

Militant

The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

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Liverpool

defiant

Fight purge of city party.

FOR STANDING by local and national Labour Party policies, for waging an unflinching campaign against the Tory government, for standing defiant before the Tory law courts, the Liverpool labour movement is to be punished by the Labour leadership.

Wednesday's decision by the Labour Party National Executive Committee to set up an enquiry into Liverpool District Labour Party and suspend all its activities will outrage Labour Party members throughout the country.

The NEC voted that: "In view of the statements by some councillors and Labour Party members in Liverpool, the accusations and charges levelled against us, the party, the trade unions and others and the damaging and deliberately provocative nature of the attacks made through the media, the NEC resolves that an urgent examination be carried out by the general secretary and six other members of the NEC into the procedures and practices of the District Labour Party. Pending their report, no meetings or activities of the DLP or its executive committee should be held."

The six NEC members proposed were Tom Sawyer, Eddie Haigh, Neville Hough, Charles Turnock, Betty Boothroyd and Margaret Beckett. After a row over the lack of CLP representatives and a vote against the co-option of Eric

By Bob Wade
Heffer, the list was supplemented by Audrey Wise and Tony Clark.

Voting against the resolution were Frances Curran, Eric Heffer, Dennis Skinner, Tony Benn and Joan Maynard.

The eight members of the enquiry all voted in favour of the resolution. As Derek Hatton said later, "the DLP has been hanged even before it has been tried".

Big business

In their campaign against the government, the Liverpool City Council invoked the wrath of big business, the Tories, their press and the Liberals and SDP. The scales were tipped against Liverpool when the national Labour and trade unions leaders joined in this tirade.

Now these same forces are screaming for a witch-hunt and action against leading fighters like deputy leader Derek Hatton, Finance chairman Tony Byrne and District Party president Tony Mulhearn. They still face the threat of surcharge, bankruptcy and even im-

prisonment for standing by party policy in the face of Tory laws—yet instead of supporting them Kinnock and the leadership are carrying on where the Tories left off.

What will anger the movement's ranks even more is the support of the so-called 'soft left' for the enquiry. The decision at the NEC was moved by David Blunkett, former 'left' Tom Sawyer was one of the its most enthusiastic supporters, while the Parliamentary Tribune group have also backed the move.

But Kinnock is finding even stranger bed-fellows in his campaign against Liverpool. Two days before the NEC, the *Liverpool Echo*—a big business owned, vehemently anti-Labour paper—asked its readers for examples of "intimidation and rule bending" by *Militant* supporters in Liverpool, all in the strictest confidence (that means there will be no right of reply to any lies or spurious concocted allegations) which the *Echo* says it will hand the Labour headquarters.

The *Liverpool Echo* like big business, the rest of their press, the Tories and the Liberals and SDP have all been demanding Kinnock purge the Labour Party of the Marxists and the left wing. The guardians of the

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Jobs, new homes and services protected

THE TORIES have totally failed to crush the fighting spirit of the Liverpool City councillors and the workers who have supported them.

Thatcher and Baker were prepared to inflict a lock-out on 31,000 council workers, bring house-building to a halt and put services to the needy at risk, rather than part with a tiny proportion of the £350 million which they have stolen from the city since 1979.

The settlement agreed last week by the Liverpool District Labour Party, and due to be put to the full council on Friday, does mark a set-back in the council's struggle to defend jobs and services.

Jobs have been safeguarded, the housing programme has been maintained for this year and there will be no rise in rents or rates. But the deal could mean cuts in the future unless the whole labour movement is mobilised behind next year's fight by Liverpool and every other Labour council against even more drastic spending cuts.

Instruments

However the role of the labour and trade union leaders in serving as the instruments of the Tory government deserves the

condemnation of the entire movement. Baker was able to take a back seat and leave the task of trying to isolate and intimidate the Liverpool councillors and trade unionists to Neil Kinnock, John Cunningham and the trade union leaders.

The councillors have won the support of the overwhelming majority of party and union activists. They have proved that when policies are campaigned for within the ranks of the movement, a Labour council can stand up to a Tory government and defend major reforms.

Editorial statement
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Give us cash to build Marxism

THE FIGHT in Liverpool continues. Straight away we have the fight against the witch-hunters, followed by the Old Swan by-election and the court case in January over the surcharging of the city councillors.

Militant needs cash to help with its work around all of these campaigns and many more. We are appealing to all readers who have not yet contributed to our Marxist Daily Building Fund to send us a week's income or at

least a 'tenner' for Liverpool.

Every £10 helps us to build Marxism on Merseyside. Make sure the work can be done by sending in your contribution right away (see page 6 for details).

Labour's tacit support for use of troops

JUST BEFORE Liverpool District Labour Party accepted the financial package to balance the books of the city council, it was revealed that the cabinet had drawn up plans for sending in commissioners to run the city.

These would be backed up by troops if necessary if the council could not maintain essential services.

That was only to be expected from a Tory government which has robbed the council of the cash it needs to run its services and has provoked a confrontation. They wanted to crush the workers' representatives on the council fighting to defend the interests of those who elected them.

What has horrified members of the Labour Party, however, and will be remembered for years to come, is that Labour leaders

have not denied reports that they offered support to the government for such draconian measures.

Throughout the Liverpool council crisis, the national leaders of both the Labour Party and the trade unions have done the Tories' dirty work for them. They used every opportunity to discredit and revile the councillors.

They misrepresented the facts about the Stonefrost Report to give the impression that it offered a 'painless' solution to the council's problems. They made threats to take disciplinary action against individual councillors and the District Labour party.

All that is bad enough, but to imply support for the Tory government sending in unelected commissioners, backed up by troops amounts to a brutal kick in the teeth for the workers of Liverpool and their councillors who have risked everything they possess to

fight for them.

In the middle of a battle like Liverpool's, the job of a Labour leadership is to put itself at the head of those in struggle and mobilise the movement nationally. Even to sit on the fence is unacceptable. But in this case, Kinnock, Cunningham and Straw have come firmly down on the Tory side of the fence. They have lined up with those seeking to crush a section of the movement they lead.

Strike-breaking

It will recall decisions by Labour government to send in troops to break the strike of the Glasgow dustcart drivers in 1975, the firemen's strike in 1977 and the dockers' strike of 1949. These were the actions of Labour governments succumbing to the pressures of big business to take measures to curb workers' power.

There is no precedent, however, for a Labour op-

position supporting such steps by a Tory government. Especially when the Tories indicated that they would only act if backed by the Labour leaders. That proves how the government could have been forced to back down if the leadership had mobilised the whole labour movement behind the council. Then the Tories would not have dared to send in troops for fear of the mighty resistance it would have provoked. The government were banking on opposition support to defuse the resistance and they were given it.

It bodes ill for the future of the next Labour government if they are prepared even now to support the use of troops to break strikes.

The whole of the labour movement will be flooding the party with resolutions demanding that the NEC and the Shadow Cabinet pledge their opposition to the use of troops against the trade union movement under any circumstances.

Defiant mood in District Party

THE MOOD of the packed Liverpool District meeting which approved the settlement package was defiant and angry.

700 attended, with another 200 outside the hall. There was overwhelming praise for the Labour councillors who will go down in history with a proud record.

Appeals were made to the rank and file members of those unions which hadn't supported the council's position to build their unions and elect leaderships who won't let them down.

Eddie Loyden MP said that if the Labour leadership had united with Liverpool,

"This DLP applauds the heroic stand by our 49 Labour councillors. The Liverpool Labour Council has re-awakened the finest traditions of Poplar of the 1920s and the Clay Cross councillors in the 1970s. By standing firm in defence of party policy they face the possibility of being banned from office, surcharged and bankrupted.

"By refusing to bend to the dictates of Thatcher's government and the hysterical campaign in the press, they have secured additional resources—albeit through other sources such as the Association of Metropolitan Authorities. However, we feel that we must now reluctantly accept that the actions of front-bench spokesmen and trade union leaders, acting in conjunction with some of the local trade union leaders, have wrecked any possible opportunity of waging a united fight to gain additional resources from the Tories.

"We view with utter dismay and disgust Parliamentary

"we'd be faced with a very different position than today's setback".

Peter Lennard, GMBATU convenor, said: "We don't blame the NALGO membership, we don't blame the NUPE membership. They are fine trade unionists. But their leadership has let them down".

Ian Lowes, chair of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee rounded off the meeting with an appeal for the members of all trade unions to unite behind their Labour councillors for the battles that lie ahead". The meeting overwhelmingly passed the resolution printed below:

spokesmen acquiescing with the Tory threats of bringing in commissioners to Liverpool, and we call on Labour Parties throughout Britain to protest at this action.

"This party wishes to pay tribute to those workers in the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee and those rank and file members in other unions who have stood firm and voted to support the campaign.

"In view of the forces now ranged against the city council and the lack of support for our stand we believe that we are forced to consider an alternative budget.

"This party recognises that this compromise is a setback for the party and the working people of Liverpool, but not an irreparable defeat.

"Recognising the necessity to prepare for the next stage of the struggle to get more funds for the city, to avoid the consequences of this retreat, we call on the local authority workers to unite around the policies of the party".



Liverpool Labour leaders Tony Mulhearn (centre) John Hamilton (with hat) and Derek Hatton (right) with supporters outside the Liverpool District Labour Party meeting (22 November) which agreed the financial package. Photo: Dave Sinclair.

Manchester women back Liverpool

MANCHESTER Labour Womens Council held a very successful public meeting supporting Liverpool City Council.

Sue Ferguson, from the Liverpool Council Family Support Group described the outstanding progress already made in Liverpool, especially for women.

The audience was impressed by the council's housing programme, particularly the

priority given to single homeless women and women subject to violence.

Provision for the under fives is improving. Six new nurseries have opened and more are planned. There is now a comprehensive directory of child care facilities.

In the discussion women from the National Union of Public Employees were keen to hear why some of the NUPE leaders in Liverpool had failed to support the council. They were glad to

hear a full explanation. Points about the lack of consultation in NUPE over the proposed strike in September had not been made in their own union meeting.

Women from a local tenants' group were interested in the housing programme and how their group could best support Liverpool. It was suggested they invite speakers from Liverpool to the tenants association. A coach tour is being organised to visit Liverpool to see at first-hand the new homes, improvements and other building work.

By Margaret Manning (Chairperson, Manchester Labour Women's Council)

Strong support for Liverpool Labour

LAST WEEKEND a mass canvass was held in the Old Swan area of Liverpool, for a forthcoming council by-election contest. There was a very good response on the door-step. 60 per cent of those who had decided how to vote were for Labour.

After the decisions made on Friday at the District Labour Party meeting, many canvassers felt that there would be a lot of confusion. But there are many reports that the public is in favour of what had been done. There were many comments like: "You

fought as hard as you could" and "You've been stabbed in the back by Kinnock". There was a very good atmosphere among the Labour Party members and the campaign got off to a fine start.

Old Swan Ward Labour Party would like to thank all comrades who made a special journey to help at the weekend.

Anyone wishing to help in the campaign should contact Mary Jennings on (051) 709 4360.

Labour's 'modernisers' drop socialist commitments

AFTER SIX years of Thatcher, workers desperately want a Labour government with a big majority able to bring about a fundamental change in society.

But what is happening in the Labour Party headquarters? According to *The Observer*, Labour's research chief Geoff Bish has produced a report which is pessimistic about Labour's chances of winning the next general election.

Many voters, says the document, are "deeply sceptical" about the party's catalogue of promises. So Mr Bish is proposing that Labour should avoid drawing up a comprehensive programme in preparation for the next election in case it causes conflict in the party and, it is also implied, because it could not be carried out.

This ties in with Neil Kin-

nock's arguments about the "impossibilism" of *Militant's* ideas, many of which are in Labour's programme formulated by party conference. Is party policy to be ditched even before Labour gets back to power?

An interview with Peter Mandelson, Labour's new head of Communications and Campaigns in *The Guardian* (25 November) shows the thinking of some headquarters staff. A streamlined 'modern' apparatus is all that is needed. Policies which use modern wealth created by workers to solve modern-day problems are—so we are told, old fashioned 'cloth cap' politics.

"The next election will be fought from here", Mandelson says. He talks of Labour being popular now with media professionals and fashionable thanks to "Neil appeal". He concentrates on the need for a TV campaign as opposed to the "soap box".

And finally "getting the message across is more important than internal decision making processes".

"Getting the message across" through modern means is fine. But the message itself must be bold socialist policies democratically decided by the labour and trade union movement. Labour's programme should spell out concrete proposals to improve the job prospects, living standards and services for all workers and unemployed.

This programme must be taken to every area, to every estate, by every campaigning means possible, and the programme should be implemented when Labour takes office.

That is how Labour's campaign department could ensure a victory which would keep the Tories out of power for ever.

MERSEYSIDE Militant Rally:

"Liverpool fights on—expel the Tories not socialists". Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor *Militant*), Derek Hatton (deputy leader Liverpool City Council), Ian Lowes (Chairman Liverpool JSSC), Terry Fields MP and LPYS speakers. Tuesday 3 December. 7.00pm. James Parsons Hall, Byrom Street (near Central Library).

THE LONDON District of the Metal Mechanics has written to Liverpool City Council and its workforce applauding the city's struggle. The letter says: "We send you our continued and sincere support and demand that you hold your heads high; and adopt the slogan 'Better to have fought and lost than not to have fought at all'."

Sectarian danger of Anglo-Irish deal

THE MASS Loyalist march in Belfast at the weekend is a warning to the government that their Anglo-Irish deal will provoke a fierce reaction from Northern Ireland's Protestants—and a grave warning to the labour movement that, if it does not intervene, there will be a heightening of sectarian tensions.

The Tory press, backing up the Thatcher government, have tried to play down Protestant opposition. More than 100,000 Protestants joined the Belfast rally; yet the press have been dismissive about the rally. The *Sunday Times*, presenting an opinion poll supposedly showing the lack of Loyalist opposition to Thatcher's plans, even reported that "only" 10 per cent of Northern Ireland's Protestants believed in armed opposition to the deal. Yet that equals around 100,000

By a Belfast Militant supporter

Protestants, and this as the Loyalists' sectarian campaign is only beginning.

A sinister development at Saturday's demonstration saw the appearance of uniformed paramilitaries marching in formation from their home areas to the city centre. A new group, the Ulster Loyalist Front, handed out 30,000 leaflets calling for the setting up of 'Ulster Clubs' to fight the deal, organising like the Ulster

Defence Association in the 1970s.

It is imperative that the labour movement—which has so far remained silent—intervenes with the socialist alternative, cutting across the sectarian divide. It must explain that capitalism, whether in the form of 'loyalist' Northern Ireland or 'nationalist' united Ireland, offers workers nothing. Neither a poverty-stricken North nor a poverty-stricken united Ireland can be made attractive to Protestant and Catholic workers.

Socialism

Only socialist policies offer an end to unemployment, slum housing and poverty in both the South and Northern Ireland.

If the movement does not intervene it will leave the way

open for sectarian bigots to exploit the situation. Already there is talk of another stoppage, which could split the Northern Ireland trade unions along sectarian lines.

The labour movement must oppose Thatcher's Anglo-Irish deal—it will solve nothing, only inflaming sectarianism. But the movement must link this opposition with the need for a socialist alternative, uniting Protestant and Catholic workers around independent class demands, with the goal of a socialist united Ireland as part of a socialist federation of Britain and Ireland.

Thatcher is playing with fire. But if the labour movement does not act, it will be Protestant and Catholic workers that will pay the price.

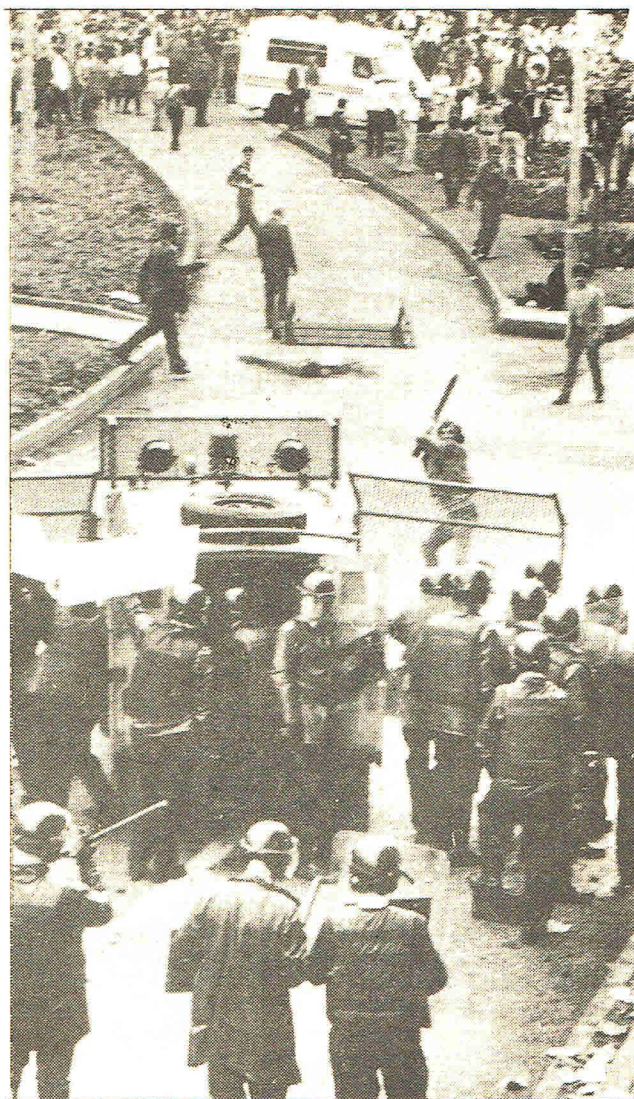


Photo: J. Arthur (Reflex).

Loyalists fight with the RUC after Orange marches were banned from marching through Catholic areas in the summer.

SALEP tour draws packed audiences



Photo: Militant.

Nimrod Sejake of SALEP.

PORTSMOUTH polytechnic students' union organised a highly successful tour for Nimrod Sejake of the Southern African Labour Education Project. There were full audiences for Nimrod, a former political commissar with the African National Congress and trade union leader, wherever he spoke.

He addressed Portsmouth Anti Apartheid Group (100 people present), Poly students' union general meeting (250), Kent University Militant Readers' Meeting (30) and Portsmouth Poly Labour Club (40 present).

He spoke to NALGO members at the Portsmouth council civic office, while the 75-strong meeting to hear Nimrod at Highbury Technical College went on to set up a Labour Club, as did the meeting at South Kent College of Technology, where 70 attended.

The tour raised over £200 for SALEP as well as Nimrod convincing many students of the need for Marxist ideas.

Racism fought in Liverpool

BLACK PEOPLE in Liverpool are doubly exploited—as part of the working class and as victims of racism.

Racism has many forms and the Liverpool City Council is determined to combat it. SAM BOND was appointed last year as head of the Race Relations Unit to assist in fighting racism in all aspects of the council's work. He spoke to Richard Venton about his experiences and how the continued boycott of him by NALGO is disrupting his work in assisting the black community.

Housing

I get many cases of harassment. One man for example, had youths break into his garden and smash up his van. He caught one of them as the police arrived. That was in September and he has heard nothing about any police action since.

On the same estate a white family were quickly moved to suitable accommodation because they 'might' be harassed, because they 'may' have witnessed an incident, and 'perhaps' reported it. Yet the black man and his

family have lived there for five years and he has still not been given a choice of other housing except one lousy offer of a damp house.

The NALGO boycott is preventing progress because although the Labour council are committed to act in such cases I have no liaison with the housing advisor, who is in NALGO.

Education

Black kids suffer harassment at school. In one case where a National Front cell of about six young fascists has been identified, a black family's kids were driven out. Now that Labour has introduced race co-ordinators in each of the 17 community schools this kind of thing can be acted upon.

The council have a draft code of practice when combatting racism—on attitudes, racist graffiti, racist literature, etc. There are now some more black school governors who have been nominated by the Labour Party. In further education the 'access course'—a form of foundation course—gives black students a second chance. It is something we

would support and hope to expand.

Criminalisation

The police and other authorities try to criminalise young blacks. When I went into one store with two friends to buy a picture frame we were immediately surrounded by security staff! I have dealt with cases of black youths being wrongfully accused of shop lifting.

Social services

There is no major centre for the elderly and disabled in Liverpool 8. Many do not receive the state benefits that they are entitled to, so a voluntary organisation was formed. Now because that voluntary organisation approached me for help the Princes Park Community Council, which involves NALGO members, has stopped all assistance to the voluntary organisations.

I have dealt with numerous cases where people need special help from social services, for example special beds, wheelchairs, home helps etc. NALGO's

boycott hampers me in this work.

Employment

There are no job prospects in the private sector. The very few jobs that do arise seldom go to blacks. I have dealt with a case of a fast food chain which took on 120 workers but had no black staff. After our unit's intervention, they now employ blacks.

The city council is a ray of hope. There has been a gradual improvement since 1983, although there is still a long way to go. NALGO control the advertising of any internal posts which constitutes about 95 per cent of clerical jobs. But for any jobs advertised externally the council has taken on 20 to 30 per cent blacks. The manual workers' union GMBATU are helping on this, through their nomination rights, by including black people on their lists. That is what all the unions need to do to help combat years of discrimination whilst remembering that we need a society where everybody can have a job, black or white.

Bragg, Weller back LPYS drugs fight

BILLY BRAGG and Paul Weller will head a lobby of the Scottish Office in Edinburgh on 30 January to hand in a LPYS petition against drug abuse.

The campaign in the Leith and Edinburgh areas was initiated by Leith LPYS. The petition demands 'drop in' centres be set up on council estates where young people can get advice and care on heroin addiction, and extra

resources given to the health service and teachers to tackle the problem.

Wasted

At a press conference to launch the LPYS campaign, Jimmy Boyle who has worked in the community helping heroin addicts, said: "Young people's tremendous talents have not been given an opportunity to develop and be expressed because there are

no jobs and therefore we have seen young people turn to heroin".

Also giving their backing are Tony Benn, the Scottish Labour Party Youth Campaigns Committee and local MP Ron Brown, who has pointed out heroin addiction lies squarely on the Tories' shoulders. Youth faced a hopeless future under Thatcher, while since 1979, 1,000 frontline customs officials had been cut by the Tories, which could only help the

drug smugglers.

Ron Brown has asked the Tory secretary of Scotland, George Younger, to meet a delegation from the 30 January lobby.

The petition has been taken up by several other local LPYS branches in the area, and will be used in conjunction with public meetings, street activities and door-to-door canvassing.

By Andy Clachers

Stoke college occupied

STUDENTS HAVE occupied the main buildings at the Crewe and Alsager college in Stoke-on-Trent. The college is not known as a particularly militant college, but the authoritarian attitudes of the college authorities have forced the students to take action. The occupation was decided on after two American exchange students were on the brink of being 'deported' by the authorities for petty reasons.

Morale at the college is low. This term alone there have been seven attempted

suicides. The Students' Union were particularly angered when one student was suspended from the campus, thus barring her from the college's welfare facilities at a time when she needed them most.

The students are demanding a review of the disciplinary procedure, a revision of residential rights of students living on campus, the college security guards to work more for the benefit of the students, and a general look at the welfare of students attending the college.

THE SCENES outside the Liverpool District Labour Party meeting on Friday 22 November were more akin to a victory rally than the 'climbdown' or 'cave in' or 'surrender' described by the Tory press.

This was the biggest meeting in the history of the DLP, with 700 delegates and members inside and a further 200 outside the meeting.

The District Labour Party voted by 694 to 12 in favour of adopting a recommendation by the Executive for the Council to implement a financial package to balance the City Council's books.

This followed a meeting earlier in the day of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee which voted by 250 to 30 to support the Council's proposals. The local authority trade unions and the labour movement of Merseyside recognise, by this decision, that they had to accept an orderly retreat given the monstrous campaign that had been waged against them.

Endorsement

This represents an endorsement of the Labour Council's decision to balance the books by adopting a package based on capitalisation and new loans in order to make up for the cash which the Tory government stole from the City and failed to make available in this financial year. The Labour movement is used to lies and distortion from the capitalist press. But this has reached new depths in relation to Liverpool, with a barrage of lies, distortion, and personal vilification against the council in general and *Militant* supporters in particular. This was combined with enough lies to construct a new Tower of Babel as to the real implications of the Stonefrost report. This recipe of drastic cuts was misrepresented as an "easy" or "painless" solution to Liverpool's crisis.

Leon Trotsky described the "cold cruelty" of the British ruling class in its ruthless oppression of colonial peoples. Today they show the same callous indifference towards the people of Liverpool.

The Tories were prepared to punish a population of half a million people, by locking out 31,000 council workers, by imposing housing cuts, and by depriving the old, the sick and young children of council care.

At the Tory Party conference, Baker, the Minister supposedly responsible for the Environment, cynically announced that he and his government were going to sit back while "Liverpool twisted in the wind". The capitalist class and the Tories hate the labour movement of Merseyside for the marvellous gains that they have achieved through struggle.

Liverpool has built more houses than all other local authorities put together. The council has improved education through its reorganisation scheme, maintaining teachers the government has said should be sacked, and re-adopting Croxteth Comprehensive School. There are 4,000 workers with jobs in Liverpool today who would be on the dole but for the measures of the City Council. There are 100 YTS trainees, on full trade union rates of pay, who have been guaranteed a job at the end of their training period.

The struggle in Liverpool forced the Tories to make concessions last year. Since then the Tory government has been determined to take revenge on the workers of the city. Fearing that the contagion would spread to workers in other cities, the Tories were determined to snuff out the Liverpool "virus".

The Tories saw that Liverpool's success last year resulted in 20 Labour councils defying the government at the beginning of this year in refusing to set a rate. There is no doubt that if these 20 councils had stood together in a united front then the Tories would have been forced to back down. Unfor-

tunately, with the first whiff of grapeshot all these councils, with the exception of Liverpool and Lambeth, ran for cover.

In spite of this, Liverpool could still have achieved a victory again this year—if the resources of the Labour and trade union movement had been swung behind their fight. Instead of supporting this magnificent struggle, however, the trade union leaders have twisted the Tory knife in Liverpool's back.

The trade union general secretaries presented the Stonefrost report as a "painless" solution to Liverpool's problems. In reality, Stonefrost regurgitated all the "unacceptable" measures already rejected by the city council and local authority unions dressed up as "acceptable" options. But it would have meant a 15 per cent rate rise (an extra £5 a week for every household until next March) and a big element of capitalisation (meaning cuts in the housing programme and sackings for private sector building workers).

Four different options, all including a 15 per cent rate increase and higher charges for council services, were all ruled out as equally unacceptable:

- (1) £12 million capitalisation, plus £4.50 rent rise.
- (2) £9 million capitalisation, plus £3.21 rent rise and 2,400 sackings.
- (3) £6 million capitalisation, with £4.88 rent rise, a freezing of recruitment, and 3,700 sackings.
- (4) £3 million capitalisation, ... £6.50 rent rise, frozen recruitment, and 5,000 sackings.

The package now adopted by the council has nothing in common with the vicious package of cuts contained in Stonefrost. Is it any accident that Stonefrost was praised by Baker, Biffen, by David Alton and the Liberals? Since when have these enemies of the working class been in favour of "painless" solutions for workers?

The role played by the trade union and labour leaders in relation to Liverpool is unfortunately no different from the shameful role they played in undermining the struggle of the miners, of refusing to back the NGA, in withholding all-out backing for the struggle of GCHQ workers for trade union rights, and for abandoning the printing workers battling at the *Financial Times*.

Kinnock

Regrettably, Neil Kinnock sat on the fence during the miners' strike. In the case of Liverpool's struggle, he has gone over to the side of the enemy. Not only did Labour's front bench scream for the immediate implementation of Stonefrost, they indicated publicly that they would support the sending in of Commissioners by the Tory government and the use of troops against the workers of Liverpool. This has produced a wave of revulsion within the labour movement. It brings back memories of the Callaghan government using troops against the firemen in 1977. This will raise a question mark in the minds of many workers about the role of a Labour government with Neil Kinnock at its head. Does it mean that the next Labour government would be prepared to use troops against workers in struggle?

Perhaps the worst example of the refusal to support Liverpool came from the general secretaries of the trade unions. The leaders of the NUT should hang their heads in shame for using the capitalist courts against Liverpool.

The NUT's action gave three High Court judges the opportunity to repeatedly denounce the City Council's policy as "irresponsible" and "irrational". Is it "irrational" to preserve the jobs of four hundred teachers against the recommendation of Keith Joseph and against the criticism of the National Audit Commission which considers them "surplus to requirements"?

Editorial Board Statement

Liverpool Council fights on

Councillors unwavering to the end

Some of those who stand on the left of the Labour Party, however, cannot be proud of their role either. They have also clamoured for the implementation of Stonefrost. First of all the leaders of councils like the GLC, Islington, and Sheffield all threw in the towel before they had engaged in battle. The marvellous struggle of Liverpool is a standing indictment of their incapacity to fight the Tory government.

If Liverpool had been completely successful it would have raised questions about their role. This explains their ambivalence, and in some cases outright opposition, to Liverpool's stand. The right wing have leaned on some of these lefts to try to bring pressure on Liverpool to capitulate. In a letter to the Parliamentary Party, John Cunningham and Jack Straw quote David Blunkett, approving his characterisation of Liverpool's stand as "insane" and also "an act of sabotage of the labour movement".

At the meeting of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities (AMA) on Thursday 20 November, Margaret Hodge, leader of Islington council, had the temerity to attack Liverpool's tactics as "discrediting the left". It is the action of leaders like Margaret Hodge earlier this year that will discredit the left in the eyes of workers who are looking for an effective struggle against the Tories.

In the aftermath of the Liverpool struggle, the capitalist press is attempting to give credit to David Blunkett. The package which has been agreed by Liverpool has nothing in common with Blunkett's "less than painful route through Stonefrost".

Militant believes in telling the working class the truth no matter how unpalatable. The package which has been agreed undoubtedly represents a set-back. The main elements of the package are a form of capitalisation, which is made possible by £30 million loans from Swiss banks. This means that parts of the house building and house

repair programme will be carried out on the basis of a deferred payments scheme (the municipal equivalent of hire purchase) financed by the banks, while the original capital funds from government grants will be used for current expenditure. This will allow the house building programme for the next financial year to be completed, and probably for the following year as well, though it will result in cuts in housing after that unless more funds can be won.

The package also incorporates the use of the feeble helping hand of £3 million transferred borrowing capacity from other local authorities arranged through the AMA. It also will mean £3 million of "unallocated" cuts, which will probably mean some unfilled vacancies and other cutbacks. There will be no job losses this year.

This package represents cuts—but far less than Stonefrost and the measures that the Tories, the Liberals, and unfortunately the Labour leaders were expecting to be implemented.

Liverpool's enemies are now claiming that this option was "there all the time" and jeeringly asking "why wasn't this implemented before?" They are maliciously alleging that it was only "Trotskyist lies and scare-mongering" that prevented a settlement on these proposals long ago.

Concessions

This is entirely false. No Marxist would deliberately court confrontation and conceal an available solution that would avoid suffering and deprivation for working people—if it were available. But this new package has only become available because of partial concessions by big business because of the magnificent struggle of the Liverpool labour movement.

The £30 million loan from the banks was not available before. The settlement arose from the fear of big firms in Liverpool of the

consequences of a mass lay-off, and these local firms in turn put pressure on the banks to come up with the loans. Moreover, while denying it vehemently in public, in all probability Baker approved the deal behind the scenes. In spite of their brave words, nobody should imagine that the Tories have been unaffected by the struggle put up by Liverpool workers.

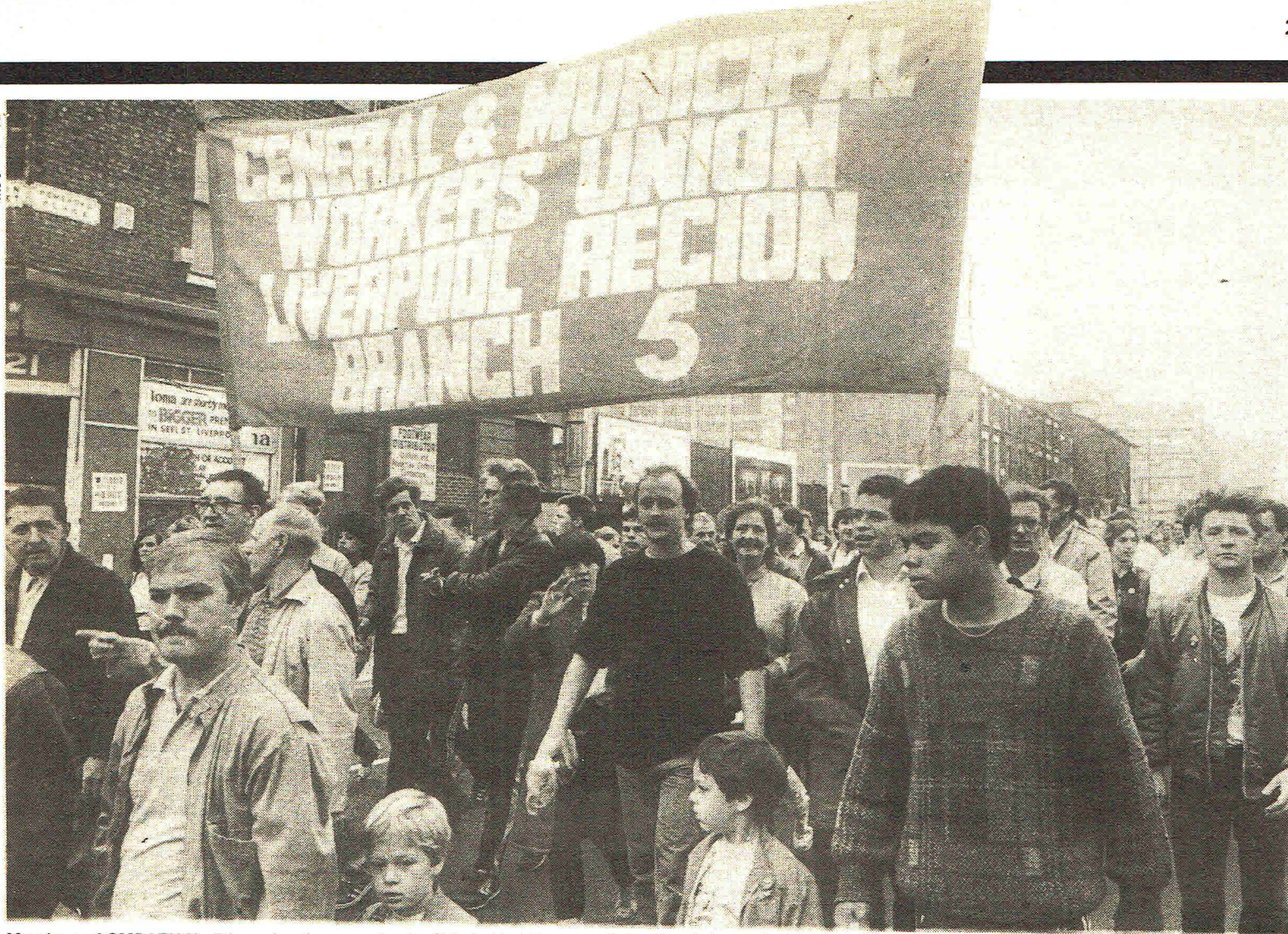
Marxists have always argued that reforms are a by-product of militant and socialist struggle. In this case, the marvellous struggle has mitigated the effects of the cuts demanded by big business and the Tories.

Perhaps there is a lesson here for Roy Hattersley, new guru of the Fabian Society. The international banks are only influenced by struggle, not by humble supplications!

What are the consequences of this package? It is much less drastic than Stonefrost. There are no rate or rent increases. There will be no sackings this year. Nevertheless, it is still based on capitalisation of housing expenditure which is a policy that *Militant* and the City Council were previously opposed to. We repeat that unless the money is made up in some other way, it will mean future cuts in the house building and repair programme.

Armed with the real facts about the Stonefrost report the majority of workers would have rejected it as a way out and voted to support the policy of the shop stewards for action.

This was demonstrated by the overwhelming rejection of Stonefrost by Branch No 5 of the GMBATU and others, and their colossal support for the continuation of the action. The open democratic discussion in the GMBATU is in marked contrast to what happened in many of the other unions. In the Transport and General Workers, for example, full time officials put an entirely one-sided version of the Stonefrost report, giving the illusion that it represented a painless way out. On the other hand, councillors, in-



Members of GMBATU No 5 branch—they remained solidly behind the council despite all the confusion spread by national Labour and trade union leaders.

cluding TGWU councillors, were not allowed to attend the meeting let alone put the case of the council.

Right to the end, between 1,000 and 2,000 GMBATU workers remained firm in their rejection of Stonefrost and committed to taking industrial action. Among these were decisive sections, such as the council security force.

Could this minority, by taking action, have drawn behind them a majority of the workforce? This was ruled out by the enormous weight of propaganda and misinformation about the Stonefrost report. Even amongst this resolute section, the salt of the earth, support for action began to be undermined by the barrage of attacks in the last few days before the package was accepted. It would have been impossible for these workers to organise effective action in the teeth of all the opposition and given the reluctance of the majority of the council workers to come out.

It would have been impossible, for instance, to implement the joint shop stewards' plans for covering emergency services during the action. There is also evidence to show that some of the right-wing trade union officials were actually attempting to sabotage the plans for emergency cover. The vultures of Fleet Street were waiting to use this sabotage and pounce on any cases of hardship to exploit the situation against the Council.

Job losses?

Unallocated cuts could mean job losses in the future. The council will not forget the workers, like the magnificent workers in the GMBATU and other manual workers, who backed the struggle to the end - and should be the last to suffer from any consequences of this compromise. We also salute those rank and file members of other unions, NALGO, the NUT and NUPE, who opposed their own leaders' shameful role and were themselves prepared to back the struggle.

Acceptance of capitalisation and unallocated cuts undoubtedly represents a retreat from the policy advocated by *Militant*. The question has therefore been raised by some workers; shouldn't the Labour councillors resign and let the Liberals and Tories do Thatcher's dirty work?

The question that should be asked is; would such a step further either the short term or the long term interests of the Liverpool labour movement and the council

workforce? The Liberals and Tories would not resign to fight a general election. Pending bye-elections, therefore, the Liberals and Tories would take control and introduce savage cuts which would be "Stonefrost plus". They would also purge the council workforce of the trade union militants - as they have threatened to do many times. The shop stewards and the District Labour Party insisted under the present circumstances, quite correctly, that the Labour councillors should stay in office.

Labour right-wingers—and some on the left as well—will now jeer that the Liverpool councillors have stepped into the same boat as themselves, and will now be presiding over cuts. The sects on the fringes of the labour movement will now intone in chorus about a "Militant sell-out in Liverpool". Victory or setback, however, they hurl the same charges - last year, in spite of winning concessions from the Tory government, they said it was "sold down the Mersey".



Labour leader Neil Kinnock. In the miners' strike he sat on the fence. But now he has openly joined Liverpool's enemies. Photo: Militant

In order to cover the retreat of the Labour leadership Neil Kinnock has used the false analogy of the "dented shield". At least the knights of old went into battle before they got their shields dented. Most of the councils Kinnock is defending retreated before they engaged in battle. Just compare the attitude in the councils which retreated to the attitude of workers in Liverpool. We saw on the television scenes where workers occupied council chambers up and down the country to prevent their own Labour councils implementing budgets based on cuts. These workers were appalled by councillors who promised to fight, but

backed down at the first serious test.

In Liverpool, in contrast, there is a widespread understanding that the Labour councillors have led a titanic struggle. Under threat from the District Auditor they have put their jobs, their houses, and their future livelihood on the line - and that threat still hangs over their heads. In what other council's area has support for Labour leapt from 45 per cent at last year's elections to 55 per cent in recent opinion polls? What other District Labour Party could boast of the attendance of over 900 people at their aggregate meetings? It has always been alleged that *Militant* "bores people away from meetings". Our right wing critics are strangely silent at the moment!

The high level of involvement of workers in Labour Party and trade union meetings, and the raising of the political consciousness of wide layers of workers, is a marvellous feature of the struggle in Liverpool. Without a doubt, it is the most politicised city in Britain.

The very tenacity of the struggle in Liverpool, with the policies and message and the council being carried to the factories, the housing estates, to every area of the city, has prepared the workers of Liverpool for a continuation of the struggle to gain more resources and prevent draconian cuts. In the light of this, it is incredible that Neil Kinnock is reportedly criticising the new package. He has criticised the package on the basis that it does not include a rate increase and that it will mean cuts in the housing programme. This is when other councils, including left councils, have carried out massive rate increases—but have hardly built any houses either! Neil must be very careful or he will end up in the same bed as our sectarian critics on the fringes of the labour movement!

Kinnock was advocating a 15 per cent rate increase, the equivalent of £5 a week for every household in Liverpool. His indignation has very little to do with concern about the housing programme, but everything to do with the city council's refusal to accept the dictat of the Labour front bench and the trade union general secretaries.

The Tories and their shadows in the labour movement were determined to use Liverpool, as they did with the miners to show that "militancy does not pay". On the contrary, what Liverpool has brilliantly confirmed is that under capitalism you don't get anything without a fight, and you don't get

a fight without a leadership guided by Marxism.

Liverpool is a shining example to workers everywhere. The battle has been followed by workers throughout the world, following events even through distorted reports in the press and the overseas service of the BBC. In strategy, tactics and organisation, it is a model to workers everywhere who want to see a victory over capitalism.

The whole labour movement must salute the 49 Labour councillors, who have remained implacable and unwavering to the end. The role of *Militant* supporters in the council workforce has been absolutely decisive. Where *Militant* supporters have been strongest, there have been the most determined sections of the workforce. Just a few days before the agreement to adopt the new package, workers in the number 5 branch of the GMBATU voted by 1,100 to three for action in support of the council. Where there was confusion and hesitation it was because there was no farsighted Marxist leadership.

Confusion

The most pernicious tactics of deliberate confusion, dust blowing and outright lies, came from local supporters of the rapidly dwindling and misnamed "Communist" Party. They have acted scandalously as a mouthpiece for right-wing Labour, and even Tory leaders. If they had consciously set out to sabotage the struggle they could hardly have done better. Fortunately their influence has been marginalised. They have been totally discredited in the eyes of conscious working class fighters, and will play no significant part in future struggles on Merseyside.

One of the main lessons of the struggle is that in order to defeat the capitalist and Tory enemy the organisations of the working class must be transformed. Only leaders inspired by the ideas and fighting capacity of Marxism can guarantee victory. The lesson drawn by the class conscious workers is that if they are to avoid future defeats their organisations, like NALGO, NUPE, NUT and other unions, must be transformed from top to bottom. The members of these unions need resolute leaders who can measure up to the demands of struggle against the bosses.

Local NUPE leader Jane Kennedy has attacked the council in the media for its promise "to continue the struggle next year". Is she saying that council workers should

meekly accept cuts? If she is not prepared to fight we are sure that NUPE members will elect leaders who are.

How will the struggle develop now? The acceptance of a balanced budget is far from being the last chapter. Liverpool's struggle goes on. In January the councillors will be up before the High Court to answer the District Auditor's surcharge, imposed on the councillors personally for the "crime" of fighting for the interests of workers. If there is any attempt by the Court to surcharge the councillors, bankrupt them, or bar them from public office, this must be answered by a resolute industrial action by the whole council workforce with the backing of the wider labour movement.

Next April, when the council has to set the next year's budget, Liverpool will be faced with a further cut of at least £30 million. The Tory government intends to cut another £1.3 billion from the block grants to local authorities—putting "all councils in Liverpool's position", David Blunkett said recently. This will mean a further massive battle to avoid even bigger cuts.

Socialism

As the example of Liverpool's gains last year and the present struggle shows, whatever limited gains the workers make under capitalism they will inevitably be forced to struggle again and again to defend the gains of the past. That is why Militant has always linked struggles like that of Liverpool to the need for the socialist transformation of society. We stand for the return of a Labour government committed to a 35-hour week, a £115 a week minimum wage, a massive programme of public works, recognising that this can only be carried through on the basis of the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy, the big banks and finance houses, and a socialist plan of production.

The battle in Liverpool and Militant's campaign for a socialist policy within the labour movement has earned us the venomous condemnation of the capitalists. They have exerted remorseless pressure on the Labour leaders to carry out a purge of socialists from the Labour Party, beginning with Militant, and then going on to purge Tony Benn, the Campaign Group, and other left-wingers. This is the first step towards eliminating all the gains achieved in recent Party conferences on democracy and radical policies.

Disgracefully, Jack Straw and even Neil Kinnock have hinted at the expulsion of Derek Hatton, Tony Mulhearn, Tony Byrne and others from the Liverpool Labour Party. They have even threatened the disbandment of the Liverpool District Labour Party. This is the equivalent of trying to expel Arthur Scargill and Peter Heathfield from the NUM during the miners' strike. It will meet with the furious resistance of the overwhelming majority not only of the Liverpool Labour Party but also of Labour's ranks generally. It would not be possible to expel Derek Hatton and Tony Mulhearn from the Labour Party without disbanding the Liverpool District Labour Party. Such an outrage would split the Labour Party from top to bottom throughout the country.

Militant would take the campaign against such a purge into every trade union branch, every ward party, onto the streets and into the estates. Any attempt to proceed along the road a mass purge of socialists will meet with mass demonstrations of workers against the witch-hunters.

The leaders of the labour movement have a choice: they can have unity in the battle against the Tories—or they can have a purge. They cannot have both.

The Liverpool fight goes on. The struggle for socialist policies within the Labour Party and trade unions goes on.

Sell Militant...

NOTHING DEFEATS Militant sellers. With the best known paper in the labour movement and the constant press publicity, they know how successful Militant sales can be.

Liverpool sellers, not satisfied with selling just one issue a week sell two papers—the *Mersey Militant* as well. Now in its sixth week of publication, the *Mersey Militant* has been selling well over 1,000 copies of each issue. Many workers have of course been happily buying both papers.


Militant was on sale in Church Street in Liverpool City Centre every day last week. 20 to 25 were being sold in half an hour. But *Militant* is not just being sold in the streets. In Broadgreen five newsagents now stock the paper, one of them is so sympathetic to what *Militant* is doing in the city, he refuses to take any commission for it. One of the union branches in Plessey now wants to take a bulk order of *Militants* each week.

On 23 November over in Birkenhead *Militant* sellers started a week of action on the paper. 13 papers were

sold in 40 minutes on an estate sale in Newferry, and 13 more *Militants* and nine *Mersey Militants* were sold in Birkenhead precinct and several of these asked for a weekly copy. On Saturday five separate street sales were held in the area.

Away from Merseyside, 20 papers were sold on a street sale in Scarborough, their best for quite some time.

In West London one seller has built up a number of sales on his window cleaning round. From the top of his ladder he is taking sales of *Militant* to new heights!



Total so far:
£4,785

Quarter ends
31 January

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London South West	112		1200
2 Southern	446		5450
3 Humberside	152		2150
4 London West	192		2750
5 Manchester/Lancs	283		4200
6 East Midlands	172		3050
7 London East	196		3350
8 Northern	213		4650
9 Scotland East	165		3100
10 Eastern	86		3450
11 West Midlands	156		4500
12 South West	34		2150
13 Merseyside	78		6850
14 Scotland West	40		3800
15 Wales East	43		3050
16 Yorkshire	53		5650
17 London South East	9		2200
18 Wales West	13		2950
Others	2343		5500
Total received	4785		70000

... Finance Militant ...

THE MINERS' strike and the Liverpool struggle have shown that workers will fight for their rights.

It also shows the need for a political transformation of the organisations of the working class. We need leaders at all levels who will fight.

Militant now needs the resources to build even greater support in both Liverpool and nationally. Hard cash is crucial to expand our paper—and a bigger paper is essential to counter the lies and nonsense carried in the Tory papers and repeated by the movement's national leadership.

On top of that, we have to defend ourselves against Labour's right wing for the 'crime' of defending the working class. The Tories are baying for expulsions, hoping they would make attacks on workers in Liverpool and elsewhere easier

next year.

You can and must help. A good start to the fighting fund is vital and we are already three weeks into the winter quarter. Liverpool's fight has created enormous support. Any attacks on us will rebound on the plans of the leadership. Workers will back us with resolutions—and with cash. Explain the issues and make a collection at work.

Liverpool workers have shown their support for *Militant*. Thanks especially to Mick Hogan, Liverpool Council worker for £42 promised at the Albert Hall rally and for the £21 from Judith Davidson of Broadgreen. All outstanding IOUs must be paid in immediately, but don't stop there, approach people who could not make the rally and ask for a £21 birthday or Christmas present for *Militant*.

Make the most of all opportunities. Rattling tins are

a must. Take one on every paper sale, to every meeting. Supporters from Birkenhead and Wirral raised £13.80 with a tin on paper sales and other supporters in Liverpool raised £6.50 on a street sale.

With just four weeks to Christmas, money from the winter raffle must start to flood in now. It's so easy to sell raffle tickets at this time of year. Try your workplace, school or college, spend ten minutes going around your local club, sell them on paper sales.

Answer our opponents in the best way, get the cash rolling in to build up the ideas of Marxism. Look at the chart and made sure your area is pulling its weight.

DONATIONS Include Arthur Beer OAP £1.95. Mark Dolan UCW £4.75. Keith Dunn Islington CLP £20. Hackney supporters £25. Central London area £66.50 and supporters in Sussex and Surrey £61.94.

will be a great financial strain this year, and many children will be disappointed. The only life-long investment that we can make is to put our money into building Marxism. No more Tory Christmases where a few can choose luxuries and most of us go without necessities. So put aside and send us a donation for the Marxist Daily Building Fund today!

£10 or more 'for Liverpool' is still urgently needed so that we can reach as many workers as possible with the truth and lessons for the

... and help us grow

WONDERING WHAT to buy your family for Christmas? How about a silver paper-knife for only £150. Or maybe a model vintage car which will appreciate in value, for £69.95. You can even have your family crest hand-painted onto it!

For a more unusual gift, maybe a telephone directory stand would do for £580—or a crocodile vanity case for £4,200. If you've been working overtime, how about a

diamond necklace for £92,000! Why buy just one Christmas tree this year—why not buy a "small tranche of Christmas tree forest"?

These modest suggestions are taken from Debrett's magazine. One article suggests a Christmas present that will last for life—such as investment in a few shares. *Militant* does not believe them. Capitalism won't last a lifetime!

For many working class families however, presents

ads

CLASSIFIED
15p per word, minimum 10 words.
SEMI-DISPLAY
£2 per column centimetre. Three weeks for the price of two. *Militant* meeting ads free.

All advertisement copy should reach this office by Saturday.

SWINDON *Militant* Marxist Discussion Group meetings held monthly. Phone Martin on 24796 for details.

NOTTINGHAM *Militant* Readers Meeting. "For a Socialist South Africa" Speaker from SALEP. Thursday 5 December. The International Community Centre, Mansfield Rd, Nottingham. 7.30pm.

BRADFORD *Militant* Public Meeting: "Liverpool—the fight goes on". Hear a Liverpool City Councillor at The Metropole Pub, Sunbridge Road, Bradford. Thursday 5 December. 7.30pm.

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION Computer game (Commodore 64) £2 from D McMillan, 46 Fairfield Road, East Grinstead RH19 4HB.

NEW PAMPHLET: "A socialist Programme for Brighton". Written by members of Brighton Labour Party. Which way forward for Labour councils after next May? Price 70p including postage from Geoff Jones 70 Hartington Road, Brighton, BN2 3PB.

DAVE AND Jane Nellist would like to thank all comrades who sent congratulations on the birth of Charlotte Florence, who arrived on Sunday 10 November. Another reason for stepping up the fight for socialism.

CLAUD BUTLER Dalesman 22½ inch 1984 £249 Mike 0703 432480.

LIVERPOOL VIDEO 30 minutes on the achievements of the council and how the struggle developed. £5 to hire plus £5 deposit. £10 to purchase. Order from WEG, c/o 3-13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB.

NOW AVAILABLE 1986 *Militant* poster calendar. £1.00 each plus postage and package. 50p each on orders of 10 or more—profit to your area Fighting Fund. Orders to 3-13 Hepscott Road, London, E9 5HB. Cheques payable to *Militant*.

OUT NOW Banned LPYS pamphlet 'The ideals of October'. Every YS branch should order in bulk. Price 50p, 20p for individual postage. Bulk postage free. Cheques payable to *Militant*, send to L Waker, 3-13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.

FOURTH GREAT annual West London LPYS Talent Nite. Saturday 7 December from 7.30pm. Ruskin Hall, Church Rd, Acton W3. Tickets £2, £1 for the unwaged. * Also acts still wanted * For details of tickets or auditions ring: 01 840 3445 or 01 993 2324.

★ ★ ★ ★

ABERYSTWYTH: Weekly *Militant* discussion groups. Details, phone Alan Huyton on 615911.

1986 DIARIES 60p, address books 60p, bookmarks 40p, plastic paper sleeves 20p, sew on badges 40p. Cheques to *Militant*, 10 Rodney Ct. Anderson Drive, Sholing Southampton SO2 8BV.

Militant Winter Draw

Registered Promoter: D Smith, 14 Station Road, Brightlingsea, Essex. £1,000 worth of prizes to be won.

- 1st prize Video Equipment worth £500.
 - 2nd prize Stacking Hi-Fi worth £300.
 - 3rd prize Portable TV worth £100.
 - 4th prize—5 prizes of £20 worth of socialist books.
- The draw takes place on Saturday 4 January, 1986. Price of tickets: 10p (ten pence).

All counterfoils, cash and unsold tickets to be returned to *Militant*, 3-13 Hepscott Road, Hackney, London E9 by first post Saturday 4 January, 1986.

TED GRANT—*Rise and Fall of the Communist International*. With an introduction by Alan Woods and an appendix. Marxist Studies Series pamphlet No 3. Now available from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB. 80p including postage.

LONDON LPYS Xmas Party. Saturday 21 December. 7.30pm to Midnight. Florence Nightingale pub, Westminster Bridge Road, SE1 (near Waterloo station) £1.50 waged. 75p unwaged. All welcome.



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EETPU BROAD LEFT/ BLOC National Conference

Owing to a postal dispute in Liverpool, credentials for the EETPU BLOC conference on 30 November may be delayed pending a settlement. Anyone who has applied for credentials and does not receive them will receive them at the door.

Marxist Study Tapes. Listen at your leisure to leading Marxists on theoretical and historical subjects.

C60, £1: Rise of Hitler—Jeremy Birch. Post War Boom—Bob McKee.

C90, £1.25: Spanish Revolution 1931-37—Alan Woods. The Early History of Bolshevism up to 1902 (question and answer)—Alan Woods. Permanent Revolution (Historical)—John Bulaitis. Chinese Revolution 1925-7—Peter Taaffe. Chinese Revolution 1944-49—Peter Taaffe. Trotsky Commemoration Rally (20 August 1985) Ted Grant and Dave Hemson.

Also, sessions from the Marxist Weekend School, (C90-£1.25).

Dialectical Materialism—John Pickard. Historical Materialism—Tony Cross. Is Marxism Relevant Today?—Ted Grant. The Origin of the State—Roger Silverman. Is Britain a Police State—Bob Edwards. Black Slavery—Phil Frampton. Black Nationalism—Bob Lee. South Africa: Closing Rally—Martin Legassick.

Add 10p per tape for postage. 10 for £12 post free. All cheques and PO's payable to World Socialist Books. Send to 3/13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB.

Marxist Daily Building Fund

Since last week **£653**

	£		£
Eastern	4382	Scotland West	2840
East Midlands	4426	Southern	5896
London NE	5088	South West	1460
London NW	5307	Wales East	2616
London SE	2827	Wales West	2051
London SW	2366	West Midlands	3156
Lancashire	1060	Yorkshire	2922
Manchester	3229	Humberside	3651
Merseyside	6448	National	1327
Northern	4736		
Scotland East	2535	Total	68,325

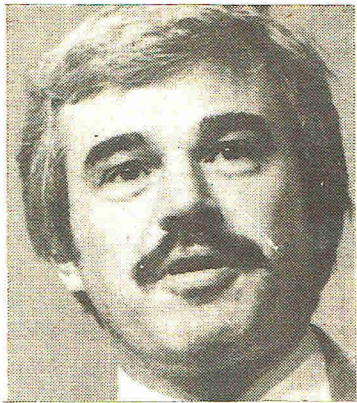
By Judy Beishon

Whitty urges against mass witch-hunt

LABOUR PARTY members will welcome general secretary Larry Whitty's comments last week, rejecting a mass purge in the party.

According to *The Guardian*, 21 November, he "rejected mass purges as a solution to the problem of lack of unity in the party. He told parliamentary journalists that many in the party recognised that unity was back on the agenda and it was more united now than it had been for many years".

Whitty made this statement the day before Kinnock and the parliamentary leadership's threats of expulsion against Liverpool City councillors. One section of the leadership at least understands that expulsions and witch-hunts will split and divide the party, damag-



Labour's general secretary Larry Whitty

ing its election chances.

But the Labour Party officialdom have allowed localised witch-hunts against *Militant* sup-

porters to go ahead in areas where the right wing retain control. Labour Party members have now been expelled or face disciplinary action in Blackburn, West Midlands, Mansfield, Macclesfield, Wrekin, Sheffield Attercliffe, Winsford, Isle of Wight, Cardiff South and Sunderland. Their only 'crime' has been to either sell or support the paper, or speak at readers' meetings.

It appears that this section of the leadership, while it doesn't want a mass purge, will accept 'just a small one'. They want the best of both worlds; some expulsions to appease the Tory press, yet not too many to disrupt the unity of the Labour Party.

Naïvely they mistake the Fleet Street newspapers for 'public opi-

nion'. But the Tory press is owned and controlled by big business. They have been the real instigators of the witch-hunt, being far from concerned with the welfare of the Labour Party. They will hound the Labour Party until the very last Marxist and left winger has been expelled and with them the party's socialist policies.

Labour's only defence is to show a united face, campaign against the Tories around its democratically agreed socialist policies, to answer the press lies.

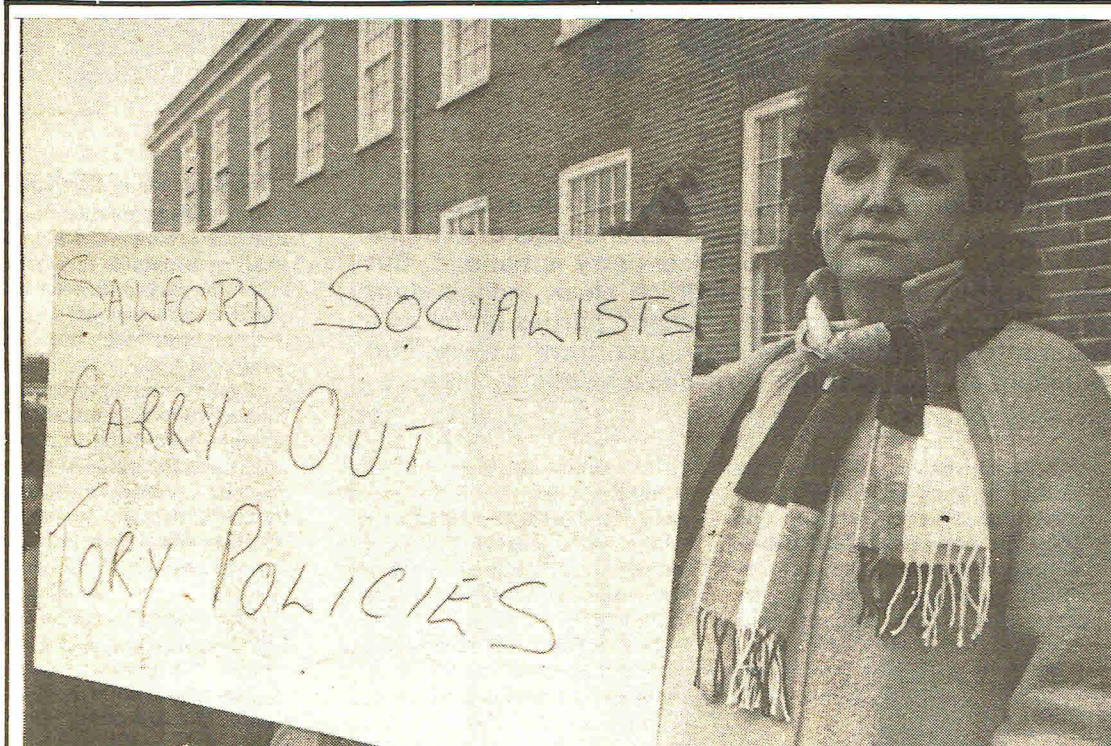
The right wing in local parties are continuing their attacks against *Militant* supporters.

● In Cardiff South three party members—Dianne Mitchell, Andrew Price and Dave Bartlett—have been summoned before the

executive accused of involvement with the 'Militant Tendency'.

● In the Isle of Wight—held up by Kinnock as an example of 'how to deal with *Militant*'—a fourth Labour Party member, Martin Cair, is facing expulsion for 'selling *Militant* on Ryde High Street'.

● In Sunderland the District Labour Party liaison delegate to the council, Bob Young, has been expelled from the Labour Group by the councillors. The DLP have vigorously protested at the councillors' action. Also the Labour council have banned *Militant* from being sold in the shopping centre, and will not even let out council owned rooms to Labour organisations that allow the paper to be sold.



Trade unionists lobby Salford Town hall on 20 November.

Photo: John Smith (IFL)

Threat to jobs by council

ANGRY LOCAL council workers jeered and protested when Salford's Labour council announced its latest cutbacks.

Following nearly 100 redundancies in the direct works department, they now plan to end the system of site wardens for old age pensioners in one of the most downtrodden and violent areas in Britain.

The council has already stated that job cuts will take the place of a campaign against the Tories.

These cuts decision have been made without consulting the trade unions and the workforce is disgusted and planning its reaction. A 'trade union forum' has been set up with rank and file participation from every union involved. At its first meeting on 22 November, the forum condemned the council for its inept attitude and vowed to build a campaign against the cuts.

By a Salford NUPE member

Defend Militant with your money

THE *MILITANT* Defence Fund was set up to raise cash for legal costs to fight the libel action taken out by James White MP.

Support for the campaign has come overwhelmingly from the labour movement and the trade unions. Industrial workers in particular see the need to defend a socialist newspaper.

This week the following resolution was received from USDAW, booksellers and stationers branch, London:-

"This branch supports the right of workers' newspapers to write the truth. We therefore deplore the libel action taken by James White against the *Militant* newspaper over a report it wrote two years ago about a pay dispute in his factory. This is just another attempt by the right wing of the Labour Party to witch-hunt *Militant* supporters by other means. This branch supports *Militant* in its fight against this action." Waveney Grant, Secretary.

Although we have been forced to settle the libel action most workers still appreciate the urgent need to help us raise £10,000 towards our legal costs.

Remember, even though the money is very important, an official donation from your organisation will show your support for the principle of the right of a workers' paper to print the truth.

Some of the donations received this week include:- TGWU 5/909 Birmingham £10; Norwich LPYS £5; Bristol West LPYS £5; Boothferry Ward Hull LP £5 and £5 promised from Langdon Hills Ward, Basildon LP.

Send your donation NOW to: 'Militant Defence Fund', 5 Cremer House, Deptford Church Street London, SE8 4SB.

By Kim Waddington

Anger at expulsions threat in Knowsley contest

THERE IS anger among activists in Knowsley North Labour Party over the possibility that the Labour leadership's threats of expulsion against Liverpool City councillors may spill over into the Knowsley North reselection contest.

Liverpool Councillor and *Militant* supporter Tony Mulhearn is standing in the contest against sitting MP Robert Kilroy-Silk, and has the backing of many Labour Party and trade union branches.

Before the tirade against Liverpool City Council, Neil Kinnock had told Kilroy Silk to 'cool off', after his media backed campaign against local party members, his attacks on *Militant* supporters and his threat to stand as an independent should he be

deselected. But following last week's hysteria against Liverpool, Neil Kinnock may do an about-turn.

Any action against Tony Mulhearn or the suspension of the reselection process due to take place on 10 December will go against the wishes of local members and trade unionists. Already 18 labour movement organisations have nominated Mulhearn, while Kilroy-Silk has lost the support of over half of the party's ward branches.

Record

The party remains unhappy about the MP's record. In an article in the *Liverpool Echo* (22 November) he said that on entering parliament 11 years ago his ambition was to become Prime

minister: "Every MP will have the same ambition." But local party members want an MP whose only ambition is to represent the working class needs of the area, and is prepared to take only a workers' wage to guard against parliamentary careerism.

Kilroy Silk goes on to say that he has had 'no complaints' about him not living in the constituency. Party members argue that perhaps the fact that he lives in the proletarian stronghold of Buckinghamshire means he can't hear them.

The threats of expulsion and the delay of reselection will only harden the mood of the party to see that they get their democratic rights and a candidate of their choice.

Beds Labour say no cuts

THE MINORITY Labour Group on Bedfordshire County Council has agreed to a position of no job losses and no cuts in services for the next financial year.

The council has a government-imposed 'grant related expenditure assessment' (GREA) with a spending increase of only 3.6 per cent for the next financial year, the lowest in the country.

Assuming six per cent inflation next year's shortfall

with a standstill budget would be £15-£16 million.

Substantial cuts and a rate rise of around 30 to 40 per cent would be necessary to balance the books.

No room

The council has little room to manoeuvre since creative accounting possibilities are all but exhausted. For the first time in recent history this year's spending target looks likely to be exceeded.

The budget will be decided in February with the probability that a Tory/Alliance cuts package will defeat the 29-strong Labour Group.

But the decision of the Labour Group to fight cuts was welcomed by local unions, especially NUPE, who said they would only agree to a united campaign on this basis.

By Gwyn Morris

Scargill to speak to Young Socialists



Miners leader Arthur Scargill.

MINERS PRESIDENT Arthur Scargill will be addressing next year's national conference of the Labour Party Young Socialists.

He will speak at the opening rally of the 1986 conference, which will be held in Bournemouth from March 28-31.

With conference so far south next year, LPYS branches should begin to raise funds to cover travel and accommodation costs. Each branch should appoint a Conference Saving Scheme organiser, collecting 50p-£1 regularly from each member. Appeals should be sent out as soon as possible to all local Labour Party and trade union branches, with discos, raffles and activities to raise cash.

Preparations should also begin for the regional LPYS conferences, which take place in the first three months of the new year. Every LPYS branch should adopt a school, college or workplace and conduct a consistent campaign around it to join up new members to the Young Socialists.

Scottish campaign

LABOUR PARTY Young Socialist branches have been building their membership in Scotland with a series of localised activities.

Livingston: Over 100 people attended the anti-drugs campaign public meeting addressed by Robin Cook MP, Jimmy Boyle and LPYS speakers. (See page three).

Niddrie, Edinburgh: This newly formed branch has got under way with a public debate between a Young Socialist speaker, Gavin Strang MP and a Tory councillor. 40 people attended.

West Edinburgh: Fifty people attended a debate with a Young Socialist speaker and Alex Wood, leader of Edinburgh council against a speaker from the Young Conservatives.

Stirling: Over 50 people heard the chair of the Scottish LPYS, Jackie Galbraith, defeat the Tory speaker in a debate.

Meanwhile in Dundee and Glenrothes, there have been successful meetings of the School Students' Union.

By Andy Clachers
(LPYS National Committee)

Under the iron heel

A MILLION people—a quarter of the population of Santiago, Chile's capital, took to the streets last Friday in the biggest ever national day of protest against the brutal dictatorship. The rally, called by the workers' parties in the Popular Democratic Movement, and the Christian Democrats, marks the beginning of the end of the regime.

In this article, JORGE MARTINEZ describes the terri-

"Life insurance may be purchased on this bus." The advertisement which frequently appears in public transport in Santiago is highly relevant. Santiago bus drivers tend not to hang about! The speed and bad traffic conditions often lead to accidents on the "micros" as the buses are known locally.

The reason for speeding is not difficult to find. Most drivers are either owners themselves or working for bonus—the more tickets you sell, the more you earn.

Another factor is the deplorable condition of the great majority of these ancient boneshakers. There is no money to keep them in a decent state of repair.

A friend of mine explained how, on one trip, the driver suddenly turned round to announce to the passengers that his brakes had ceased to function. They had been failing for some time, but he had had no money to repair them, and now he would have to stop his vehicle by running into something, so would everybody hold tight!

And it is on the "micro" that one comes across the first tangible proof of the revolutionary upheavals which have shaken Chilean society to its roots over the last two and a half years.

On all the buses there are at least two or three windows displaying ugly, jagged cracks—the result of stone-throwing on the days of protest. Those bus-owners foolhardy enough to drive through the "poblaciones" (shanty-towns) on such days are systematically bombarded from street corners. Naturally, there is no money for re-glazing!

Chile is frequently rocked by earthquakes, lying as it does along a major geological fault. Colossal pressure builds up gradually in the entrails of the earth, until masses of rock buckle and are split open with terrifying force.

A similar process is taking place deep down within the recesses of Chilean society. The "days of protest" closely resemble the tremors which announce the imminent arrival of an earthquake. Long before the final explosion arrives, there is a slow but inexorable accumulation of tensions and strains, which gradually overcome the resistance of inertia.

From the same "micro", with its

shattered windows, it is possible to discern the nature and cause of these tensions. No sooner does the bus come to a halt at a red light or bus stop, than the siege begins. Not one, but two, three or more street vendors enter the bus trying to sell the few pitiful items they have managed to assemble, to buy a crust of bread. It is the struggle for existence reduced to its crudest and most inhuman forms.

Chocolates, biscuits, nail files, comics, ice-creams, sticking-plaster: all at ten pesos (about five pence). What percentage of those ten pesos will the vendor keep at the end of the day?

Street vending is a risky business. Apart from the danger to life and limb of literally jumping from one bus to another (which quite often leads to death and injury) it is against the law.

One morning, a man about 30 years old, quite respectably dressed, gets on the "micro" and makes a little speech, as always, in the politest terms, outlining his predicament: "Ladies and gentlemen, it is far from my intention to bother you, but I am only trying to make an honest living by

selling things on the "micros". Yesterday I was arrested and held in gaol overnight. I was let out this morning, but they confiscated all I had. I need to raise enough money to buy stock to sell to be able to eat today. I have a family to maintain." Most of the people on the bus give something. Although most had little enough to give.

The worst thing is that the majority of these vendors are not professional beggars or lumpens, but ordinary workers who have lost their jobs as a result of the catastrophic collapse of Chilean industry.

There are the children. The large number of children in school uniform indicates the way working-class families make sacrifices to keep the kids in school, in a pathetic hope that this will

ble conditions suffered by the mass of Chilean people; conditions that fuel the protests in conditions of extreme repression, where every political party is banned. But days of protest are not enough. A clear, independent socialist strategy from the workers' parties is the sole guarantee of forcing the torturers from power and building a secure future for Chile's working class.

somehow give them a "better start in life". But education, like everything else, is private. The desperate poverty in the "poblaciones" is shown by the fact that children frequently faint in the classroom from hunger. No wonder, then, that as late as 11 o'clock at night one sees school kids, still in uniform, selling on the "micros".

Hard as the lot of the street-vendor is, there are many who are not so fortunate. Hard on the heels of the sellers come the singers and flute-players who perform at the back of the "micro" and then pass down the aisle, hand outstretched.

Finally, there are the beggars, who have nothing to sell, who stand or sit all day in public places, in all weathers. Many of these are just children, frequently suffering from rickets and other obvious symptoms of malnutrition and under-nourishment.

As a crowning irony, social workers are sent by the authorities into the schools to examine the children and check for lice and other signs of neglect. They then go to the shanty-towns to lecture the parents on hygiene and cleanliness.

10-15 years of age will sell themselves for as little as 80 pesos—the price of a bit of bread. Along with scurvy, rickets and scabies, venereal diseases are now common in the shanty-towns, even in children.

The process of physical and mental degeneration which now threatens an entire generation is revealed by the fact that many children from poor families now begin to speak a year or 18 months later than normal, healthy children raised on a proper diet.

According to the progressive catholic weekly *Hoy*, whereas in 1970 around 10 per cent of the population did not earn enough to pay for food, the corresponding figure for 1983 was 32 per cent, or 3,600,000 people, of which a large part are children:

"...the living conditions of too high a proportion of the population are miserable and bear witness to an intolerable social contrast when compared to the most highly paid sections. Thus, the *per capita* income of the richest 20 per cent of households is 30 times greater than that of the poorest fifth on average." (*Hoy* 27 October, 1985).

"A building worker described to me how labourers on his site would walk many miles to work, start a 12 hour day and after hours of hard manual worker, sit down to half an hour lunch break of bread and cold tea".

But how can you explain such things to people who have no money to buy bread, let alone soap? Frequently, the houses of the poor lack even running water. Children sleep on earth floors, and in the cold winter months try to keep warm by covering themselves with the same clothes they wear to school. The parents imagine that the educated visitors have come to offer them what they really need—work and housing. They are invariably disappointed.

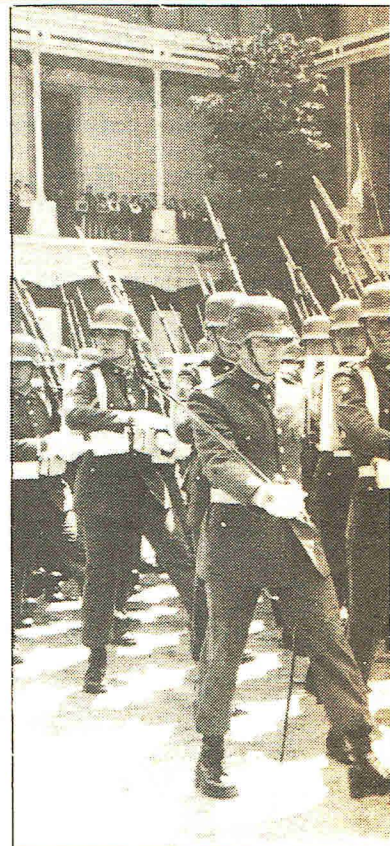
There is no work to be had. Factories in former hives of industrial activity like Vicuna Maquina, stand empty. Unemployment in Greater Santiago officially stands at 30 per cent. In practice it is even higher. The situation in the countryside is worse still.

Prostitution, including child prostitution, is rife. Youngsters of

That part of the working class fortunate enough to have a job is obliged to work long hours under appalling conditions in order to earn poverty wages.

18,000 pesos a month (about £80) is not enough to maintain a family. Yet 80 per cent of Chileans earn less than this amount. Many workers work for 15,000 or 10,000 pesos a month. Sometimes even less.

The bosses ride roughshod over the workers. In every factory or building-site, there is a "little Pinochet" who cheats, robs and exploits with impunity. The working day is arbitrarily lengthened at the whim of the employer. It is not uncommon for workers to have to work 12 hours a day, seven days a week. If travel to and from work is included, the working day would be nearer 15 hours or more.



Troops parade in Santiago.

A building worker described to me how labourers on his site would walk many miles to work, start a 12 hour day and after hours of hard manual labour, sit down to a half an hour lunch break of bread and cold tea.

Even formerly privileged sections of the workers, such as the copper miners, have been hit hard by the crisis and the policies of the junta, which, like the Thatcher government in Britain, has gone in for massive privatisation of publicly-owned industry, with catastrophic results.

Since 1980, the number of copper miners working for the state-owned enterprise Codelco has fallen from more than 11,000 to 9,000. No fewer than 4,000 now work for the 296 private contractors who have entered the industry.

Big gaps have opened up between the conditions and wage of the miners in the state and private sector. The lowest wage of a worker in Codelco is 20,000 pesos a month (about £90). In addition, the workers receive other bonuses and subsidies for water, electricity, gas, free medical and dental treatment, and other fringe benefits.

Missed chance

By contrast, the contractors' employees receive, at most, 10,000 pesos and are subject to frequent sackings. They receive none of the fringe benefits of their comrades in the state sector, and are forbidden to join a union. The government plans to transfer all the activities of the nationalised industry to private contractors by the year 2000. A wave of anxiety and uncertainty is sweeping through the mines.

According to the extremely conservative and predominantly Christian Democrat leaders of the copper workers, relations between management and workforce are extremely tense. A few months ago, the copperworkers' union sent a letter to Pinochet complaining about the private contractors' lack of housing for the miners of Chiquicamata and the appalling toxic pollution. A similar letter was sent to the managing director of the mine, Pedro Campino.

The reaction of the government was to arrest Rodolfo Seguel, Christian Democrat leader of the copper miners' union, with other trade union and student leaders, accused of organising an illegal Day of Protest on 4 September.

The government, playing the usual cat-and-mouse game, waited until after the street agitation had died down, and then pounced upon the most prominent leaders of the student and labour organisations.

This tactic was particularly stupid and short-sighted, because the main role of the Christian Democrat trade union leaders in

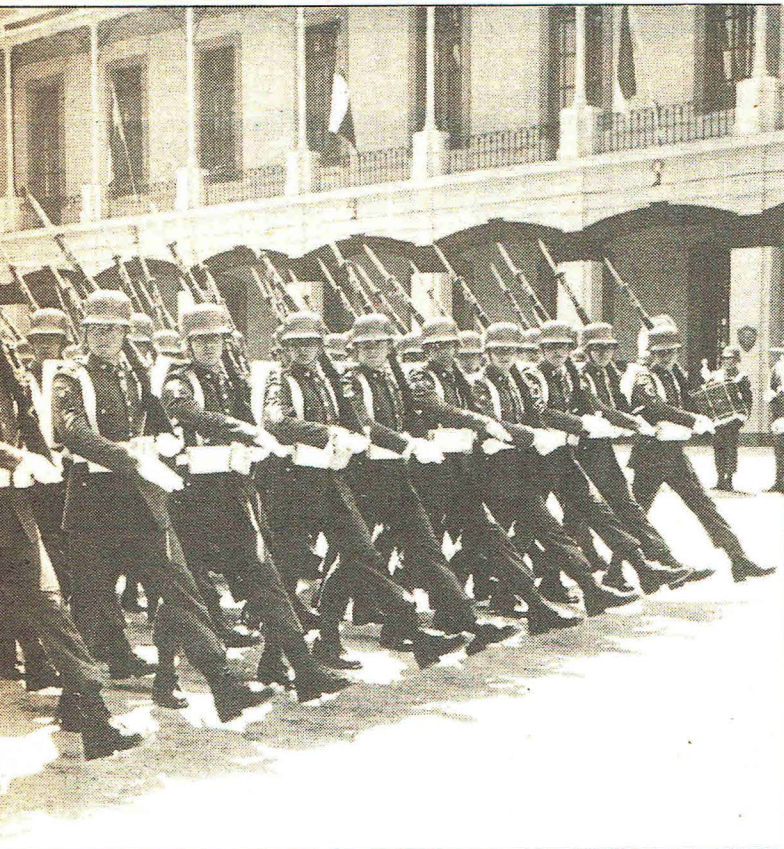


Photo: Jacob Sutton

Send cash to Chile's workers

THE CHILE Socialist Defence Campaign (CSDC) has received a number of urgent appeals from Chilean workers' organisations for aid in fighting the Pinochet regime.

Some of these appeals have been made from organisations representing young people in Chile who have been the hardest fighters against the dictatorship.

The need to step up the support for the CSDC is reinforced by the fact that the amount of money going to the Chilean workers' organisations from Britain is pitiful compared to what can be sent, particularly from the major solidarity organisation, the Chile Solidarity Campaign (CSC).

The CSC have strongly attacked the CSDC and have aligned themselves with the right wing and witch-hunters within the Labour Party to mobilise a campaign against the CSDC in the Labour Party and

in the trade unions. Recently as part of this attack, Larry Whitty the LP General Secretary sent a letter to all affiliated organisations asking them to refrain from supporting the CSDC in its work.

International

The CSDC was set up in 1980 to provide direct financial and material support to Chilean workers. It has always believed that international solidarity is political as well as financial. It therefore sees the adoption of a clear independent, socialist programme by the Chilean workers' organisations as crucial for the overthrow of Pinochet and the creation of a stable socialist society that will guarantee a decent living standard for the Chilean masses. It argues that political pacts of any sort with parties of Chile's capitalist class, such as the Christian Democrats must be

renounced.

The LPYS will not allow the CSC, or witch-hunters within the labour movement, to derail the CSDC from its crucial responsibility to the Chilean workers and youth. In fact the CSDC will redouble its efforts to raise cash for the heroic struggle of the Chilean workers and youth.

As part of this campaign the CSDC is therefore launching an urgent appeal for all labour movement organisations for support to help us carry out this vital work.

Please send letters of protest to: The General Secretary: L Whitty: 150 Walworth Road; London SE17 1JT and to: The Chile Solidarity Campaign: 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7 7QG. Please send letters of support with a financial contribution if possible to: CSDC, PO Box 448, Emma St London E2.

particular has been to hold back the movement of the workers. In the blindness of desperation, the Pinochet regime imagined it would "teach the workers a lesson" by clamping down. But it was a gigantic miscalculation, which stirred up a hornet's nest.

Immediately, a widespread movement of protest began in all the universities—even the most traditionally conservative sections were drawn in. The police reacted violently, with tear gas hurled into the lecture halls and baton-charges against demonstrators.

What occurred subsequently showed the crisis of the regime and the nervous vacillation of Pinochet and his camarilla. Very quickly, the student leaders were released, without charges. The union and shanty-town leaders however, remained in gaol.

Here was a golden opportunity for the socialist, communist and trade union leaders to organise an all-out general strike to overthrow Pinochet. The mood for a fight was present, not just among the students, but in the shanty-towns and, most significantly of all, among the workers and copper miners whose leaders were still in gaol.

In the event, the leaders of the workers' organisations let slip a most favourable opportunity. The Christian Democrat leaders of the copper miners played a particularly treacherous role, limiting the call to action in Chiquamata and Calama to pathetic symbolic gestures, such as keeping the children home from school, singing the national anthem, going home at 7pm, switching the light off, sounding the car-horns and beating saucepans, etc.

The workers responded massively to the call. The union leaders professed themselves well satisfied: "the biggest protest against the regime within memory around here," said one. But if strike action had been proposed, there is no doubt that the response would have been just as solid. In reporting the protest *Hoy* asks the question: "Could it not be the case that something bigger is being inculcated in the midst of the workers of the biggest copper mine in the world?"

This question lies at the very heart of the perspectives for the revolution in Chile. For almost three years now, the masses have fought heroically to rid themselves of this monstrous dictatorship.

Wave after wave of struggle has been unleashed in the "days of protest". Yet the brunt of the struggle has been borne by the youth and the shanty-town dwellers. The big battalions of the proletariat have yet to be decisively committed.

Under conditions of mass unemployment and semi-starvation, the decisive section of



A poor family eke out a living selling peas on Santiago's streets—many of the street sellers are jobless factory workers.

the workers will not commit itself unless it sees a clear perspective of an all-out struggle to overthrow Pinochet and commence a radical transformation of society.

One-day protests, which bring the risk of sacking, imprisonment, torture and death, without posing a real threat to the continuation of the dictatorship, are increasingly being called into question, not only by the workers, but by ever growing sections of the militant youth and shanty-town dwellers.

The repression continues and becomes increasingly desperate, although the forms have changed in recent years. Ultra right-wing groups, linked with the police, intimidate with impunity. Known oppositionists are kidnapped, beaten and raped. Increasingly the attention of these elements has been directed against the rank-and-file Christian and civil rights activists.

Branded

Right-wing thugs have carved crosses on their bodies with razors, and recently beat up an 18-year old girl in her home and burned her on the breast and forehead with a hot iron.

Yet for all its virulence, this activity denotes the internal

disintegration of the regime, which has now begun to turn in on itself.

In 'democratic' Spain, ten years after the death of Franco, not a single one of the fascist murderers and torturers has been punished—and more than one has been decorated by the 'Socialist' government of Felipe Gonzalez. In Argentina, under the pressure of the masses, Alfonsín was compelled to put the key members of the Junta on trial after the overthrow of the military regime.

Yet in Chile at the present time, even before the overthrow of Pinochet, the trials of notorious torturers have already begun! Recently, one of these monsters was actually summoned back from South Africa by the Air Force, and then put on trial.

The policemen who cut the throats of three Communist leaders before the summer have likewise been arrested. This has led to the resignation of the Minister of the Interior, general Mendoza—a prominent member of the Junta, and bitter public recriminations between the 'Caribineros' and other sections of the police and armed forces, each one trying to place the blame for the repression at the other's door.

The resignation of Mendoza,

even more than the October disturbances, was a moment when a general call to action would have met a ready response. It revealed just what would happen if the ruling class were to try to move from the top to get rid of Pinochet.

No sooner had the news of Mendoza's resignation been announced on the radio, than the centre of Santiago was thronged by people who had come in from the suburbs and shanty-towns, filled with excited expectation.

Politicisation

A young socialist bumped into an apparently apolitical neighbour: "What are you doing here?" he asked in some surprise. "Oh, I just heard the news, so I came to see if anything was going to happen." The clear implication was that the neighbour—along with several thousand others—would have joined in!

A further indication of the critical state of the regime and its extreme social isolation, is revealed by the attitude of the Church. The Church hierarchy has been behind the so-called 'National Accord for the Transition to Democracy'.

This document is a thinly

disguised attempt to patch up a rotten compromise with a section of the Junta. It does not even call for the immediate removal of Pinochet, and would mean, in effect allowing all the murderers and torturers to get off scott-free.

Nonetheless, it is extraordinary to see how, in middle-class suburbs, thousands of stickers supporting the National Accord have appeared in the windows—even of some army officers. The Catholic Radio Station broadcasts an announcement every 15 minutes publicising its position. Such an open campaign would have been unthinkable in Franco's Spain, even in the last period. It shows how far the splits and divisions within the ruling class has gone.

Everyone in Chile can sense that the regime has entered into its death agony. Everyone is now waiting, like the man quoted above, for "something to happen". It is up to the Chilean Socialist and Communist Parties to make sure that it happens sooner rather than later. Only mass action of the working class, shanty town dwellers and the youth can lead to the revolutionary overthrow of Pinochet and open the road to the socialist transformation of society.

South Africa in the '70s

When the black workers reorganised

IN THE first of two articles, David Hemson, an exiled South African trade unionist discusses the revival of the black workers struggle in the 1970s.

A second article will discuss the formation of COSATU, the 'super-federation' of non-racial democratic unions with 533,000 members affiliated, to be launched on 30 November.

ALTHOUGH the end of the week had come, the African and Indian women textile workers were tired of the oppressive working conditions at Consolidated Woolwashing and Processing Mills where the manager humiliated them and they had to work in the open, rain or shine.

They were tired of earning just £3.50 for a full weeks wage—below even the miserable minimum wage laid down by the state.

On the Monday these downtrodden women joined tens of thousands of fellow workers on strike for massive wage increases in the Durban Area. Hundreds of similar groups of factory workers made the same decision in wave after wave of strikes early in 1973. They announced to the world a new period of struggle for industrial and political rights in South Africa.

These were exhilarating times when workers marched through the centre of Durban shouting slogans and demanding white workers should join them in the streets. In the industrial areas strikers called out the workers in factory after factory. Fresh battalions were greeted with cheers.

The police, informed there would be a boycott of trains, were concentrated in the townships. The mass upsurge in industrial areas caught them on the wrong foot. Although over 170,000 black workers had broken industrial and security legislation by striking, the police were reduced, in the main, to spectators of mass events.

It was this movement which more than anything else marked the end of the bleak years of repression and defeat of the 1960s when the resistance was crushed and black trade unions reduced to a few thousand. The leadership of the resistance had disastrously reinforced this defeat by pulling out the best workers from the coun-

try for guerilla training.

With the leadership imprisoned on Robben Island, the secret police followed up with detentions of any workers even suspected of membership of the banned African National Congress.

But under the surface of this bleak political situation the tremendous upsurge in the economy was preparing an ever-larger African working class with greater skills and confidence. The devaluation of the Rand in 1971 which followed on the international monetary crisis gave fresh impetus to inflation. A 40 per cent increase in workers on the poverty line between 1971 and 1973 gave a new urgency to action by the gathering army of labour.

Strikes

Following the Durban strikes, African workers were eager to establish independent trade unions. Elsewhere workers did not have precisely the same confidence, but the independent non-racial unions emerged steadily from factory workers' committees and discussion groups. The strike movement flared up in a desperate and bloody series of struggles on the strategic gold and coal mines, but without trade union organisation in this sector seeming remotely possible.

The growing unions battled in a number of companies where the workers were well organised to get recognition and wage increases. Such was the criticism generated internationally of the multinationals, the House of Commons felt obliged to investigate the poverty wages

paid by British companies. The TUC leadership toured the country.

Wary of the growing power of the independent unions, the Vorster regime lashed out with banning orders on union officials. For a moment the movement seemed to mark time, multiplying in the number of unions rather than in membership.

The 1976 uprising led by the youth pushed the union leadership into a dilemma: of openly supporting the stay-at-homes and risking annihilation or earning the contempt of the angry youth.

The unions were cautious in this battle, although it was significant that well organised industries in particular were reported as being shut down during the political stay-aways.

The flowering of the unions, which up to that time represented only a fraction of the African working class, came with the upturn in the economy. Between 1979 and 1981 the independent unions dramatically increased their numbers to over 200,000 members. Most of the industrialised non-racial unions came together in 1979 in the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU), but there was also a mushrooming of non-racial unions such as the South African Allied Workers' Union (SAAWU) particularly in the Eastern Cape.

SAAWU revived many of the traditions of the workers orientated to the African National Congress. Organisers led workers on the trains and buses in singing union and resistance songs. Rallies were organised in the townships where members were signed on. After the union made spectacular advances, the state responded with detentions and coordinated action



Above: Union organiser Nimrod Sejake speaking at a union meeting in 1955 where workers had been prevented from leaving the premises. The unions were smashed in the 1960s. Below: The youth revolt in 1976 posed a dilemma of how to link the struggles

with employers to smash the union. SAAWU's lack of a powerful industrial base made them more vulnerable.

But the traditions of militant struggle were not held by the members of SAAWU alone. Although most strikes in South Africa have been short sharp exchanges won or lost in a few days, the growing organisations in the factories and townships brought protracted industrial struggles. These struggles soon commanded support from workers internationally and galvanised the youth.

In British Leyland in Cape Town a strike for union recognition was won in 1981 with the support of British trade unionists and the Labour Party. Campaigns also started around the meat workers' strike in Cape Town and Ever Ready and Wilson-Rowntree strikers.

A huge momentum to the workers' movement was given by motor assembly workers in 1982 who demanded a doubling in their wage. The spectacular wage increase they won from multinational companies spurred workers throughout the country into action.

Faced with such resolute action the Botha regime was forced to make grudging concessions. Industrial legislation was changed to provide registration and negotiating rights to the independent unions. The intention of the regime was to build up a conservative bureaucracy in the unions through dividing urban and migrant workers and tight state control. But strong op-

position to state control forced greater concessions. The most significant of these allowed for registration of an independent union in the strategic mining industry.

The phenomenal rise of the SA National Union of Mineworkers is a testament to the organising abilities of workers throughout Southern Africa. The mine workers, housed in military style barracks and denied family life, earn starvation wages in the richest industry of South Africa. Up to the formation of the NUM strikes invariably took the form of uprisings, with inevitable deaths.

United fight

Mineworkers' enormous enthusiasm for the NUM forced recognition from the granite-like Chamber of Mines. From its formation in 1982 it had 100,000 members in 1984 and is soon expected to have 250,000.

More than all formal resolutions, it has been this major thrust forward which has put the unity of the independent non-racial unions to the front. As the largest independent union in the country it has great traditions of union democracy and is a pole of attraction for workers throughout the

Southern Africa region.

The independent non-racial unions have made great advances in winning recognition and factory agreements and in building strong shop-floor support. The most blatant attempts by the state to tame the unions through building a conservative bureaucracy have failed.

In many areas, particularly on the East Rand, shop stewards' councils have been formed to strengthen workers' control and organise the unorganised factories. The unions have been pulled into political struggle by the attacks of the state.

Strike action has been called by the union on the death of trade unionists: of Neil Aggett in February 1982, and again in May this year around the death of Andries Raditsela. But the most determined political response from the unions occurred in November last year when the youth and trade unions combined in a massive stay-away in the Transvaal.

More than anything else, the tasks of organising the workers politically are the priorities of the moment. These tasks and the prospects for the new federation COSATU, will be dealt with in a future issue.



The South African NUM in conference in 1984.

Inqaba ya basebenzi—Journal of the Marxist Workers Tendency of the African National Congress. Issue no 16/17 includes a supplement 'Workers revolution or racial civil war' price 75p plus 25p post and package from *Inqaba ya Basebenzi*, BM Box 1719, London WC1N 3XX.

High-rise tenants organise

CRACKED concrete and chunks of concrete falling off, doors and windows not fitting, live electric wires with sockets hanging out of the walls, wiring rotting due to flooding from an inefficient heating system, damp.

The threat of rapid fire spreading due to cracks in concrete, gaps between floors and walls and no fire fighting equipment.

The threat of what's technically called "progressive collapse" (what happened to Ronan Point in 1968) if there was a gas explosion.

Do you recognise any of these? If you live in one of the thousands of system-built tower blocks up and down the country you would.

These appalling living conditions are the lot of those in the five 19-storey Clapton Park tower blocks in Hackney, which house over 1,500 people. The majority of them are families with children or old age pensioners, who believed they would be retiring to these

By Sharon O'Callaghan
(Clapton Park Tower
Blocks Campaign,
Hackney)

"dream homes" of the '60s and '70s but found them to be nightmares of the '80s.

In the '60s housing boom, these cheap concrete-lego pigeon holes were slung up at a speed of one in eight to 12 months. The policy was, the more blocks the local authority put up, the more subsidy it got for housing from the government. The reality is that Hackney council, like many others, will be paying off the loan charges for these blocks for the next 60 years. That's even if they fall down before then, which is, according to their own technical report, "highly

likely".

We in the Clapton Park Tower Blocks Campaign have demanded that the council pull down the lot and save all that time, money, waste and more importantly, trauma faced by tenants in tower blocks.

But the problem is—money. The Tories have taken £150 million from Hackney and offered only £30 million subsidy this year. That has to cover the borough's other 81 blocks, the rest of the estates and other housing, as well as ours—and to do up our blocks alone would cost over £30 million (just to make them structurally sound).

The Clapton Park Tower Blocks Campaign was started by tenants last year. We have organised, held public meetings, produced a survey on the appalling conditions here and demanded demolition (only four people in the blocks didn't sign the June petition).

There are other groups in Hackney and all over the

country which are demanding the same. All this energy has been channelled into the 'Systems built housing and tower block project' which has been set up in Manchester and held its first major conference last week. So if you live like us, not in old slums but in the 'new' systems built slums, get together in each others' homes, organise yourselves and demonstrate and demand your right to a decent home.

The Tory minister George Young visited our estate last week and had the cheek to insult us by quibbling over £400,000 intended for this estate (none of this which will go to the tower blocks), when Mrs Thatcher has just bought a house for that—£400,000!

To Mrs T and the Tories' offer and their policies we say 'stick it'. To tenants in tower blocks we say 'don't stick it, fight it'. You're not alone!



The solution to Hackney's Trowbridge Estate tower blocks—blow them up or try to. Photo: B Eastop.

£19 billion needed for repairs

A GOVERNMENT inquiry report has just been published which shows that nearly £19 billion is needed to repair Britain's council housing. Councils need to spend £5,000 on average for each home.

The report was considered so sensitive that its publication was initially held back until after the chancellor's statement on the economy.

But Lawson promised an increase of only £220 million, or one seventy-sixth of the sum needed for repair in the government's own report. Now it seems that this promise is nothing but a confidence trick. It is not an increase at all, but for many councils will be a cut. The money is to come from receipts from the sale of council houses of which councils can spend up to 20 per cent on housing. Even then the treasury wanted to cut this allowance to 15 per cent which would have cut £300 million from the amount available for hous-

ing investment.

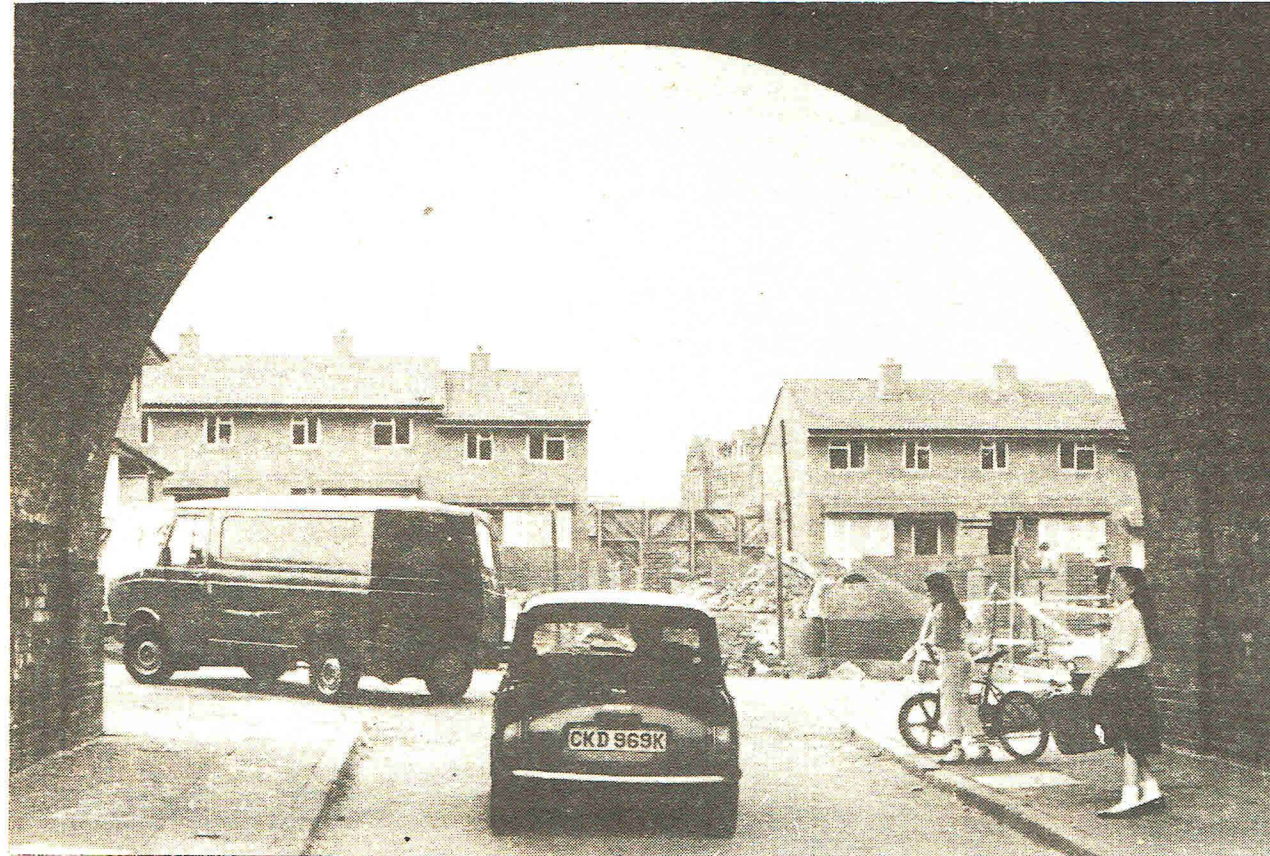
Some councils can get round the 20 per cent limit by putting their sales receipts into repairs. But for many inner-city boroughs little cash has been raised from the sale of council houses, not only because many Labour councils have opposed selling-off their assets but because few tenants are in a position to buy even if they wanted to.

Penalised

Again it is the inner city areas which are being penalised and it is these areas where the need for housing repairs and new housing is greatest.

To add to this, Kenneth Baker, the environment minister, has since announced that capital spending (money for building new houses) is to be cut by £185 million and will not rise as originally thought. Baker has stated that the bulk of new house building should be left to the private sector.

By Ben Eastop



Family leaving their Liverpool tenement for the last time to move into their new council house built by Liverpool City council.

London's housing horror story

THERE ARE now 25,000 homeless people in London and 240,000 on housing waiting lists.

This is at a time when investment in housing is lower than ever and the number of new building

starts by local authorities fell to 3,613 last year, compared to 24,620 in 1975. Total public spending on housing in London has fallen by a third in five years.

These figures have been compiled in a report on housing in London by the

housing campaign group SHAC, called *Capital Decay*.

The report also shows an increasing number of people are dependent on housing benefit. 60 per cent of council tenants receive housing benefit. The benefits have become increasingly less generous. In more than half of London, the report says, more housing subsidies go on tax relief for people with mortgages, who are generally on higher incomes, than goes to those on lower incomes.

Default

But owner-occupiers are increasingly suffering financial strain. A greater proportion of people become homeless through mortgage default than council tenants becoming homeless through rent arrears. More owner-occupiers are finding it difficult to keep their houses in a good state of repair. It is estimated that some 20,000

elderly owner occupiers live in unfit homes.

The average price of a house in London is now £46,000 and it is not surprising that with 49 per cent of Londoners owning their own house the number of mortgage defaults has trebled in five years.

Housing in London remains more expensive than anywhere else. Council rents have risen much faster than earnings over the last five years and registered private rents have risen even more so.

By Lynne Faulkes
(Hackney South and
Shoreditch Labour Party)

Capital Decay (Second Edition) by Jean Conway. Price £3.95, obtainable from SHAC, 189a Old Brompton Road, London SW5 0AR.

Slum landlords prosper in Edinburgh

PROPERTY COMPANIES in Edinburgh who own a number of flats in the city have been making a packet through extensive overcrowding and charging of exorbitant rents. Phoenix Properties have been charging £45 a week rent to 85 tenants crammed into three buildings;

In one building it was reported that 50 people were sharing one kitchen and two toilets between them. Many of the tenants are young people, often unemployed and living in slum conditions.

The flats are often run and owned by the same company, or through a web of interlinked companies. Flats in York Place and Dublin St are operated by Phoenix Properties, but owned by a company called City Lets, who are notorious for letting

slum housing in Edinburgh. The Scottish Development Department has refused to give Edinburgh District council the powers to supervise the letting of the flats.

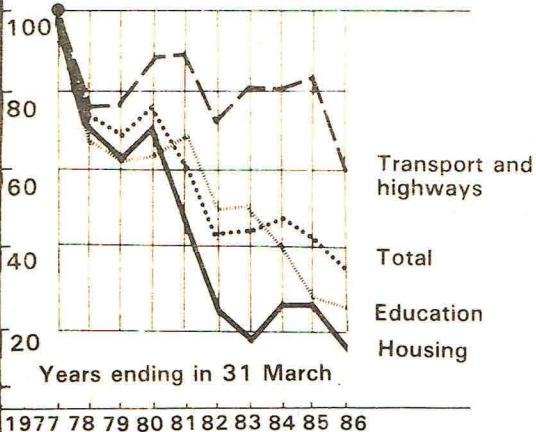
Repairs

A recent report on housing pointed out that Edinburgh needs £47 million spent on housing repairs. 40 per cent of Edinburgh's council housing and a large proportion of the private sector housing is in slum conditions.

Edinburgh's Labour council must force the government to come up with the cash necessary to provide decent housing for all in the city.

By Jimmy Bennett
(TGWU ACTSS)

Trends in local government capital spending 1977=100



Moanin' Minnies say thanks

Dear Comrades,
On behalf of *Moanin' Minnies* may I take this opportunity, through your Letters page, to thank *Militant* supporters for the warm welcome we received when we performed at the 21st Anniversary Rally at the Royal Albert Hall. The organisers are to be congratulated on the success of the event, whilst the audience, without a doubt, was one of the best we have ever played to.

As a group we believe that music and song can play an important political role in getting the message across and winning peoples' support for socialism. For this reason *Moanin' Minnies*, along with other musicians and singers, have been organising and performing at a variety of fundraising

and other events in South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire for the last eighteen months.

On Friday 6 December we shall be singing at the Red G'Zunders Christmas 'Do' at Rotherham Central Labour Club along with comedian Mike Elliott.

We would therefore welcome the support of those comrades at the Rally who expressed an interest in hearing us again, along with anyone else who lives within easy reach of Rotherham.

P.S.
Please find enclosed a cheque for £5 for 13 issues of *Militant* from two very disgruntled ex-*Tribune* readers.

Yours fraternally
Malcom Fox
Moanin' Minnies



The *Moanin' Minnies* at the 21st Anniversary Rally.

Photo: Militant

Hackney demolition—correcting 'inaccuracies'

Dear Comrades,
D Ezra's letter (*Militant* 22 November) about the demolition of Hackney's Northaird Point contains a number of factual inaccuracies. The railway line he refers to is at least 400 yards away, and the canal is virtually unused. But more importantly the contractors aimed to leave a 'pyramid structure' of about five stories, not eight stories as he states.

What was actually left when the dust cleared was 11 stories, resting on a cushion of rubble, at an angle of ten to fifteen degrees—hardly a 'slight angle'.

The structure was dangerous and a family living in a nearby bungalow had to be evacuated. I doubt very much if this was intended by the contractors.

The point is that *Militant* is not attacking the workers involved in the demolition, any more than the workers who built the flats. They too were skilled workers. It doesn't alter the fact that the flats were jerry-built by cowboy contractors out to make a fast buck, and were a nightmare for workers to live in.

It is not the workers but the profiteering building firm who are the real culprits. They are no more capable of demolishing these concrete monstrosities than they were of building decent house for working class people.

Yours fraternally
Simon Cole
Hackney South CLP

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism. Write to *Militant*, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB

Never too late to learn

Dear Comrades,
I had the privilege of campaigning with Liverpool comrades in support of the socialist Labour council.

We canvassed the home of a 76-year old widow in West Derby constituency. Naturally, we were cautious, even afraid, that this person might be a Liberal or Tory. Her clarity, and understanding of the issues shocked us.

She supported the stand of Liverpool council. She said it was the first time in her life that a council or person was elected on a programme, which after the election, proceeded to fulfill their promises made to ordinary working people.

"Promises", she said, "other politicians interested in their careers would have abandoned." She singled out Derek Hatton for taking a principled stand in providing

jobs and services on socialist policies, despite vicious attacks by the gutter press.

"Yes," she said, "I voted Tory in the last council elections and Tory in the last general election before then, but never again! What the Tories and Liberals have done to the city of Liverpool and the country, is to their eternal shame".

Since her youth she has been a member of the Tory Party, but today she is an ardent supporter of the socialist Liverpool City Council with the enthusiasm of a 15 year old football fan. At 76 years of age she has decided to join the Labour Party, and also buy *Militant*.

Marxism, I realised, has not only won the workers and youth, but it gives hope to a 76-year old ex-Tory!

Yours fraternally
A Young Socialist

Bosses block technological development

Dear Comrades,
An article in *Garden News* recently commented on the way that new technology is not being fully utilised for people's needs. The writer pointed out that new technology could provide you with a unit for your car so that your gate would open itself as you drive up, and other such useless gimmicks—but how about an electronic device to keep insect pests off your garden vegetables?

The writer pointed out this would probably be easy to devise, but that it would be unlikely to be produced as it would reduce the profits of the multinationals. The pesticides manufacturers

with multi-million pound profits would be out of business. He took his analysis to its logical conclusion but said that the trade unions were blamed for holding up technological progress. We should look elsewhere for the culprit.

It is becoming more and more obvious to everyone that the system we live under is a positive block to the development of society, we can expect more and more people to see that only socialism offers a solution to their problems.

Yours fraternally
Steve Jarvis
Gardening correspondent
Hanley

Fate of a football club

Dear Comrades,

The past season and a half has been good and bad for Cardiff City Football Club depending on your point of view. For the owners, Kenton Utilities, it has been a good couple of seasons. Cardiff City were one of the few League clubs to make a profit last season.

But for City supporters it has been a disastrous two years. From being in the top half of the Second Division, City were relegated last season and are now firmly rooted at the foot of the Third Division. City have always been relegation escape artists but there doesn't seem any prospect of getting out of it this time.

A team that used to attract crowds of over 40,000 in the 1960's and just a few years ago of over 10,000 is down to less than 2,000.

Kenton Utilities is a company from the north east who have managed to make money out of City despite falling gates. This feat has been achieved using one of the bosses' oldest tricks—asset stripping. Their concern is not football but making money.

Before the beginning of last season City had a very useful side. Now most of it has gone, sold off at a very handsome profit and

replaced by players borrowed and taken on free transfer. They have even had players on YTS playing in the first team! The youth system has been wrecked. Now there's nothing left to sell, except the club. So Kenton have put Cardiff City up for sale.

The fans are left with a team heading for the Fourth Division at the same time that the big club owners are throwing the Third and Fourth Divisions out of the Football League. So Wales, which has a team good enough to qualify for the World Cup, will have no club in the Football League due to the money-grabbing of the owners and the top clubs.

The only people with nothing to show from it all are the players and the ordinary supporters who have followed their team through thick and thin, paying for the rich to treat their club as a plaything. There is so much anger and frustration among City fans that Alan Durban, City's manager, has had to move from the dugout to the stand at Ninian Park to guarantee his own safety. The real culprits are already sitting in the stand—in the directors' box.

Yours fraternally
Dave Reid

SDP obsessed with Militant



Photo: Militant

SDP leader Shirley Williams.

Dear Comrades,

I thought you might be interested in my experience at a meeting addressed by Shirley Williams in Southampton on 5 November. I went to sell papers and then went in as the meeting began.

It was introduced by Bob Mitchell (former Labour MP now SDP renegade) his opening comment was: "Good evening ladies and gentlemen—you've seen the *Militant* Tendency tonight, and let me assure you *Militant* will have control of Southampton Labour Party within three years and when a vote is made for Labour it is a vote for *Militant*." He proceeded to mention *Militant* seven times in his opening remarks which lasted

barely ten minutes.

Shirley Williams began "We have a country in crisis—*Militant* here tonight thrive on that crisis, look at Liverpool today where the class polarisation of society is most clearly shown..." In ten minutes talk on the Labour Party, apart from references to the UDM, the AUEW ballot to take government money and a brief reference to Arthur Scargill, she talked solely of the *Militant* Tendency.

Doesn't it say volumes for our influence when a major SDP meeting of 250 people can be dominated by one theme... *Militant*.

Yours fraternally
Mike Ingram
Southampton CLP

LEFT and RIGHT

For services rendered

READERS WILL remember those fearless fighters of the National Working Miners Committee during the miners' strike. The papers were full of stories of how they would not be intimidated from their right to work. These 'ordinary blokes' are now getting their rewards. The *Daily Mirror* (21 November) reports that Colin Clarke, the committee's president has accepted redundancy along with an OBE. Meanwhile the committee's press secretary Tony Morris has been promoted to trainee personnel manager with the South Midlands coal board.

Crackshot Kinnock

LEAVING ASIDE the attacks on Liverpool and the miners, Labour leader Neil Kinnock made some stirring speeches at conference in October about internationalism, Nicaragua and South Africa. Last week however he was a guest of the Royal Regiment of Wales stationed in Germany near Hanover. He had a go in a Scimitar tank and practiced firing at Soviet tanks on a gunnery simulator. He was described as a 'fair shot'. If troops had been sent into Liverpool he could have been useful.

Sinking in the Holy See

DESPITE ITS vast material wealth, the Vatican is in trouble. The Vatican's Council for the Study of Organisational and Economic Problems of the Holy See, in discussing this year's budget, has discovered an overdraft as long as the committee's title. It is \$50 million in the red.

Engineers' ballot - defend the TUC

THE AMALGAMATED Union of Engineering Workers is holding a re-run ballot of its membership to decide whether to accept government money for ballots held by the union.

If the result is in favour of taking money for ballots, then not only will it push the AUEW down the road of greater government influence over the union's affairs, it also runs the risk of provoking a break-away TUC based on the AUEW, the EETPU and the scab break-away Nottingham miners' union.

The AUEW Executive Council took the decision to ballot its members on the issue last January. It recommended acceptance of the government offer of money for ballots back-dated to 1980.

The Executive implied that this money was for nothing, and failed to explain that taking such money was in direct conflict with TUC policy and might well result in the union's expulsion from the TUC.

Not surprisingly this scandalous misrepresentation of the position, combined with

By Dave Beale
(AUEW)

against.

Nevertheless, by June the AUEW had received its £1.2 million from the government. And by the time of the TUC conference in early September, the prospect of the AUEW's expulsion and a break-away TUC being formed was looming large.

Electricians' union leader, Eric Hammond was close to boasting about the possibilities of such a break-away, and provoked the situation further by inviting Roy Lynk, leader of the Nottinghamshire miners' break-away, to meet EETPU leaders in Blackpool during the conference week.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the airline pilots, engineers and colliery managers' unions also lined up with the AUEW and EETPU on the issue.

The outcome of September's TUC was a compromise agreement with



AUEW press conference at the TUC—the general council backed away from disciplinary action over defiance of congress policy.

once again reaffirmed overwhelmingly at the 1985 TUC conference this September.

What cannot go unnoticed is that the policy of the AUEW and EETPU leadership in favour of government money for union ballots, goes hand in hand with their support for single union deals and no strike agreements, their willingness to open the door to widespread flexibility agreements, obsessions with postal ballots as opposed to the traditional forms of participatory democracy upon which the movement was founded, and their refusal to accept any kind of class perspective as the key to understanding all these issues.

State interference

There's no longer much doubt that the AUEW and EETPU leadership will adopt any policies they can get away with if they help protect their own privileged positions.

The brake on the activities and policies of such leaders is pressure from the rank and file.

It is essential that the AUEW rank and file seize the initiative and implement themselves the agreement to explain the TUC's case against taking government money for ballots to the membership.

The TUC General Council are correct to argue that "were unions to become dependent on public funds to operate their own basic democratic procedures, it would hand the government a major lever to influence the conduct of trade unions."

"Indeed, it could put in grave peril the independence of British trade unionism and in time could lead to unions being reliant on the state".

There can be little doubt that the Tories' tactic of offering such money was carefully calculated to help split the trade union movement at a time of high unemployment, leading to reduced union membership

and serious financial difficulties for many unions.

The Tories quite clearly have one policy for fighting unions like the NUM, and another for right-wing led unions like the AUEW and EETPU, but their objective is the same for both—render them ineffective, one way or another.

What is utterly inexcusable is that the AUEW and EETPU leadership have shown open contempt for the democratic decisions of the TUC conference.

Right undemocratic

They have refused repeatedly to abide by Congress decisions on this issue, whilst they have had and still have the opportunity to campaign to change TUC policy in their favour.

It is essential that the left at every level in the union explain this point clearly to the membership, and use it to expose the sham allegiance to union democracy by the AUEW leadership.

Reject empty compromise

RESPONSIBILITY FOR the ballot money dispute reaching such serious proportions lies with the vacillation of the TUC leadership at the Congress in September.

By Ian Ilett

The AUEW at that time was torn between the wishes of its right wing leaders, backed by their earlier ballot vote, and the opposition of the AUEW National committee backed by the TUC.

The AUEW's general secretary Gavin Laird knows that the traditional democratic procedures of his union are still strong. His is still far from a company union and his members will not easily accept what the EETPU leadership can, for the moment, get away with.

Laird, backed up by others such as Grantham of APEX, was playing a more subtle game at the TUC than the EETPU's Hammond and those who have engineered the UDM split from the NUM.

The ballot money debate had become the site of a trial of strength between the right and the centre/left in the TUC.

Right and left on the TUC general council are very amorphous terms. Much of what goes on is straight power broking between union barons, with marginal political significance in

their voting.

Under the enormous pressure of Tory rule and in particular the miners' strike, a political differentiation has begun which has exacerbated internal conflicts.

Ron Todd, defending the most left policy of the larger unions, made powerful speeches at both TUC and Labour Party conferences against the right wing offensive on existing policies.

The other leading opponent of the AUEW and EETPU on the general council, however, was the GMBATU's David Basnett.

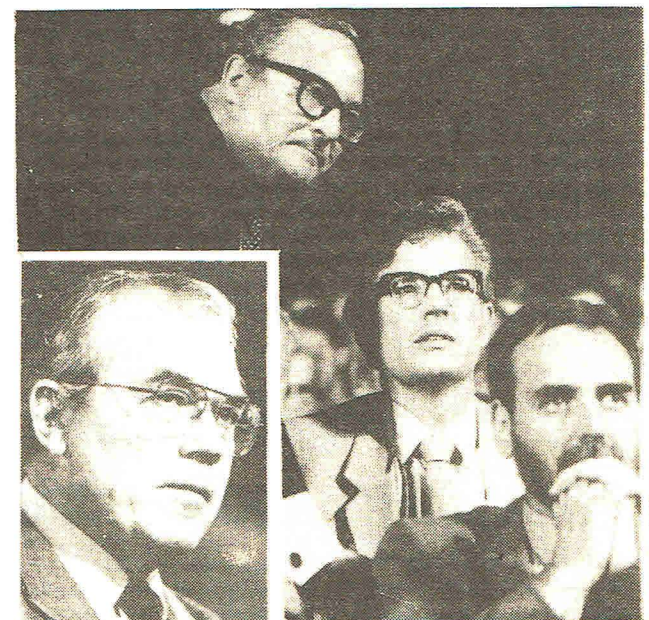
He has worked carefully over the years to carve out a 'statesmanlike' position as a man of the centre. And the GMB have no intentions of defying the government's trade union legislation to the extent of breaking the law.

Illegal

The TGWU have defied the law—and paid for it—without a fight. They have shown no intention of being prepared to launch a campaign of industrial action to back up members running foul of the law.

This is the fundamental reason why the defenders of TUC policy backed down in face of the right's intransigence.

Both they and the right know that short of all-out confrontation with the courts and the



Key figures in the power struggle—Hammond (inset), Jenkins, Bickerstaffe and Sawyer (left to right).

government they will end up accepting the Tories' legal dictat.

But the right were pushing things too fast and asserting their strength too rudely. And those who still have a policy of opposition have their members to answer to.

It is vital that the left mobilise now within all TUC affiliates to head off moves by TUC general secretary Norman Willis, report-

This should be linked to the longer term campaign to show how and why the postal ballot system is alien to the best traditions of trade union democracy.

And certainly the leadership cannot be allowed to get away with the argument that the AUEW needs the government money to finance its expensive system of postal ballots. The rank and file in the union must also expose the growing contempt of the leadership for the National Committee. All this cannot be separated from the presidential elections and the serious possibility of electing the Broad Left candidate, John Tocher.

Just as it cannot be separated from the need to transform the TUC and build a fighting leadership, so that every trade unionist knows exactly why his union is in the TUC and is prepared to fight tooth and nail to maintain that position.



Norman Willis—his balancing act will play into the hands of the Tories.
Photo: Militant

difficulties of rank and file debate in the union's postal ballot system, brought about a big majority in favour of taking the money.

The AUEW leadership had done this without consulting the union's National Committee, the policy-making body. Such was the anger of many sections of the union that when the National Committee did meet in April this year, even one leading right wing delegate pilloried the Executive for "sharp practice and unconstitutional behaviour".

Opposition

Finally, the National Committee agreed a compromise with the Executive, instructing the latter "not to seek or participate in the funding of the postal ballots from the Tory government", but at the same time a new ballot would be held stating the arguments for and

the AUEW Executive Council.

This was based on a re-run ballot to be held in November—but making provision this time for the TUC's case against government funds for ballots to be made clear to the membership as well as explaining the consequences of AUEW suspension from the TUC.

In light of the record of the Executive Council on this issue, many trade unionists will be watching the leadership's implementation of this agreement very closely.

The TUC's position is based on clause 3 of the TUC special Wembley Conference of 1982, which states clearly that "Affiliated unions shall observe Congress policy and not seek or accept public funds for union ballots under the Employment Act 1980 ballot funds scheme".

In fact, this policy was first agreed at the 1980 TUC conference. And it was also

edly unopposed by TUC chair, Ken Gill of TASS, to use the TUC as a post box for government money in an effort to patch up a compromise.

Such proposals do not affect the fundamental objections to state interference in union affairs one jot—or break the impetus of the Tories and the trade union right wing towards compulsory postal ballots.

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

Leeds teachers link struggle

NUT MEMBERS at Foxwood school in Leeds, with the largest membership in the city, have turned to other workers for support in the present dispute.

We are keen to link up with other trade unionists, particularly in the public sector, with a view not only to winning this struggle, but preparing for others in the future.

As well as all the usual activities such as leafletting in shopping centres, organising letters to Keith Joseph, etc, we have used our half-day strikes to approach miners, water workers and bus workers.

The response has been very sympathetic, the main criticism being the piecemeal and erratic nature of our action.

Parents have said: "If you stop messing about and just come out on strike we'd know where we stand!". Many of the miners and water workers felt that after ten months we should be taking more decisive action.

The NUT rep has addressed a meeting of water workers at a depot in Leeds, and we are optimistic that a similar meeting will be held by the TGWU busworkers' branch.

Some of the water workers seemed a little surprised that

a teacher should come and address them in this way, but once it was clear that it was a question of one group of trade unionists seeking support from another, the response was very good.

One question raised was about the hostility between the leaders of the NUT and the NAS/UWT at national level.

We were already aware of the need to build upon the unity which is naturally developing at rank and file level, and persuade our leaderships to avoid the traps Joseph has laid for them.

We are pushing for joint mass meetings of both unions, to win the claim for a minimum £1,200 increase for all teachers.

At the next general meeting of the Leeds NUT we will be seeking support for the stand of Liverpool City council, and the stepping up of our action, to involve indefinite strikes in some secondary schools, and a levy on members in the others schools.

By Terry Wilson
(NUT Rep,
Foxwood School)



South Manchester—lobby of Area Health Authority meeting to try and stop services being put out to private tender.

SILENTNIGHT demo, Victory Park, Barnoldswick, Lancs. 30 November 10.30am. Speakers Dennis Skinner MP, Bob Cryer MEP.

Liverpool postal strike

LIVERPOOL POST offices returned to work last Saturday after a week on strike against the introduction of flexible working.

Head Postmaster Eric Lawson exposed the basis of the dispute with the recent comment: "A postman is a postman, and will do what I want and go where I tell him".

The workers are very angry at the outright sabotage of the dispute by the UCW national leadership. At a mass meeting last Wednesday, national official

John Taylor denounced the strike as being politically motivated in support of Liverpool City Council!

Some workers marched out of the meeting shouting: "We are not going back", after a vote was declared to favour a return to work by a tiny majority of ten, even though 40 workers were under official instructions to remain on picket duty.

The Liverpool Amalgamated branch remained on strike and organised effective mass pickets at the Copperas Hill main office. UCW general secretary Alan Tuffin circulated a

disgraceful letter to all branches instructing all members to co-operate in the handling of Liverpool's mail.

Against these odds it wasn't surprising that Saturday's vote was heavily in favour of a return to work. However, there was no sense of demoralisation after the mass meeting. Instead, as one postman commented: "We won't be going back with our heads down".

The experience of the strike underlines the importance of the Broad Left campaign for a democratic, fighting leadership that genuinely represents the interests of the membership.

By Brian Beckingham

Benn speaks at successful local health service Broad Left meeting

ON THURSDAY 21 November, at Greenwich Borough Hall, over 100 people, predominantly NHS workers, attended a public meeting of the Greenwich NHS Broad Left.

Dave Shield (Hammersmith and Fullham Health Emergency) spoke of the appalling situation in London, particularly the developments at Neasden geriatric hospital (closure imminent), where workers are occupying the building, recent developments in Bloomsbury Health Authority, and the critical emergency bed-state.

Attacks

Sylvia Burton, Chair of Addenbrookes strike committee outlined the situation at Addenbrookes after 14 months of strike action.

Laura Trench, secretary, Greenwich NHS Broad Left, gave a detailed account of the unparalleled destruction of NHS facilities within Greenwich Health Authority.



Tony Benn speaking at Greenwich NHS broad left meeting.

She described the closure of the British Hospital for mothers and babies, the recently announced closure of the National Seaman's Hospital, the reduction in beds at the district isolation unit from 12 to 4, so-called 'temporary' ward closures, the threat to St Nicholas' Hospital, the threat of closing the neurosciences unit at the Brook Hospital—preparing the way for total closure. All that on top of the spectre of private tender. She also explained the aims of the Greenwich NHS Broad Left.

Tony Benn MP began by congratulating the Broad Left and giving support. He spoke at length about the need for an organised fightback, using the potential power who have within our grasp.

The Greenwich NHS BL, set up in July with six supporters had grown to 15 prior to the public meeting now has over 40 supporters.

By K.G. Spearpoint
(COHSE Branch 843 personal capacity)

Vital Transport union elections

ELECTIONS FOR the GEC of the TGWU are taking place amid hysteria from the Fleet Street press.

The two victories of Ron Todd in the general secretary elections have meant the maintenance of the left at the top of the T&G.

The policies passed at this year's bi-annual conference, including the 35-hour week, minimum wage, represent a major step forward in the battle for a decent future for TGWU members.

The desire for unity to defeat the Tories and get a

Labour government elected was evident when the majority of delegates voted against a return to the days of Deakinism, in rejecting witch-hunts against *Militant* supporters.

In the light of these attacks the message to the left is quite clear. There can be no complacency.

The left need to campaign more openly and boldly to counter the lies of the Tories, their media and the right wing.

The GEC elections in particular, take on crucial importance in maintaining the

left policies of the union. The right cannot be allowed to make gains.

Militant urges all members of the TGWU to vote for the left candidates and recommends the following names know to us as the best able to take the union forward.

Region 1: Stan Laurence, Peter Fuzzy.

Region 5: I. Platt, Roy Shirlock.

Region 6: Eddie Prestley, Alan Quinn.

Region 7: Dan Duffey.

By Ian Parker

South Shields French connection

FOLLOWING A secret ballot on 16 September, 160 members of the National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers have been on strike over their demand for union recognition. At present no production workers are going in.

The contracts company, which is a subsidiary of French Connection, has refused to recognise the union since February 1985 even though there have been over 100 members of NUTGW in the factory since it opened in July 1984. No shop steward is allow-

ed to operate within the factory and a number of workers have been sacked since the dispute began. The company has further attempted to intimidate the strikers by advertising their jobs and spreading rumours of factory closure.

Recognition

On 1 November strikers decided unanimously to refuse to meet management until the issue of recognition was given first place on any agenda.

Shop steward Jane Kingland told us: "We have

a basic human right to join a union. We cannot and will not let that right go by default." Excellent donations have been made by, for example, the workers of the nearby Westoe pit.

The campaign has been taken to other subsidiaries of FC and to shop workers who distribute those goods.

Donations should be made payable to NUTGW and sent to Contracts Dispute Fund, c/o NUS Building, Coronation Street, South Shields, Tyne and Wear.

By JN Marshall

Manchester council shop stewards

A CAMPAIGN has been launched amongst shop stewards in Manchester City Council to form a Joint Shop Stewards' Committee.

At the first meeting of the campaign, stewards from NUPE, NALGO and UCATT decided to take up the idea in their own and other council unions.

We believe that Manchester's record of defending jobs and services will put it in the forefront of Tory at-

tacks next year and therefore a JSSC would be invaluable in bringing together workers across the unions and linking up with the council.

Currently there is just a loose forum of the trade union leadership which does not really involve stewards and grassroots workers.

A UCATT steward reported that a Direct Works' Stewards meeting had supported the idea of a JSSC and that the North West Region of UCATT have

agreed to support and encourage the formation of JSSCs in local authorities.

We hope to build on this, and the support from many shop stewards in all the trade unions, to pull a JSSC together to represent all local authority workers in the struggle against cuts and privatisation.

By Margaret Manning
(Manchester NALGO,
personal capacity)

Marxist candidate for miners' president

South Wales miners' election hots up

THE CAMPAIGN to elect a new president of the South Wales area of the NUM, described by retiring president Emlyn Williams as: "The most important election ever in South Wales mining history," is hotting up.

The question of leadership in the mining industry is now crucial, as the NCB pursues its programme of pit closures.

Nine pits have already been closed in South Wales since the strike. As a result of their experiences as the only pit in the South Wales coalfield to campaign against closure and take the fight to the NCB, St Johns lodge of the NUM have nominated their secretary, Militant supporter Ian Isaac, for the presidency.

His election literature clearly spells out the policies the lodge has implemented in their fight back. Isaac argues for full involvement of the rank and file of the union against the run-down of the mining industry, keeping the members up to date with all the necessary facts and arguments through regular

meetings and rallies to counter the board's lies and distortions.

As president, he would organise for each pit in the area, as he has for St Johns, an independent geologist's report to arm every member against NCB propaganda, and also provide economic data and analysis to expose how the management cook the books and starve pits of investment.

Enthusiasm

The involvement of rank and file members in St Johns' fight against closure has been reflected in the election campaign itself, where teams of committee men and ordinary members of the lodge have enthusiastically leafleted every pit in the coalfield, discussing the issues with the men.

Posters and stickers have also been produced and distributed by the St Johns men and pit-head meetings are being arranged wherever

possible. Already the campaign has had an enormous impact among the rank and file miners.

St Johns is recognised throughout the coalfield as "The pit that fought against closure" and the lodge's decision to nominate Isaac was made on the basis that even if the pit was lost they were determined to win the presidency to ensure that no other pit would have to go through their experience of isolation.

Ian Isaac's campaign and his determination to carry on fighting the pit closures have given new heart to many miners in South Wales who had become disillusioned with the lack of initiative and activity shown by the area leadership.

As one miner from Lady Windsor colliery put it: "At least somebody is doing something to fight the closures."

One of the charges levelled by the EC at Isaac has been that of, "outside in-

terference" in the election campaign. However, the only real "outside interference" in the election noticed by miners in the area was last week's television intervention by Neil Kinnock—declaring his long standing friendship with another candidate, Terry Thomas.

Unfortunately for Terry Thomas, Kinnock's role in the strike has not yet faded from the memory of South Wales miners. As one miner put it: "Neil's support must have lost Terry a thousand votes."

Policies

The third candidate in the election, Des Dutfield, has a reputation as a good trade unionist for his role in past struggles. However, to date there has been no statement from him about his policies or any strategy to fight pit closures.

As one miner from Abercynon said "I've always respected Des but Ian Isaac is the only candidate to put



Ian Isaac, standing for South Wales miners' president.

forward any real strategy about fighting pit closures. Now that I've heard Ian I'll definitely be voting for him."

Philip White, Ian Isaac's election organiser, said he is surprised at the lengths to which some lodge committees have gone in their attempts to prevent Isaac meeting the rank and file in the canteens and pit heads.

This has taken the form of lodge committee decisions that for any candidate to be granted permission to address meetings all three candidates must previously have intimated that they wish to speak.

This effectively means that Isaac, whose campaign has been based on meeting the

rank and file, has been prevented from doing so by the apparent desire of the other candidates for a low-key campaign.

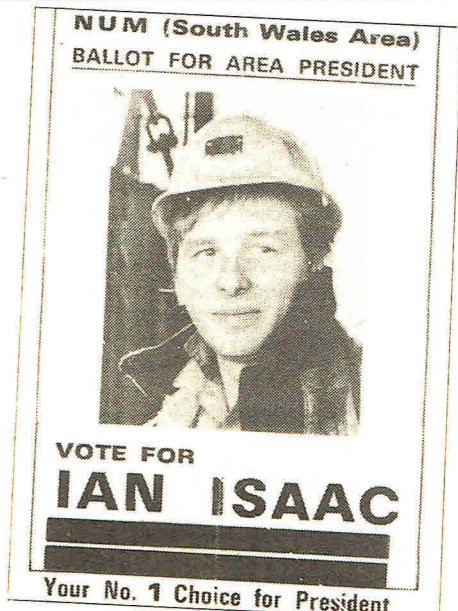
New spirit

Whatever the outcome of the election the St John's election campaign has sparked off a new discussion of the issues facing South Wales miners.

It has rekindled some of the fighting spirit shown during the strike—reflected in the growing demands among rank and file miners for an active, campaigning Broad Left in the NUM.

By Kevin Miles

Miners' president on a miner's wage controversy



Before and after—leaflets amended after South Wales executive threatened to disqualify Ian Isaac for featuring his commitment to be a miners' president on a miner's wage.

ONE ASPECT of Ian Isaac's campaign which has captured the imagination of many miners is his pledge to draw only the average wage of a face worker.

The popularity of this principled stand may well be the real reason why the executive council has seen fit to censor Isaac's election leaflet by deleting the slogan "A miners' president on a miners' wage".

Phillip White, compensation secretary of St John's

lodge explained to *Militant* how the lodge envisaged the principle being implemented:

"As Ian explains in his election leaflet, he will draw the £19,500 salary of the president in accordance with the area rules, but then set an example, as part of our campaign for rates of pay comparable with those of our members, by taking for himself only the average wage of a South Wales miner."

"This will be based on the

figures supplied by the NCB to the DHSS every six months. The lodge committee agreed that the remainder should be paid into a new president's fund which will be overseen by a rank and file scrutineer from every lodge.

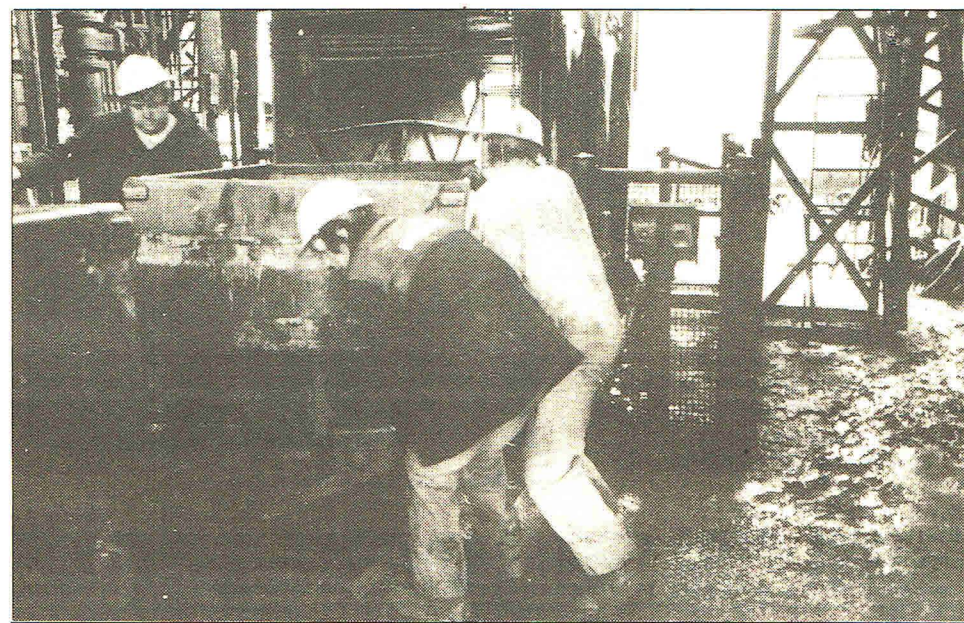
"The fund will be used, on application to help causes of the labour movement, especially in mining areas, and to assist campaigns and schemes of benefit to the mining industry."

Welsh miners involved in the pit-head occupation in Staffordshire is especially resented.

But it is the question of developing a battle against pit closures and job losses that is uppermost in the minds of the rank and file.

Many commented on the lack of leadership shown from area level in the face of many pit closures since the end of the national dispute.

St John's vote shows the need for national campaign against closures



Life at St Johns pit, now it faces closure.

THE MEMBERSHIP of St Johns NUM have voted by a narrow majority at a general meeting against recommendations of the lodge committee that would have allowed any man wishing to transfer or take redundancy to do so, whilst reiterating the lodge's commitment to have its case heard under the new modified review procedure.

The lodge committee decided to put this recommendation forward in the aftermath of management scuttling the S12 section of the colliery, rendering 160 men surplus to manpower requirements.

Through the union the lodge requested extra power to supply the district six weeks ago.

They were promised that an examination would be conducted accordingly. This did not transpire and the section was closed using the excuse of insufficient electrical power.

Following this, increasing pressure was exerted by local management on the workforce.

The NCB stepped up this campaign of rumour and scare mongering. In particular a letter from area HQ to the colliery general manager was duplicated and distributed to every man in order to play on genuine fears about benefit entitlement in 1986. A carrot of £800 transfer money before Christmas was also used.

Set-back

This vote represents a serious setback for the NUM nationally. St Johns was the only pit in South Wales actively fighting against closure. They have been an inspiration to mineworkers throughout the British coalfield.

They were the first to set-up a community action committee to involve the labour

and trade union movement and the local community, and the first to hold an independent public enquiry, drawing experts to challenge the board on their own terms. They were also instrumental in organising a rank and file conference against pit closures which brought together miners from 12 pits.

The lodge leadership have always been aware that the struggle of one pit in isolation is not enough. Victory can only be guaranteed on the basis of linking up threatened pits in a rank and file campaign co-ordinated through the national union.

The positive aspects of the St Johns struggle must now be taken up by the NUM leadership and by the rank and file up and down the British coalfield.

By Chris Herriot

Fight for amnesty

THE MINERS' Amnesty Campaign have held two successful meetings in the South Wales coalfield on the twin issues of stop pit closures—reinstated sacked miners.

The meetings were addressed by Ian Isaac, lodge secretary St Johns NUM and Chris Herriot a sacked miner from Monktonhall. Some

8,000 leaflets and 500 posters were distributed and displayed throughout the area.

The rank and file are very bitter at the victimisation that has taken place and they are looking for a determined response from the union on the issue. The recent industrial tribunal's decision against the reinstatement of

Militant

South Wales miners' elections — Page 15

Save the fire service

THOUSANDS OF fire fighters will be meeting in Manchester on Thursday. They are fighting for their jobs and the vital service they provide. Andy Darke of Chelsea fire station explains the issues:

by Andy Darke
(Chelsea FBU, personal capacity)

THE HOME Office has recently announced two directives which will have serious consequences on manning in all fire brigades.

A recruitment freeze is planned in four metropolitan authorities and inadequate budgets are to be drawn up for the joint boards in Manchester, London, Sheffield and Liverpool. Both are effective from 1 April.

The FBU has called a series of demonstrations in all the affected areas: starting in Manchester on 28 November and ending in London with a lobby of Parliament.

The restricted budget will

mean job losses. Many will be swallowed up by natural wastage, accommodated by the recruitment freeze. Some fire brigades may be made redundant.

However the prospect of a national strike in line with annual conference policy may persuade the employers to avoid sackings.

But any failure to defeat these job losses will be the chequered flag to the employers for future attacks.

The budgets make no

allowance for the wage rises due in November, determined by the upper quartile pay agreement—the result of the nine week strike in 1977/78. The employers undoubtedly want the pay agreement scrapped.

The employers already have plans to downgrade the shift system at fire stations in certain areas from whole-time manned to day-manned or wholetime/retained. (In other words fewer full time firefighters on fire stations for a full 24 hour period.)

Intensive campaign

The employers will see nothing to stop them attacking everything from annual issues of uniform to the non-essential work at stations perhaps bringing back station cleaning etc.

It is imperative therefore

that these demonstrations be fully supported by the membership. However, demonstrations on their own will not turn the government from their course.

The opportunity must be taken between now and April to initiate an intensive campaign to explain the issues, short term and long term, in detail.

This should be complemented by a campaign directed at the public to inform them of the dangers of cuts in the budgets and fire cover, whether it be cuts in appliances, longer minimum times to reach an incident, worsened training, less equipment etc.

This must lead to a series of national one-day strikes, and if necessary an all-out strike, should the demonstrations fail to halt the Home Office's plans.



Firemen march in Manchester in the 1977/78 strike. Their gains—and more—are now at risk.

Photo: John Sturrock (Report III)

Maxwell starts Fleet St war

MIRROR PICKETS blocked Robert Maxwell's attempts to print the *Daily Mirror* without them on Monday. The 30,000 print run only got as far as the rail stations and then was stopped.

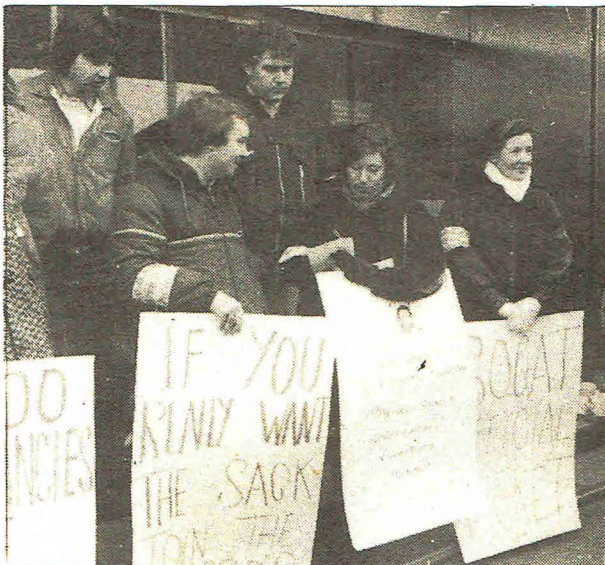
Propped up against the wall of the Holborn Circus site the clerical chapel of SOGAT '82 had photos of Maxwell with the caption: "See no reason, tell no lies, his head is way up in the skies."

Maxwell was forced to drop the redundancy notices issued to SOGAT '82 members. But negotiations will now take place over his demand for 2,000 jobs to go from his 6,000 workforce.

Mirror Group Newspapers are now selling 2.7m less newspapers than a year ago. There have been newspaper reports that MGN faces a loss of £20m to £25 million this year.

But all print workers on Fleet Street face the same threat to jobs as those on the Mirror Group. Every major owner has plans to move to new plants within the next few years.

Murdoch's News International group has a brand new plant ready and waiting in Wapping, reportedly being



Outside the *Mirror* HQ on 25 November.

Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)

manned at present by scab labour from the Southampton area, in preparation for a move from Fleet Street.

- ★ No selling of jobs
- ★ United union approach
- ★ Mass meetings throughout the industry, prepare for action.
- ★ Rank and file pressure on all the print union leaders to resist blackmail or divisive tactics by the bosses. Stand firm!
- ★ Resist legal blackmail

- ★ Appeal to the TUC to honour section five of the Wembley agreement—for solidarity action in defence of any union under attack
- ★ National blacking of the companies of any Fleet Street proprietor breaking agreements with the unions
- ★ Prepare for immediate one-day national print strike and mass picketing to shut down any plant to which a Fleet Street title is moved without union agreement.

Liverpool defiant

Continued from page one

party's socialist policies. Kinnock, Blunkett and the leadership are dancing their tune.

Yet they know they could not get away with a mass purge which would lead to a civil war in the Labour Party's ranks. Instead they will use the enquiry for an underhand organisational attack on the democratic rights of the Liverpool party and the influence of Liverpool *Militant* supporters.

Enthusiasm

Labour Party members will find it incredible that one of their complaints is that the District Labour Party has "too many" trade union delegates. Those trade unionists were democratically elected to the DLP by their branches—the high number is the result of the enthusiasm for the council's fight generated by the magnificent campaign.

Last week's DLP meeting saw 900 delegates and visitors attend—what other party in the country can show such a high level of rank and file participation?

In Liverpool, all policies

put forward by the council are first put before the representative DLP before implementation. The leadership want to stamp out this fine example of rank and file control before it spreads to other areas of the country.

The leadership are trying to disguise their action with dark mutterings about 'Militant conspiracies and plots', all seized upon with glee by the Tory press. Yet even *The Guardian* has admitted that *Militant* supporters do not have 'numerical control' over either the city council or the Constituency Labour Parties. What has frightened the leadership—and behind them big business—is that *Militant's* policies have received the backing of the ranks of the movement—and Liverpool Labour Party's democratic processes have meant they have been carried out. They know the Liverpool example will be

repeated throughout the rest of the country.

The leadership's action will not be confined to Liverpool. In Knowsley North, the NEC has voted to suspend the Parliamentary reselection procedure. If the selection procedure remains suspended after 9 June, under Labour Party rules, reselection will be abandoned. It will be a backdoor way of letting Kilroy Silk off the hook. (See page seven)

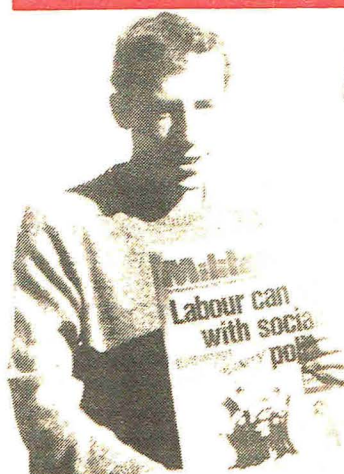
Interference

The inquiry is direct interference by the leadership into the democratic rights of Labour Party members. It is an attack on those who have stood by socialist policies. The leadership must be met by a furore of opposition, not just from Liverpool but by the ranks of the movement throughout the country.

Garston Labour Party reject witch-hunt

GARSTON Constituency Labour Party has voted with only two against to oppose an enquiry into the Liverpool District Labour Party, which they say "will encourage a witch-hunt against good party members".

Three of the most prominent councillors, Derek Hutton, Tony Byrne and Tony Mulhearn, represent Garston wards. The party also agreed to donate £50 to the *Militant* Fighting Fund.



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