pay for women, corporations paying their fair share of



taxes. I'm just hoping and praying we can get someone for the working man like Jesse Jackson."

A white Baltimore steel worker at a Jackson rally: "The thing that he says that's different from any other Democrat is we need to build a movement against economic violence like the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s."

The white president of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Mobile, Alabama: "He's the only candidate, the only politician who has paid any attention to us."

And a white bricklayer in the industrial city of Flint, Michigan, home of the historic sit-down strikes which built the mass industrial unions in 1936-37 and where Jackson beat the Democratic front-runner Michael Dukakis by ten to one:

"I think he captures the essence of America. He's the people. He's not corporate front. Four years ago some people saw him as a threat. I think of him as being the essence of the country."

This worker said after hearing Jackson speak against plant closures: "I had tears in my eyes. I haven't felt that way when anyone spoke in, geez, 25 years."

The response to the Jackson campaign gives a glimpse of the rising tide of revolt among American blacks and working people. This has been fuelled by their worsening economic position, as well as the example of the South African blacks and the struggles of workers, peasants and youth worldwide.

It shows the increasing class anger among the American working class and the powerful desire among workers of all racial backgrounds to unite and fight to change society, to defend and improve their living standards. It shows the tremendous potential to build a party of labour.

Of enormous importance for the coming events in the USA, it shows the deepening class polarisation and

increased hatred of the corporations and the rich among the majority of the population.

Viewed superficially, the tide of struggle in the East as well as the West over the past years seemed to pass by the US. But this was not the case.

The end of the post-war boom of capitalism, the cuts in living standards, increased repression and insecurity have been preparing the ground in the US for a massive explosion among the working class and youth, with the workers and youth of the especially oppressed racial minorities in the lead.

New period

The movement around Jackson signals that the first beginnings of this process are now unfolding. The years of relative lull, of workers and youth turning away from active political involvement when the black revolt and anti-war movement ended in the early 1970s, are now over.

A new period has opened in US society. The struggles ahead will combine the great labour traditions of the 1930s, when the giant industrial unions of the CIO (Confederation of Industrial Organisations) were built, with the heroism and dynamism of the black revolt of the 1950s and 1960s.

The process of revolution unfolding worldwide is welling up beneath the surface in the US also, breaking out here and there in momentary bursts of energy such as the present Jackson campaign, and giving notice of what is to come.

This mood to struggle is crystallising around Jackson's campaign for the Democratic Party nomination because of the refusal of the leaders of organised labour to take independent political action and build a Labour Party.

Frightened by the mass movement that such a lead would evoke, the

labour leaders cling to. They believe that the

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Jackson

Labour party

"Mr Jackson just could be an insurgent who represents the future"

Wall Street Journal, 1 April.

(Left) Jesse Jackson at a rally of 15,000 teamsters, construction and longshore workers in Pittsburg, California. 108 copies of the North American paper Labor Militant were sold at this meeting.

the Democrats. There is no alternative to see what the Labour Party. Workers to vote Democratic. Paragons from the return.

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More desperate measures to stop Jackson are also being considered, such as those which ended the lives of Martin Luther King and militant black leader Malcolm X, have undoubtedly been turned over in the minds of some big business strategists.

However, if Jackson were to be assassinated it would unleash a black explosion of much greater ferocity than anything seen in the 1960s. For this reason, it is practically ruled out that such measures will be taken by big business at the present stage—though attempts by racist elements not directly controlled by big business cannot be excluded.

If Jesse Jackson were to win the Democratic nomination, his campaign against the Republicans would face sabotage by the big business controllers of the Democratic Party. Terrified of the expectations his election would unleash among blacks and workers, they would prefer to see Bush win the presidency.

An article in the *Wall Street Journal* indicates the panic that Jackson's support is striking into the hearts of these elements. A member of the Democratic Party's National Committee called on the big business media to attack Jackson, saying: "It is time for the press to scrutinise Jackson as a serious potential nominee and not patronise him as a token."

Workers internationally and in the US have learned through experience that the only way to improve their conditions is to organise independently of employers. This is also the key to struggling for social change in the interests of the working people who make up the vast majority.

The Democratic Party, formerly the party of the slave owners, can never represent the interests of working people. The role of the Democratic Party is one of trying to bind the working class to support for capitalism and the politics of the employers.

Workers and youth around the Jesse Jackson campaign must applaud his support of workers' struggles and his criticism of the corporations and the rich. However, they must also take action to break this movement from the snare of the Democratic Party and move it in the direction of independent working-class action, towards the building of a labour party.

On city, state and federal level union conventions—drawing in community and family farmer organisations—should be called to discuss the elections, clarify a programme and lay the basis for the selection of candidates representing labour in all the elections taking place in November 1988, including elections to Congress.

This would lay the base for the working class to create its own political party.

Jesse Jackson and the forces he inspires should turn away from the Democratic Party and involve themselves with building this alternative. They should campaign at all levels to move the labour leaders into putting the forces of the labour movement into action for the building of a labour party.

This would provide a solid base from which to confront the corporations and the rich. Jesse Jackson could continue his fight for presidential nomination as the candidate of labour, not the Democrats.

Unless this is done, the Jesse Jackson campaign could become a conduit for drawing the developing movement for change into the Democratic Party, where it would founder and sink as similar movements have done in the past.

Business fears

A political columnist in the *San Francisco Chronicle* put it this way:

"Jackson is a great man. He's doing work the country has needed doing for a long time, channeling 'black power' and black anger into the political process. The alternative has always been the streets and violence ... Jesse Jackson is doing some heavy lifting for his party and the nation ... If Jackson did not exist America would have to invent him."

On the one hand, big business fears Jackson because of the hopes and expectations he is helping to unleash. On the other hand, if there is going to be a struggle, then they would prefer to confine it within the Democratic Party where the movement can be seized and its head held under water till it drowns.

Only independent working-class action to build a labour party can show a way forward to the hopes being expressed at present.

Such a movement would have to clarify its programme. Jesse Jackson's campaign seeks to pressurise big business to look after workers at home, and act fairly and peacefully abroad. This is like asking a tiger to stop eating meat.

For a solution to the problems facing US society a socialist programme must be adopted: ending the dictatorship of the corporations, and establishing instead a democratic plan of production.

Only on this basis can the coming movement, which can be glimpsed in the Jackson campaign, be successful in building a society in which poverty, racism and oppression will be ended.



New York Labor Rally for Jesse Jackson invites you to join **Jesse Jackson**



Jesse Jackson speaking to hundreds of steelworkers

Monday, April 11, 1988 - 6:00 p.m.

at the Jacob Javits Convention Center (35th St. between 11th & 12th Aves.)

Crosstown M34 bus on 24th St.

Racism: the hard facts

Blacks are 12 per cent of the US population, but own 4 per cent of the country's wealth. Overall US unemployment: 5.8 per cent. Black unemployment: 12.2 per cent. Black teenage unemployment: 33.4 per cent. Black median income: 58 per

cent of white median income—the same as 20 years ago. Blacks in poverty: 31 per cent. National average: 14 per cent. Black life expectancy (1983): 69.6 years. White life expectancy (1983): 75.2 years.

"I come from a tradition of those who march in solidarity for jobs and peace and justice. In the 60's we marched for civil rights; in the 80's we march for workers rights."

A WORKER'S BILL OF RIGHTS

By Jesse L. Jackson

- 1. WORKERS HAVE A RIGHT TO A JOB**
People need jobs and there are jobs to be done. We can build the housing, roads and bridges that we need as well as provide care for this nation's people. We can end plant closings without notice and unemployment without hope.
- 2. WORKERS HAVE A RIGHT TO A DEMOCRATIC UNION**
All workers, including public employees, should be able to organize themselves into democratic unions, have those unions recognized, and work under a collective bargaining agreement.
- 3. WORKERS HAVE A RIGHT TO A LIVING WAGE**
People who work full-time should be able to rise out of poverty on their pay. American families need family wages. Young workers (youth) need opportunity.
- 4. WORKERS HAVE...**

The Reagan years: USA 1981-88

Number of workers unemployed at least once: 60 million
Workers' loss of buying power: 10.9 per cent. Number of working poor losing all or some food-stamp aid: 4 million.
Number living in poverty: 33.5 million (average). Increase in number of poor over 1974-1981:

8 million (31 per cent). Total federal budget deficit: \$1.2 trillion. Cost of interest payments on Reagan's debt: \$3,743 per person. In 1981-84 fifty large corporations made \$57 billion profits but paid no tax. Instead they received \$2.4 billion in rebates under Reagan's tax cuts.

-Statistics from AFL-CIO Economic Research Department.

Militant International Review

Summer 1988 will deal with the US civil rights movement of the 1960s, the life of Martin Luther King, and Jesse Jackson's role in the struggle

West bank

Settler violence flares up

THE KILLING of a 15-year old girl from a Jewish settlement on the West Bank has raised the possibility of attacks by Jewish settlers, most of whom are armed, on Arab towns and villages.

During the course of the Palestinian uprising, there have already been many instances of settler-vigilantes stoning and vandalising Arab cars and attacking Arab villages. A number of the Palestinians killed in the last four months have been shot by settlers, venting their fury at young people throwing stones.

The government's reaction to the killing has been to intensify repression and legalised brutality, especially on Arabs in the village where the killing took place. The Palestinians' expectations of civilised treatment from the Israeli army can be gauged from the statements of the 'Justice' Minister, Avraham Sharir who advocated "mass retaliation" against the inhabitants of the village—which he likened to the biblical city of Sodom—including demolishing houses and mass expulsions.

But at the same time the government will be anxious to avoid too great a backlash from the settlers. Israel's leniency towards Jewish vigilantes in the past does not necessarily mean that it can tolerate hundreds of rampaging settlers—for fear of an intensification of the Palestinian revolt in reply.

The establishment since 1967 of Jewish settlements and military installations in the occupied West Bank has resulted in more than half the Arab land being confiscated, something that is a source of enormous resentment among Arabs.

While Arab towns and villages are starved of investment and denied planning permission for any kind of development, literally

By Peter Jackson

billions of dollars have been poured into the settlements. Arab areas are served by little more than dirt tracks, but the settlements have the most modern road system, usually by-passing Arab areas for security reasons.

The settlements have up-to-date electricity and telephone systems, separate to those serving Arab areas, so that the army can close off communications to the Arab West Bank without affecting the settlers. Whereas Jewish farmers are subsidised and supported by the Israeli export department, Arab farmers are squeezed out, usually having to send their produce to Jordan.

More than a million Palestinians live on the West Bank, without democratic or civil rights, under an arbitrary military government. The 65,000 Jewish settlers, on the other hand, are Israeli citizens, with full voting and civil rights.

Although the leaders of Israel capitalism pay lip service to the religious fervour of many of the settlers, deeming it the Jews 'historic right' to settle in the biblical land of 'Eretz Israel', the real purpose served by the settlements is a strategic guarantee of Israeli control over the West Bank.

Notwithstanding the religious fanaticism of many of the settlers, the government still finds it necessary to 'bribe' Jewish workers to move to the West Bank, with subsidised, air-conditioned apartments in the settlements in place of expensive run-down homes in



Israeli Arabs demonstrate.

the slum areas of Jerusalem or Tel-Aviv.

The settlements that have expanded in recent years have been little more than 'dormitory' settlements for Jews who work in the big cities. 85 per cent of settlers live within commuting distance of Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. On the other hand, even before the uprising, settlements in the Jordan valley and in other areas experienced a fall in their population as some settlers gave up and returned to their former towns.

The Palestinian uprising will have shaken the settlers' confidence even further. The smaller settlements, in particular, are like besieged fortresses. Members

have to be armed going to work, tending the fields, or even taking children to school. Many more settlers will now be considering returning to the relative tranquillity of the Israeli cities.

Industrial action

Last week Housing Minister David Levy, anxious to reassure settlers, announced that incentives and mortgages would be increased to halt the declining demand for houses in the territories.

Meanwhile, while the government pumps millions into settlements, health service workers in Israel are continuing their prog-

ramme of strikes and industrial action over wages, and against government expenditure cuts. These struggles and even more intensive class battles in the future will open the eyes of many Jewish workers as to the real nature of Israeli society and the role of the settlements.

Despite the strategy of Israeli capitalism, the settlements are, in any case, no guarantee to peace and stability for Israel, as the uprising has shown. That will only be achieved by the establishment of a national homeland for the Palestinian people, alongside an Israeli state, within the context of a Socialist Federation of the Middle East.

More equal than others?

SPANISH WORKERS returning from an Easter break in Portugal had an eye-opener when they bumped into the country's Socialist deputy prime minister Guerra at the border.

A mile-long queue of cars was lined up waiting for the ferry when 'comrade' Guerra came along in his chauffeur-driven Mercedes and headed straight for the front of the queue.

At this, anger exploded. Horns were hooted and insults shouted. "It was beginning to turn into an ugly incident", said a Portuguese official.

Guerra was forced to beat a retreat, and drove instead to the nearest airport where a Spanish air force jet was sent to 'rescue' him and his family from the inconvenience of queuing up with ordinary people.

Many Spanish workers voted Socialist because they see it as the party of equality. Some Socialists, it seems, are more equal than others.

Emergency looms in the Punjab

ON 15 March, 35-40 million workers throughout India took part in one of the biggest general strike movements ever seen across the globe (see *Militant* 18 March).

By Mukesh Moorthy

This strike once again confirmed that only the working class has the capacity to maintain the unity of India and lead the struggles of the peasantry, oppressed nationalities, and downtrodden castes to overthrow the decaying capitalist society of India.

However, parallel to these repeated revolutionary struggles of the working class, the horrific massacres in the Punjab in the last few weeks have highlighted the dangers of a communal holocaust which would lead to the Balkanisation of India if the workers' organisations fail to lead the masses to the socialist transformation of society.

In just over three months over 800 Sikh and Hindu civilians have died in the Punjab, compared to 1,234 in the whole of 1987.

The crimes of the Sikh terrorists of slaughtering entire Sikh and Hindu families can only meet with revulsion of the Sikh and Hindu population. They aim to drive a wedge between the communities by their sectarian killings of



Sikhs shot down by the military.

Hindus, who make up nearly half the population of the Punjab, and provoke a Hindu backlash against Sikhs in the rest of India.

Based upon the futile methods of individual terrorism they openly talk of "killing hundreds of thousands of people, even tens of millions" in order to attain Khalistan.

Rajiv Gandhi and the Congress(I) government have tried to divert blame to "some foreign hand helping the terrorists", thereby whipping up anti-Pakistani and anti-Muslim feelings.

It was Indira Gandhi who originally created the monster of Sikh fundamentalism

around the figure of Bhindranwale, aiming to split the then Akali Dal state government and enable Congress(I) to capture power.

Khalistan

The outrage felt by Sikhs after the Indian army's invasion of the Golden Temple in Amritsar and the anti-Sikh massacres in October 1984 pushed thousands of unemployed Sikh youth into the arms of the Khalistani terrorists, who are demanding an independent Sikh state of Khalistan ('land of the pure').

It is a symptom of the failure of the capitalists to

unify India that the Sikhs, who played such a leading role in the struggle for Indian independence, are now being pushed in the direction of nationalism.

Rajiv Gandhi's government has performed several 180 degree turns in policy. First they propped up the capitalist Akali Dal, then suspended the Punjabi government 11 months ago, imposing direct rule from Delhi and intensifying military operations.

In the process they failed to meet any of the basic demands of the Sikhs agreed in the famous Accord between former Akali Dal leader Longowal and

Rajiv Gandhi.

Now the government is trying to do a deal with the Khalistani terrorists who they have failed to crush militarily.

If the talks break down, it appears likely that Gandhi would impose a state of emergency on the Punjab. This would mean blanket censorship and complete suppression of democratic rights, with direct intervention by the Indian army and attempted military suppression of the Sikh revolt.

The main effect would be to push thousands more youth into the arms of the Khalistanis.

Under capitalism none of the basic problems of the Sikhs, or of India's other national groups, can be solved.

Despite the rise in communal tensions, the mass of the Sikh and Hindu workers and peasants look forward to a joint struggle against the Congress(I) government, as demonstrated by the rock-solid support in the Punjab's three major industrial cities for the 15 March general strike.

As a step in the education of the masses the Marxists in India are demanding that the Communist parties campaign together with a joint programme of socialist transformation which alone can halt the growth of communalism.

The Tories are a health risk



Edwina Currie.

EDWINA CURRIE was on television again recently, urging everyone to give up tobacco as she "wants us all to be healthy!"

What a hypocrite! Currie serves in a government that will tolerate almost any unhealthy practice if profits can be made from it.

Every day people are made ill because they are forced to live in overcrowded, damp, squalid housing but local authorities are deprived of funds to build decent homes through rate capping. The Tory policy of privatisation means worse provision of services like roadsweeping and sewer maintenance. How healthy is that going to make us?

And look what they do to people who try to create decent conditions. Liverpool councillors built new homes. They were surcharged, thrown out of office by unelected judges and treated like criminals.

The Tories want us to be healthy, do they? Why then do so many old people die needlessly through hypothermia and malnutrition, often in loneliness and despair.

They could prove their concern, by giving the old a decent pension, and allowing councils to build sheltered homes so people could live out their days in dignity. Instead they close geriatric wards in hospitals and send old people into a non-existent community care where, to make things worse, they will soon have to pay poll tax!

The 'community' usually means relatives who are on duty 24 hours a day. "Parent abuse" is growing. Even the most patient person can snap after many sleepless nights looking after someone with senile dementia, who has to be fed, dressed and may wake you up in the middle of the night because they think the house is full of strangers.

Edwina Currie's latest nonsense is to tell young women: "don't screw around. Nuns don't get cervical cancer." This disease is not caused by "promiscuity". Any sexually active woman can get it. Her 'alternative' to health spending on curing cervical cancer is total celibacy!

What are the Tories going to do about unemployment? Figures prove being jobless makes you more susceptible to illness. What about the young unemployed whose suicide rate is rising steadily? The only answer they have is lower (or non-existent) social security. This just creates an extra problem of homelessness. Is that a healthy lifestyle?

Will the Tories give young people hope for the future to stem the growth of drug taking? Not if it costs a penny and not if it stops

Feature by Shella Hall and John Dale

their big business friends making profits out of super-exploitation schemes like the YTS.

Are they going to stop the deaths on these schemes caused by lack of supervision and training and unsafe machinery? Will they stop employers disregarding health and safety by speed-ups, which have increased the rates of stress-related heart disease in the car industry? Not likely!

A year after the Zeebrugge disaster, when ferry workers strike against the imposition of Victorian hours of work which increase the workers' stress and the danger to passengers, what do our 'betters' do? The Tory judges declare the strike illegal not the conditions!

Every Christmas, Currie's government launches a big anti-drink/drive campaign. At the same time, their friends in big business launch a far bigger 'saturation advertising' campaign encouraging people to drink more alcohol. The tobacco companies, brewers and distillers are amongst the Tories' biggest financial backers.

The government allow manufacturers to fill our kids full of artificial sweeteners and additives that can cause ill health, behavioural problems and mental disorders. Some additives have been banned in other countries for years but not by our health-loving Tories.

And how can we be healthy when some of us live near nuclear reactors and power stations which increase the risk of leukaemia for our children? Is Currie going to stop Britain becoming Europe's dumping grounds for toxic chemical waste? No.

And I haven't even mentioned their cuts in the health service, the needless deaths from cervical cancer, and the attacks on staffing levels and pay.

I smoke and I know it's bad. But if Currie was really serious about wanting us to be healthy, she would be fighting for a massive injection of funds into the NHS, and stopping the attacks on social security and council housing. She would be leading a fight against the Poll Tax.

She would be standing up to the exploiters and polluters, in fact she would be helping to destroy the system she and the rest of the cabinet are benefitting from. She won't do that, of course, but we can!



Contrary to popular belief, rich people like executives are less prone to stress, heart failure and other diseases than the working class.



Accidents at work have increased in recent years.

A socialist alternative

BRITAIN HAS one of the worst rates of heart disease in the world; four out of ten men suffer from the illness by the time they are 65 years old.

Tens of thousands suffer premature death or severe disablement that could be prevented. Treatment costs the NHS hundreds of millions of pounds.

The Tories claim to favour health education. It sounds a good idea; prevention is better than cure. But the government hope this will cut the cost to the NHS, and shift the blame for illness on to the victims. They want to be able to charge patients for hospital treatment, arguing that it is their own fault they are sick.

Health education, giving people information to live a healthy life, is meaningless unless the causes of unhealthy living are tackled and the choices necessary for a healthy life are available.

Working class men and women have the highest rates of heart disease, cancers and other preventable illnesses. Male manual workers have a 32 per cent higher risk of an early death through heart disease than non-manual workers. Those on low incomes have the highest risk of chronic illness.

One reason is that a healthy diet costs 35 per cent more than the average spent on food by low income families. For example, wholemeal bread and other products can cost one quarter more than white bread. Fatty meat products such as sausages and pies cost about a quarter less per portion than lean meat.

In 1983, households earning

over £250 a week spent 15 per cent of their income on food (£48.16 a week). But households with less than £80 a week spent 30 per cent on food (only £26.81).

Edwina Currie can afford her healthy eating—the northern housewives she lectured on bad diet don't have her money to spend.

Unemployment, cold and damp housing and stress, (which affects workers more than executives) are other factors contributing to ill health.

Advertising

Smoking is a major cause of heart disease, lung cancer and many other illnesses. But workers and unemployed who smoke often do so because it is one of the few pleasures they can afford. There is enormous advertising pressure to persuade young people to start smoking—once started, the tobacco companies know it's hard to stop.

The same is true of alcohol—drinking too much causes a great deal of illness (and injury). The breweries and tobacco companies spend huge sums sponsoring sports events to give themselves a healthy image.

Tobacco companies evade the ban on TV advertising this way. In a recent cricket match, the sponsor's name was visible on the television screen for one third of the time.

The Tories don't want a serious health education programme. Up to last year, the Health Education Council was campaigning for tighter measures against these companies, who make huge profits

from tobacco and alcohol.

The government disbanded the Council, reforming it as the Health Education Authority with a different director and under closer government control. That was Thatcher's thank you to the tobacco and alcohol bosses for their contributions to the Tory Party.

A Labour government with a socialist health policy should:

- ★ Ban all advertising of tobacco and alcohol.
- ★ Nationalise the tobacco industry under workers' control and management to provide alternative useful jobs for tobacco workers.
- ★ Fund sports and arts events so they do not need sponsorship.
- ★ Provide free sports and leisure facilities for all.
- ★ Nationalise the giant food companies and big supermarket chains. Provide good food for health and enjoyment not for profit.
- ★ Increase spending on health education.
- ★ Spend money on medical research, not weapons research.
- ★ Carry out a socialist housing policy to provide good housing for all.
- ★ Implement a £135 minimum wage, for all including pensioners, sick and disabled.
- ★ Ensure safe working conditions, safe products and prevent pollution of the environment through workers' control of safety.

A socialist society removing the stress, poverty and insecurity that capitalism breeds, would prevent much of the illness we suffer today.

ALTHOUGH PEOPLE are living longer than they used to, the chances of manual workers surviving to retirement age are worse than for anyone else. New figures show the gap widened between 1972 and 1983.

These stark facts have been hidden away in a government report, which is only available on microfilm at a total cost of £55.20!

Casualties of market forces

Dear Comrades,
Woolworth's have announced pre-tax profits of £147.2 million, a 28 per cent increase on the previous year. This makes the decision to close the Paisley High Street store and throw the workers on the scrapheap seem all the more callous.

However we shouldn't be surprised at this decision, since it merely represents the logic of the free market system, where the unfettered pursuit of profit takes precedence over the needs of both the workers who helped to create these profits and the communities who contributed to them over the years.

It was somewhat ironic then to see Neil Kinnock, the same evening on TV, assuring his interviewer that he supported 'market forces'. Presum-

ably the logic of this is that he could not criticise Woolworth's, who, after all, are taking decisions based on market forces as they see them.

It is time for socialist arguments to be advanced which deny Woolworth's and companies like them the right to exploit workers and communities as they see fit. It is because of this that I, along with thousands of other socialists, will be supporting Tony Benn in his challenge for the leadership of the Labour Party.

Now, as never before, the case for socialism, for a rational, planned economy based on the needs of ordinary people, must be advanced. Otherwise the Woolworth's workers will only be the latest, but not the last, casualties of market forces.

Councillor Hugh Henry, Erskine, Renfrew

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

Militant,
3-13 Hepscoth Road,
London E9 5HB

Alton's scandalous Bill

Dear Comrades,

I think it is totally ridiculous and scandalous that David Alton and the rest of these Tories should be putting this Bill through Parliament to reduce the time limit for abortion.

I also think it totally scandalous the disgusting remarks he makes that women who are victims of rape and incest should

be made to carry on with the pregnancy.

I also think it is ridiculous that all the Labour MPs who voted in favour of Alton's Bill were men. This makes me very angry. We women must stand up for our rights!

Elizabeth Young, Maryhill militant, Glasgow



Part of the 19 March anti-Alton Bill march.

Photos: Dave Sinclair

Dear Comrades,

How is it that the only letters you print opposing Militant's declared policy are those which oppose abortion? We now have a second letter repeating the same fallacy, that abortion is "not a matter of choice or of feminism".

Are you yourselves not convinced that it is a woman's right to be accredited with more sense than an embryo inside her in deciding what is best for both?

There is no argument about killing babies. It is about the necessity to prevent some embryos from becoming babies and this is best decided by the woman of whose body the embryo is a part. She has a mind while the embryo has none.

Over Alex Abiola's letter (2 April) you print the headline 'For the moral case', as if anti-abortion were moral and abortion were not. Is that what you think? An answer would be appreciated.

Kathleen Jones, Bishop's Castle, Shropshire

(We will print letters from readers who oppose Militant's views on any subject.)

Profit from prawns Tories not welcome

Dear Comrades,

British Rail have recently started advertising the return of Pullman restaurants on Intercity trains. They are aiming at the better-off traveller, with expensive, luxury food, in particular prawns.

Fish processing can be

quite a profitable industry and there are many such places in North Shields. Commonly young workers peeling prawns start on £50 a week. But after five weeks they go on to piece work. One lad I talked to earned 75p for each basket of prawns he peeled.

However the first basket took him an hour to peel! Experienced workers could manage three bags in an hour. In other words they could earn a maximum of £80 a week.

Terry McPartlan, Whitley Bay Labour Party

Dear Comrades,

At Blackpool last weekend, our landlady said that when the Tory conference was last there, the post boxes were closed for four days, so she couldn't post a birthday card.

You couldn't walk through the central car park, hospital wards were kept empty and there were police on every street corner and snipers on the roofs.

It cost £1m, paid not by the Tories but the rate-

payers. The local Hoteliers' Association don't want them because the small places don't see any of the money, just the big hotels.

Gary Freeman, Nottingham

Classified ads

20p per word, minimum 10 words. Semi-display £3 per column centimetre. Three weeks for the price of two. Militant meeting ads free. All advertisement copy should reach this office by first post on Friday, the week before publication.

Wanted co-op and green shield stamps. Loose, part or full books. All proceeds to the fighting fund. Send c/o

Militant circulation, 3/13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB.

New sticker available in rolls of 250. 'One day general strike-Defend the health service'. Other stickers: 'Kick out the Tories', 'No to slave labour on YTS', 'For a socialist South Africa', £2.50 per roll. 'Militant for labour and youth' enamel stud badges £1 each. A3 size posters of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg 50p each collecting tins £1 each, 10 or more 75p each.

Available from Fighting Fund Dept, 3-13 Hepscoth Rd, London E9 5HB. For all orders add 25 per cent P&P. Cheques payable to Militant.

Media hypocrisy

Dear Comrades,

Recent events in Ireland have shown the complete hypocrisy of the mass media in Britain. They have talked of the 'barbaric' attack on two soldiers.

Yet the three IRA members ambushed and shot in Gibraltar and Aidan McAneaspie, unarmed and shot at an army checkpoint, are as much victims of British rule in Ireland as the two British soldiers killed by mourners at an IRA funeral.

There can be no doubt that the unarmed mourners thought they were going to be the victims of another loyalist gun attack and their initial reactions were to defend themselves.

One soldier produced and fired a gun. The situation got completely out of control, resulting in the grisly outcome. The IRA callously and needlessly intervened to shoot the soldiers dead.

The cycle of violence will not be ended by moral appeals from the churches and the government. The military and political policies of the government are doomed to failure, as are the policies of the paramilitary groups.

A campaign for working-class unity and a socialist united Ireland is needed if a Lebanon-type disaster is going to be avoided.

Kevin Fernandes, Vauxhall Labour Party.



Glasgow housing schemes like this will not be regenerated by Rifkind's £25 million.

Crumbs for slums

Dear Comrades,

Tory Minister Malcolm Rifkind has announced a major urban renewal package in Scotland "to bring about social and economic regeneration of run-down areas".

Oh aye, I thought, about time too. Could this be the Tories losing their marbles and deciding that after lining the pockets of the rich in the budget they were going to do something for the rest of us?

If the government can afford to give £2 billion away in tax cuts and a further £1.9 billion to the vultures of British Aerospace for Rover, then surely this would mean at least a few billion to rebuild the sprawling

slums of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee.

No danger! A package of £25 million, spread throughout Scotland over the next few years and the money to come from the sale of the best council houses we've already got!

What a con! And if that wasn't bad enough-guess which is the only housing scheme in Edinburgh to get a share of this paltry aid-Wester Hailes. Of course this has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that this is part of Rifkind's Tory marginal Pentlands constituency.

Kevin Williamson, Edinburgh Labour Party

Nuclear waste

Dear Comrades,

Britain's worst accident at an advanced gas-cooled nuclear power station, which put the Hartlepool No 1 reactor out of operation a year ago, has so far cost the electricity consumer £35m and it is not expected back on stream until May at the earliest.

Since 1983 when the station came into operation, seven years behind schedule, it has only produced electricity 17 per cent of the time.

The Labour Party should call for the phasing out of nuclear power and workers' control of the CEGB, which is nothing more than a pro-

paganda service for the government and nuclear power, more concerned with covering up the dangers than the safety of workers.

What other industry would the Tories allow to run at 17 per cent efficiency and lose £35m?

Andy Walker, Middlesbrough Labour Party

Workers' Education Group Summer Camp '88. Saturday 6-13 August

Bracelands Campsite, Gloucestershire.

Book your holidays now!

Cost: £40 14 years and over
£5 5-14 yrs

Children under five free

For further details write to
WEG, PO Box 332, London E15 3BY.

Free the Sharpeville Six

Friday 22 April
Assemble 1pm

Brixton College, Brixton Hill
March to SA Embassy
Organised by Lambeth LPYS
& Brixton College NUS

Wirral Militant supporters would like to express their deepest sympathy to Mr & Mrs Martin & family on the sudden death of Steven, a Militant supporter, sadly missed

'The union was absolutely corrupt'

"THE MAIN demand during the 1960s was for shipboard union representatives. The union was absolutely corrupt.

"I remember in Liverpool the union office was actually inside the Shipping Federation headquarters. You had to go through great big iron doors and then a door which let one man through at a time. It was

common knowledge that if men put a fiver in their pass book when they gave it to the official, he'd let them jump the queue.

"Yates, the general secretary, used union money to buy his daughter a Rolls Royce on her 21st birthday.

"When the 1966 strike broke out we'd learnt many lessons

from the 1960 strike. The biggest problem we faced was lack of transport. None of us had cars, with being away at sea all the time. So we got a load of cars from the scrapyards and painted them white with some ship's paint we found. The cars had no tax and no-one had a driver's licence, but somehow we made do. We put

loudspeakers on the top and organised mass meetings along the docks.

"The *Liverpool Echo* gave us a terrible press so we put out a leaflet, *Who Owns The Echo?*, and listed all the companies with the shipping lines prominently displayed. After that, the coverage improved.

"After the strike, the leaders

tried to stop us lobbying the 1967 conference by holding it in Dublin. But scores of us were stowed away on the B&I boats by Seamens Union of Ireland members. That's when reform of the union began".

John Nettleton an NUS activist in the 1960 and 1966 strikes, spoke to Richard Knights.

Seafarers' stormy past

NINE WEEKS into the strike of P&O workers at Dover, we look at some of the lessons which can be drawn from the history of their union, the National Union of Seamen (NUS). Central amongst these was the last national strike in 1966. This week we examine the background to that event. In next week's issue, we will draw out the lessons of the strike itself.

By Richard Knights.

Seafarers face unparalleled attacks from the ship owners. Already this year national strikes have been called over the Isle of Man ferries and P&O Dover.

Tragically, seamen have also been forced to grapple with their own union leadership.

In the nineteenth century the ship owners, organised through the Shipping Federation, used brute force to try and break trade unionism—they organised ships with scabs on, ready to sail to any port and break strikes.

The 1911 maritime strike broke the power of the Shipping Federation, through the unity of all dock workers and seamen.

However, the NUS's founder, Havelock Wilson, broke from his militant background and in 1920 signed a sweetheart agreement with the ship owners. The NUS became their appendage and during the 1926 general strike gained the dubious distinction of being the only union not to participate.

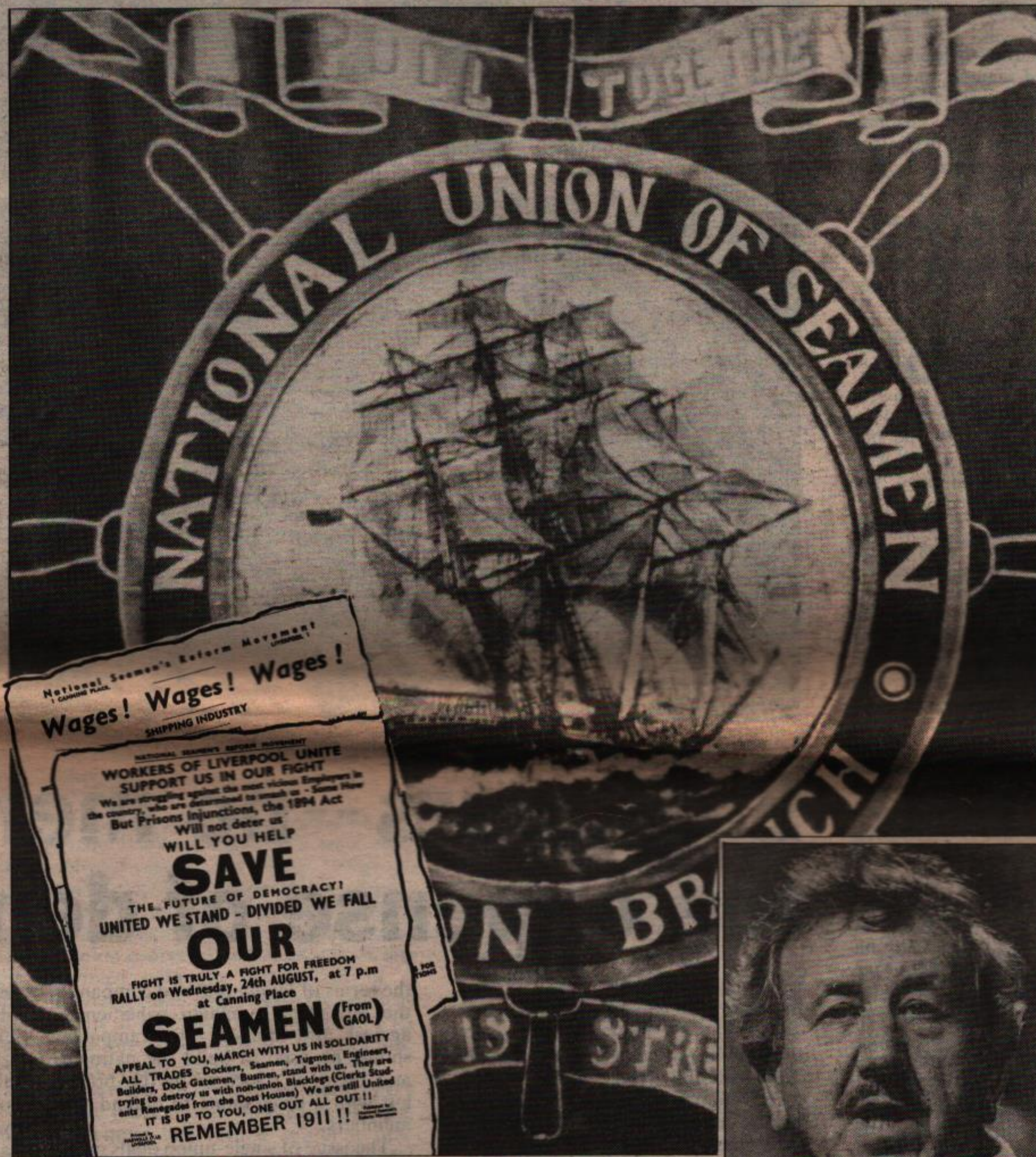
Havelock Wilson's support for breakaway miners' unions led to the NUS's expulsion from the TUC. It was only re-admitted in 1929 after Wilson's death, but remained a byword for class collaboration and company unionism.

In the post-war period the union and ship owners exercised joint control over employment through the Merchant Navy Establishment Scheme and on pay through the National Maritime Board. As a result of the union's compliant role, by 1958 the pay of an able seaman averaged £33 per month, whereas on shore average industrial wages were £54 per month.

On board ship, seamen were still bound by the draconian 1894 Merchant Shipping Act, which stipulated that seamen absent without leave could be fined two days' pay on an escalating scale. Disobedience of a lawful command at sea could result in four weeks imprisonment.

The NUS was virtually in the pockets of the shipping magnates, run by a corrupt bureaucracy with no element of democracy tolerated.

The main complaint of the rank and file was that no shop stewards were allowed on board the ships. The only course of complaint came when the ship finally docked. The members were effectively policed by the full-time officials. In 1960 there were 185 officials to



NSRM leaflets from the 1960 strike in Liverpool.

80,000 members—the highest ratio in the TUC. All officials were appointed by the general secretary!

The only elected post was that of general secretary itself and here the union still operated the plural voting system introduced by Havelock Wilson.

This worked as follows: probationary members with under one year's membership had no vote; up to five years' membership, one vote; up to ten years, two votes; 15 years, three votes; over 15 years, four votes.

One third of the annual conference was composed of full-time officials and they even determined when branch meetings took place. Any dissent was ruthlessly crushed. Unofficial strikes in 1947 and 1955 were met with expulsions.

The post-war period also ushered in the decline of Britain's dominance as a merchant fleet and the raising of flags of convenience began to further erode wages and conditions.

By 1960, the union was like a powder keg waiting to explode. Pay negotiations became the fuse. On 6 July a walkout on the Liverpool ship *Carinthia* over a

disciplinary matter spread to the pay issue. Flying pickets brought out other ports.

The NUS general secretary, Sir Thomas Yates, attacked the strikers, commenting that "the company were perfectly within their rights...Liverpool has always been full of dissidents and not just seamen".

Union clean-up

A week later, the National Seamen's Reform Movement (NSRM), based on the main ports, came in to being. In its paper *The Fo'c'stle*, it commented after the return to work on 20 July that "the British merchant seamen engaged in the strike decided that the real cause of their unsatisfactory conditions lay in the composition of the NUS. It was decided that the clean-up of the NUS was by far the most important objective."

The founding of the NSRM represented a major step forward. One of the shipping owners' journals later wrote that "the most significant decision of the reform movement was to continue the campaign within the union's ranks.

Photos: Militant

attacks. In Southampton, two strike leaders were sentenced to prison (reduced to fine on appeal), one of the magistrates being an NUS official!

In London, 16 strikers were fined and injunctions were issued in Liverpool. Despite these measures, by 19 August 106 ships were held up and crews walked out in Sydney, Montreal and New York.

Paddy Neary, NSRM chairman was jailed and the strike finally petered out on 22 September. However, the strike raised the morale and fighting spirit of the seamen. One of their leaders, George Foulser wrote that "they had discovered that all Cunard's millions allied with the Board of Trade and the Shipping Federation were not strong enough to move a ship one inch in any port where the rank and file seamen were in full unity."

Expulsions

After the strike, Yates retired and the NSRM backed the assistant secretary, Jim Scott in the election, hoping to hold him to some radical phrases he had made during the campaign.

They were soon to be disappointed. After his election at the 1961 conference he said: "Does anyone really think this malignant group of anti-unionists, Trotskyites, fascists and other rejected flotsam and jetsam are doing anything else but exploit the pluck and sense of loyalty enjoyed by seafarers."

Scott opened a vicious attack on the rank and file. Three NSRM leaders were expelled from the union and the idea of shipboard representation was dismissed by him with the threat that "I will dismiss every official the day that ship's delegates come into the British mercantile marine..."

Just before he plunged the union into civil war, Scott died in 1962. In the ballot that followed, Bill Hogarth beat Jim Slater, backed by the NSRM, by 30,897 votes to 9,855. In view of the plural voting system some members calculated that more working seamen had voted for the NSRM candidate.

Faced with the discontent, Hogarth began to make concessions and in 1965 limited shipboard representation was granted. Three of the Reform leaders were elected by the members onto the executive—Joe Kenny from Liverpool, Jim Slater from the North East and Vernon Miner from Bristol Channel.

The re-election of the Labour government in 1966 with a huge majority raised all workers' expectations, but with an economic crisis developing, the Labour right-wing reformists were preparing to put the burden onto the working class. The *Economist* had prophetically commented on 15 January: "The only way to achieve an incomes policy in 1966 is going to be by outfacing the trade unions on some big national wage struggle".



Reform leader Jim Slater.

"The effect of this strategy was to give a prominence and continuity to the militants' aims, where previous disenchantments had been assuaged by spasmodic unconnected revolts, or by the setting up of independent, unrecognised and eventually unsupported rival organisations for seamen."

The 1960 wage negotiations continued with the hot breath of the members on the necks of the NUS leaders. When they accepted the employers' offer of £2.50 per month increase, instead of the £4 claimed, ships were immediately held up in Bristol, Manchester, South Shields, Sunderland, Hartlepool, Hull, Glasgow and Liverpool.

Once again, Sir Thomas Yates raged that "this group of irresponsible people in Liverpool is misleading and misrepresenting the issue. This sort of thing is nothing more than industrial anarchy and mob rule."

The strikes felt the full weight of state and union bureaucracy

Industrial reports

Seafarers back Militant

LAST FRIDAY evening over 50 people crammed into Dover's Dew Drop Inn for the first Militant public meeting of the P&O dispute.

The audience of striking seafarers heard Tony Mulhearn, a disqualified Liverpool councillor, and a shop steward on the Belgian P&O boats.

The discussion naturally revolved around the strike. Immediately clear was the P&O workers' determination to defend their conditions and jobs against the management attacks. Debate was sharp about how best to secure victory, particularly given the attendance of a member of the NUS port committee, the 'left' member of the leadership.

This 'left' had come to the conclusion that the only

By Darren Summers.

strategy was to stick out a local dispute. He even stated that as soon as Sealink come out on strike, "this strike will be lost". Militant supporters were accused by him of being divisive and infiltrators. However, when asked what party he was a member of, peels of laughter met his reply: "The Communist Party".

The overwhelming majority of seamen applauded Militant's record in the dispute-fundraising, producing bulletins and organising speaking tours. They

agreed that for the strike to be won, an appeal must immediately be made to all the British seafarers, as well as the Belgian and French crews, for solidarity action. A national rank and file conference should be called to organise this action.

The strikers also applauded the record of Liverpool city council and listened to the lessons drawn out by Tony Mulhearn, especially regarding the role of the courts. At the end of the meeting, £35 was raised for the fighting fund, made up of the £1 coins of seamen.

The meeting can best be described by the comment of one of the strikers who said quite simply, "fantastic".



P&O strikers on the Dover picket line.

Photo: Dave Sinclair.

NUT leaders duck issues

THE ANNUAL conference of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) could not have taken place at a more crucial time in its history.

In a few months, the Education Reform Bill will be law. Then the Tories will have begun in earnest their onslaught on state education and the teaching unions.

In the event, conference was treated to opposition in words only from the executive, whilst in fact they are preparing the most abject retreat.

Gordon Green of the executive warned of "the inherent dishonesty and evil of the Baker bill" but could only suggest that the union looks for 'authoritative' allies such as local authority employers and the churches to form an education commission to mitigate the worst effects of the bill.

Unity

He failed to mention that these 'allies' have singularly failed to stop the bill going through.

Our natural allies are those teachers in the other unions, NAS/UWT and Natfhe, with whom we should be having joint action. In many areas this is already being done. In fact, the overwhelming feeling of conference was to pursue the idea of unity with NAS/UWT and against the will of the executive. A motion from Militant supporters in West London was carried enthusiastically, instructing the executive to start negotiations immediately.

Executive members kept returning to the question of the law. Even when it came down to details, non-cooperation was totally opposed by the executive.

A motion which called for united opposition from local authorities and teaching unions was seized upon by the executive with horror. According to them we could not possibly ask councillors and town hall unions to not comply with the law. This is the same shameful line that the

Labour leaders are pursuing in relation to the poll tax in Scotland. Don't worry about the suffering, just don't defy the law!

But worse than simple acceptance of Baker, the right wing on the executive are proposing to reorganise the union to make it easier for Thatcher to transform education.

The Tories want to break the power of the unions. One way to do this is to allow schools to opt out and be run by boards, who will be able to hire and fire and set rates of pay. The union is proposing restructuring to allow new regional centres to negotiate not only on behalf of regions, but also within individual schools!

This break up of the nationally agreed level of pay and conditions is a matter which must be resisted tooth and nail. But worse still was the manner in which restructuring was proposed, without consultation. Likewise with the new logo and the appointment of Doug McAvoys as the next general secretary.

This actually proved to be the stumbling block even from regions where the executive could have previously counted on support. In the event, an amendment was carried calling for a special conference.

This conference will be about the restructuring, but in reality it will also be about the real nature of the union. It will be about the direction the union takes and the programme it stands on. It will be about whether the union is allowed to decline into a professional association, or whether it develops into a fighting and democratic union capable of protecting its members in the face of vicious Tory laws.

If the left campaigns with vigour and determination it may be able to tip the balance.

By Linda Taaffe,
Hackney NUT,
personal capacity.



Amalgamated Engineering Union leaders Jordan and Laird.

Photo: Dave Sinclair.

Engineers – no merger at the expense of democracy

SINGLE-UNION deals and a possible merger with the electricians' union, the EETPU are among the main items on the agenda for the 70th Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU) national committee, effectively the union's conference, starting next week.

Even before the impact of recession, the plight of manufacturing industry in Britain is reflected in the processes taking place in the AEU.

The right-wing leaders of the AEU have said nothing so far on their meetings with EETPU leader Hammond concerning the merger. According to reports, all will be dealt with in president Bill Jordan's opening address.

Single-union deals, particularly the lessons of Nissan and Ford, will receive the attention of sharp discussion. Also, demands for this year's wages and conditions negotiations with the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF), will also need to be formulated.

A membership ballot is likely on the merger, with Laird and Jordan arguing in favour and prepared to accept the majority of the present constitution of the EETPU, including the appointment of full-time officials, disbanding of the AEU's district committees and removal of the traditional democratic structures.

Clarity and consistency in arguing the case of the left is essential. The merger will be welcomed on the basis of strengthening the hand of workers on the shopfloor and democratising the EETPU. However, faced with a ballot question asking for a straightforward 'yes' or 'no', having accepted

the terms of Hammond and company, the left must campaign vehemently against any merger. The campaign should be used to build the national and regional structure of the broad left with a programme to defend the members.

The issue of single-union deals must also be clarified. Obviously, if workers in one establishment all belong to the same union it strengthens their position. But if the cost of this theoretical possibility of unity is the present position at Nissan, with a very ambiguous agreement and less than 10 per cent membership, then all it will mean is increased exploitation.

White piece of paper

The outcome of deals such as these is vital to workers all around the country. They are used to weaken the position of organised trade unionism, driving down the wages and conditions of workers.

Our union's position must be for unity if negotiating rights are favourable, but not at any cost. Defence of present members of the union who have jobs is a higher priority than chasing a few hundred jobs elsewhere and giving the employer a white piece of paper on which to write an agreement. This would have been the position at Dundee.

The next 12 months will pose the question of defending members far more sharply than the last. The right-wing leaderships of both unions believe that only with poorer wages and conditions can British manufacturing industry become competitive in the world markets. What will be the

development of this line of thought when the impact of recession is felt?

Last year, Jordan was prepared to sell everything for a one and a half hour reduction in the working week, even though productivity levels would have had to be maintained! No doubt this year will see similar attempts.

There is an urgent need for activists to campaign in their areas for democratic broad lefts, linked to the national structure. Only by explaining the issues to members, especially the youth, can the interests of AEU members be defended against the vicious attacks which result from the recession now looming over the British and world economy.

★Reject merger with the EETPU if any of the democratic structures of the AEU are threatened.

★Reject no-strike agreements.

★Reject single-union deals agreed at any cost.

★Defend the right to organise.

★Defend democracy in the AEU.

★For a 35 hour week with no strings attached.

By John Killen,
EC 3 broad left,
personal capacity.

AEU ENGINEERING GAZETTE
EC number 2 broad left rally.
Saturday 23 April, 11am, London Road Labour Club, Preston.
Speakers include John Tocher and Len Brindle (broad left candidate, EC 2 election).

Industrial reports

CPSA elections- organise for Broad Left victory



Department of Employment members on strike recently.

BALLOTING HAS started in the CPSA elections for the national executive and section executive committees. Up to 5 May, voting will be taking place in the most important elections in the union's history.

The Tory government's aims for the civil service are far-reaching.

They intend to abolish national pay rates and bargaining, to slash jobs, introduce casualisation and privatisation and bring in YTS schemes.

In addition to these plans we have seen the Tory offensive take the form of poll tax, cuts in benefits and tax cuts for the rich at the expense of the health service.

The record of the present Broad Left national executive has been outstanding. They have stood between the Tories and their objectives. Over the course of the past year, the Tories have not achieved a single one of their aims. They intended to introduce 30,000 YTS trainees this year but this figure has been reduced to 121. This represents an important victory. Regional pay has not yet been introduced, despite their plans.

The Tories and their friends in the media are undoubtedly hoping that their choice, the 'moderates', will be elected. The 'moderates' and the broad left 84 group are on record as being prepared to accept the introduction of YTS.

The media have launched the 'moderates' election campaign in the London *Evening Standard* and *The Times*. The latter implored the members to "Vote against Militant" in its editorial of 12 April.

The Broad Left national executive has a proud record in defending members from the Tories' plans. Over the past year, work has been done around the questions of racism, womens' rights and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation.

The Broad Left executive only gave full-time officers the same pay increase as the members got last year, £5.75p. The car and credit card of general secretary, John Ellis were removed. Why should officers get these perks when they are already on £28,000 per year?

Campaigns have been organised on South Africa and the NHS, including, respectively an eight page campaign newsletter and a four page bulletin.

Consultation with and information to the members has never been better. Union communications have been improved with the production of a bulletin explaining clearly the implications of merit pay, regional pay, YTS and the other attacks. In addition, *NEC News* has been launched.

Savings on full-time officers' perks have made more funds available. The executive has turned round a projected £1 million deficit to a £250,000 surplus. Funds have been re-directed to the benefit of members.

Backing has been given to members in struggle. Full support has been given to members involved in a whole range of disputes, particularly the London Department of Employment strike, strikes at DHSS offices, the strike over YTS at Sheffield and others.

All this has been achieved despite attempts to block progress by the

FOR A STRONG UNION TO PROTECT YOUR INTERESTS VOTE FOR THE BROAD LEFT CANDIDATES BELOW

President Doreen Purvis (4)

Vice Presidents (2) Chris Baugh (3)
Phil Green (6)

National Executive Committee

(3) Rod Bacon	(56) Pat Lavery
(5) Chris Baugh	(62) John McLoughlin
(14) Dawn Castle	(65) Gavin Martin
(17) Tony Church	(70) Alistair Nicolson
(24) Simon Dennison	(71) Larry O'Callaghan
(32) Phil Green	(73) Charlie Parker
(39) Val Higgins	(74) Sheila Pevely
(40) Margot Hill	(75) Paul Phillips
(42) Steve Ion	(76) Doreen Purvis
(44) Phil James	(84) Mark Serwotka
(46) Martyn Jenkins	(91) Gloria Tanner
(48) Rob Johnson	(92) Tom Taylor
(54) Amanda Lane	(99) Danny Williamson

general secretary and the president.

Broad Left activists will be organising meetings throughout every region. Leafletting of workplaces will take place to counter the hysterical propaganda of the media.

We urge every activist to maximise the number of balloting meetings in their branches because we're confident that members will see through the smear campaign and vote Broad Left when they hear the truth.

By Doreen Purvis, Broad Left
presidential candidate.

Knowsley council strike

KNOWSLEY COUNCIL'S joint shop stewards committee has decided unanimously to call a half day strike of all local authority workers on Wednesday 27 April if the council does not drop its plans for major job losses. A lobby of the council meeting in Huyton council building will follow at 7pm.

The council's planned job cuts were first revealed in a letter circulated to the trade unions on 21 March.

The 'competitive tendering sub-committee', established on the advice of management consultants, Coopers and Lybrand, decided on that day that considerable job losses

By a Knowsley
correspondent

were required this financial year and that compulsory redeployment and compulsory redundancies ought to be used if necessary.

The letter to the trade unions mentions a possible loss of 1500 jobs under

competitive tendering. The council's long-standing 'no compulsory redundancy policy was re-affirmed as late as the last Labour group meeting but it seems that that decision is going to be ignored.

Letters have also gone out to individual employees in some sections, without any consultation with the union, outlining the redundancy entitlement of workers with various lengths of service and advising them how to apply.

All of the local authority unions were represented at Friday's 50 strong meeting,

at which a representative of Knowsley Campaign Group gave full support.

Right-wing candidates for the local elections are being imposed both in Knowsley North and in Halewood in Knowsley South constituency. Disciplinary hearings are still going on against left activists in Knowsley North. It is clear that witch-hunts and the carrying out of Tory policies go hand in glove. Local authority workers must join the Labour Party and insist on a socialist defence of jobs and services.

News in Brief

What's happening in your workplace?
Phone in your reports to
the Industrial Editor
on 01-533 3311
before 5pm on Monday.

Newcastle Central Office

"WE MAY have received a jolt in the elections last month but nobody should make the mistake of thinking we are finished. We will be back and next time we will be ten times stronger than we were. We represent the voice of the rank and file members and our ideas represent the future of CPSA workers and workers as a whole in Britain.

"I look forward with confidence to the election of Militant supporters in this year's NEC elections and to the election of Militant sup-

porters in Central Office at the 1989 AGM."

These were the defiant words of Terry Martin, until recently branch secretary of Newcastle Central Office CPSA, at a Newcastle Militant public meeting addressed by deputy general secretary of the CPSA, John Macreadie, a few days ago. The audience of 60, mainly civil servants, heard John outline the case for a Broad Left leadership of the union.

By a CPSA Militant
supporter

Strikers back Broad Left

OVER THE past year, many CPSA members have been forced to take industrial action. Here, two strikers say what they learnt and why they'll be supporting the Broad Left candidates in the union elections.

"The dispute at MSC head office owed its strength to local Broad Left organisation. BL84 and the 'moderates' showed they were barren of policies and ideas. Broad Left were prepared to make a stand on the important issues. That's why I'll be voting for the Broad Left candidates."

Andy Duncan, Sheffield
YTS dispute.

"I came out because I'm against statistics being used to divide black from white workers. If it wasn't for the campaign led by Broad Left supporters in London, I don't think there would have been any action taken. I don't want leaders who pay lip service to the campaign against racism. I'll be voting for the Broad Left who have demonstrated a serious commitment to oppose racism in practice."

Maeve Connellan, ethnic
monitoring dispute.

Jaguar, Coventry

JAGUAR MANAGEMENT in Coventry are once more drawing up the battle lines. Before Easter, workers threatened to strike if a speed-up of the track was imposed. Management said that the productivity was too low in relation to that of main rivals Mercedes. They also claimed that they had been badly hit by the falling dollar and wanted an extra 92 cars a week.

They backed off in the face of strike threats but

now seem determined to have another go. According to the assistant managing director, "We simply cannot afford to feed the mouths of all our employees at the existing levels of productivity".

The chairman of the workers' joint shop stewards committee now says that members are being prepared for possible strike action.

By Don Stubbins
AEU member

TGWU, Dundee

A PRESS attempt to humiliate Ron Todd, leader of the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU), on his recent visit to Dundee backfired in a big way. Todd was in the city to explain his union's position on single-union deals in light of the press propaganda over Ford's decision not to site a new factory here.

The local press warned that he wouldn't be able to get off the train, such was the anger felt towards him locally. After all, the TGWU was opposed to single-union deals and that was the reason Ford gave for pulling out.

In the event, a small group of aging Tories were there to boo him as he got off the train, a sharp contrast to the 100 or so trade unionists who met him outside the hall where he was

speaking. One banner, from the 7/282 branch of the union read: "Ford to blame-no secret deals".

Ron Todd addressed a meeting of 200 shop stewards from the Dundee area. He explained that the proposed deal with the Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU) and Ford would have meant wages 50 per cent less than the national Ford minimum being paid, the undermining of the Blue Book agreement and the threatening of workers' jobs at other Ford plants.

The meeting not only backed him unanimously, with calls for action to be taken against the AEU leaders, but gave him a standing ovation.

By Chris Wallace,
chairman TGWU 7/282
branch, personal capacity

Dover strikers demand National action

Press smear CPSA Broad Left

THE P&O strike at Dover goes on. If the strike is to be won Sam McCluskie and the NUS leaders must call a national strike. Seafarers throughout the country recognise that the future of their industry, and of their union is at stake.

By a Militant reporter

All the initiatives are being taken by the rank and file strikers—they are leading the strike from below. They have been raising the cash to fund the strike, organising support groups and have now drawn up a petition demanding that the local NUS leaders call a national strike from the mass meeting on Sunday 17 April.

Unfortunately the only left member of the union's Dover port committee, a Communist Party member, is advocating that the strike should be kept local, not involving Sealink and the wider industry.

This dispute is like Wapping revisited: all the lessons of previous struggles demand that the strike is widened with an appeal to the rest of the labour and trade union movement for support.

If the demand for a national strike is not met then the rank and file must make it a reality themselves. Speakers need to be sent to every port to raise funds and help build support for a national strike.

If, in two weeks, the

THE SEAMEN of this country have got to stand up and be counted. P&O have now stated that they are prepared to stay out until next January if necessary.

This dispute has all the similarities of the miners' strike except one major factor, the strike is not yet national. We are not only fighting P&O, we are fighting the Tory government because P&O are a major part of the Tory party.

We call on all seamen all over the country to open your eyes and look at what this government is doing. Dover is the biggest ferry port in the country. They will break us first, then the rest of the country will be forced into line.

Nobody wants to break the law but the facts are we cannot win by upholding the law because the Tories change it at their own convenience.

If it means sacrificing our union assets, then so be it. We must have an all out strike now.

By Carle O'Hare, striking P&O worker.

P&O have given a £100,000 handout to the Tories as sacked Dover seafarers are fighting for the right to work and safety at sea.

The NUS called it an 'insult' and a spokesman for the union's Dover port committee said it was "scandalous that the company have given the Tories £100,000 when they won't take £100 off a £6 million package that will cost us 400 jobs."

On top of this the company has awarded its chairman, Sir Jeffrey Sterling, with a £20,000 pay increase.

union's national leaders still fail to make this call, then all eyes will be on the national conference in Hull on 15 May.

As one striking seaman said: "We need a national

strike. We've got to organise to put pressure on the delegates to make that call. We've already discussed holding a lobby and a meeting in Hull—everyone must be there."

★ Union must pay £15 a week strike pay.

★ Call on Sealink workers in Dover and Folkestone to come out now in solidarity.

P&O strikers in Dover: Appeal to all trade unionists. Mass picket, Eastern Docks, Dover, from 9am Sat 16 April.



Dover P&O strikers lobby NUS executive.

Photo: Dave Sinclair

WITH THE CPSA executive elections barely hours old, the right-wing press barons have begun what is clearly going to be a massive smear campaign.

In what amounts to an instruction to members of the union *The Times* editorial of 12 April demands:

"Vote against *Militant*". What better recommendation could there be to vote for the Broad Left candidates than this, coming from the mouthpiece of Rupert Murdoch who sacked 5000 printers?

Over the last year the Broad Left executive of the CPSA has blocked the way of a Tory government intent on attacking civil servants' jobs and conditions. That is why their kept press is on the attack.

They want a tame leadership in the union that will collaborate fully with cuts in jobs and living standards. This year, Broad Left 84 candidates appear on the so-called 'moderate' slate. All right-wing forces are uniting together against the Broad Left leadership.

This fusion and the media assault will act as a spur to all activists to work even harder for a Broad Left victory in these elections.

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Return to the Circulation Department, *Militant*, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB. Make cheques payable to *Militant*.

£35,000 is needed

NIGEL LAWSON'S billionares' budget meant that the likes of Burton Group boss, Sir Roger Halpern, creamed off an extra £5,000 a week in tax cuts. It's a safe bet to assume that the main beneficiaries of the budget won't be contributing to *Militant*!

Militant fights for an end to the Tories rotten profit system. But we need your support to do that. We have to raise another £35,000 in 3 weeks! We appeal to all our readers to donate at least a day's pay to help our fund-raising campaign. Give us a cash donation to step up the fight against the Tories!

This week Allstair Fraser, Bristol MSF, sent us £150. Paul Davis, Portsmouth NALGO, donated £50. Two Merseyside supporters, one from W.Derby

and the other from Mossley Hill, both gave £50. Having made your own donation, why not take a *Militant* appeal sheet round your workplace and ask your workmates to donate?

Militant is organising a special sales drive from the 21st—28th April. Use the appeal sheets and collecting tins on the streets and the estates. As a minimum, everyone who buys the paper should be asked to donate the solidarity price of £1.

On the intervening weekend follow the sales drive with a *Militant* social. A quiz-night in Garston raised £28.98 while a 'Master Trot '88 quiz in Portsmouth netted £11.50.

Thanks to all this week's contributors, including; *Militant* supporters in Pollok who raised

Target 1 May £50,000 Raised this week £3968

Fighting Fund

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 South East	1011		1570
2 South West	618		1270
3 East Midlands	1005		2530
4 London	2601		7080
5 Eastern	770		2260
6 Manchester/Lancs	902		2890
7 Northern	912		3270
8 Yorkshire	1470		5950
9 Scotland West	592		2520
10 Southern	419		2020
11 Merseyside	950		5000
12 Scotland East	336		2150
13 West Midlands	618		3960
14 Wales	478		3510
15 National	2004		4000
Total	14,685		50,000

£51.30 selling pontoon tickets; Ken Jackson, Leicester NUT £10; Mick Griffiths and Adrien O'Malley, COHSE members from Wakefield who gave a tenner

each; *Militant* supporters in Peckham who raised £20 selling samies on the coach to YTURC conference; Ray Hickman, Portsmouth CPSA £5.