

Labour can win with socialist policies

WITH WORKERS facing the most serious assault on jobs and living standards since the war, with the Tories riding roughshod over trade union and democratic rights, it was a disgrace that the Labour Party leader, Neil Kinnock, chose to declare war on a part of the labour movement.

All those Press barons who support the Tory Party in one general election after another, are now crowing with satisfaction, not to say glee, at the speeches he made.

In his attacks upon the labour movement of Liverpool and upon the miners, he showed utter contempt for the struggle of ordinary working people for their jobs and their livelihoods.

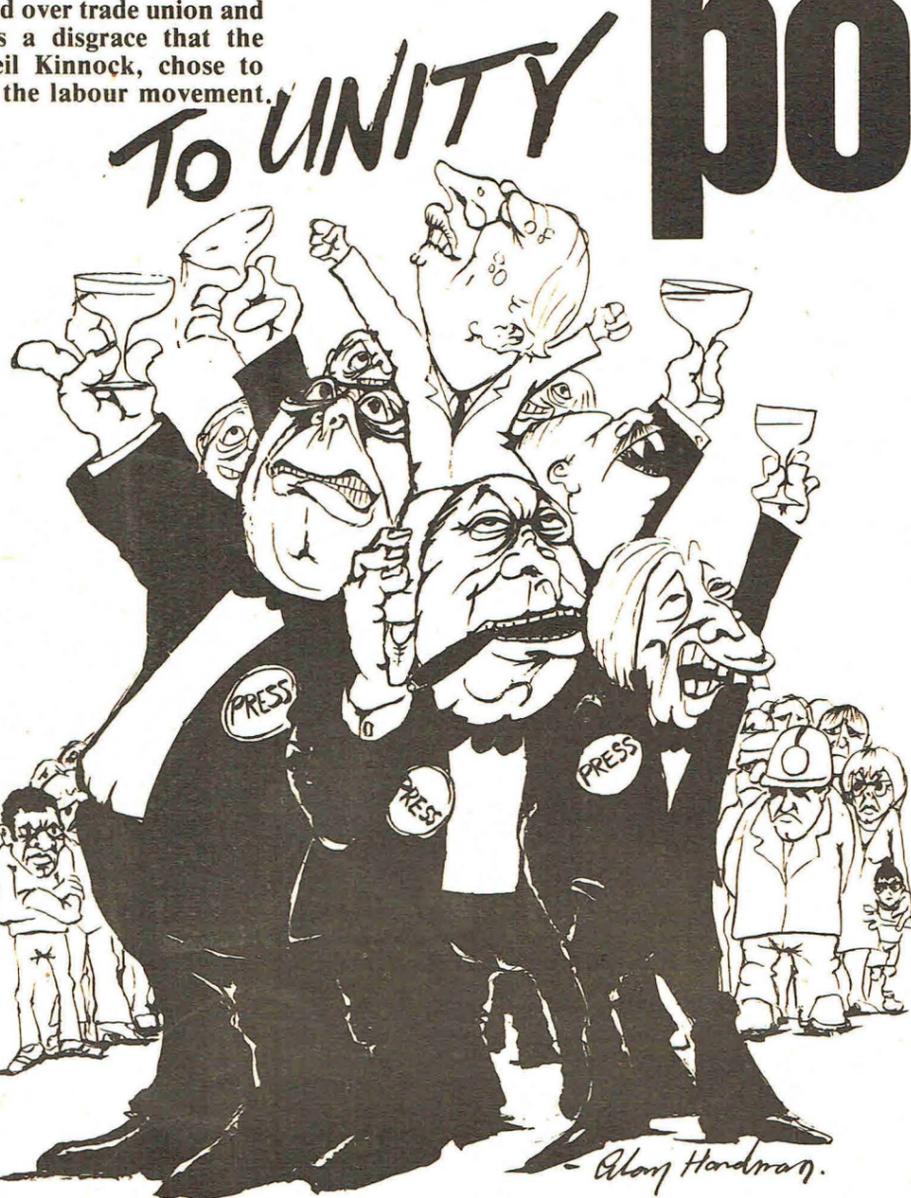
It is all very well to talk, as he did, about "opportunities" and about helping our "own people", but when workers *do* take up a fight for their rights and for a decent life, they deserve the backing of the leadership, not kicks in the teeth.

The Labour Party conference this week has addressed itself to all the horrendous problems facing workers as a result of the Tories' policies. Unemployment has more than trebled. Whole industries and regions have been laid waste. Trade union and democratic rights in general have been savaged. Massive cuts have sliced into the health, education and welfare services used by working people.

Time after time, clear calls came out of the conference for the next Labour government to redress the balance, to restore the cuts and to fight as hard for workers as the Tories do for their own class.

What was so disgraceful about Neil Kinnock's speech was the way he treated the conference and the Labour Party membership as irrelevant and, in effect, addressed his remarks to the Press. His speech was a futile attempt to appease the Press barons whose only interest is to prevent a Labour victory and demoralise Labour's ranks. It was a snub to the hundreds of thousands of honest, hard working Labour Party members who put him where he is and whose views are reflected in the conference.

Moreover, the speech and the 'Presidential' style will not win an election. Unless



the rank and file of the party are enthusiastically mobilised to fight an election, they will not be able to go out to the mass and convince them.

His attack on Liverpool council in his main speech was a scandal, deliberately distorting the question of the 90 day notices. In Liverpool there is a District Labour Party and a Labour group fighting to keep jobs and to build homes.

It is not "playing politics with peoples' jobs" for those 49 councillors to put their own livelihoods at risk, as they have done. It is not empty "rhetoric" or "posturing" for the council

to build homes and create jobs as they have done.

It is unforgivable for the Labour leadership to kick Liverpool in the face, after the record they have built up and after the courageous stand they have taken.

Neither Neil Kinnock nor John Cunningham the day after would offer an acceptable alternative to Liverpool's strategy. John Cunningham, Shadow Environment Minister, let the cat out of the bag when he clearly hinted that "two or three thousand" Liverpool jobs would have to go. When David Blunkett offered a way out "without cuts and without cutting the housing

programme," Kinnock pointedly refused to applause, unlike the majority of conference.

Neil Kinnock's contempt for Liverpool was only matched by his contempt for the National Union of Mineworkers, in his speech the following day.

The newspapers have fallen over themselves to congratulate Kinnock on the keynote speech, describing it as a 'watershed' in Labour history. He has been compared to Hugh Gaitskell, right-wing Labour leader of the fifties, who fought in the party against unilateral nuclear disarmament.

(Continued on page 4)

55 per cent back Labour in Liverpool

Third National Rally
The first programme of addresses

21st Militant

Back miners amnesty
Support Liverpool council

Sunday 3rd November 1985
Royal Albert Hall
LONDON SW7
12-6pm

*Derek Hatton
(Deputy leader, Liverpool City Council)

*Jack Collins
(General Secretary, KNU)

*Harry De Boer
(Leader of Historic Mineworkers General Strike USA 1934)

*Ted Grant (Political Editor, Militant) *Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant)

Labour to power on a socialist programme

Tickets £3

Militant Third National Rally

21st Year celebration

Sunday 3 November, 1985

Royal Albert Hall, London SW7

All tickets £3 (Cheques to "Militant Rally")
(Crèche available, but places must be booked)

Doors open 11am

Kinnock slanders Labour fighters

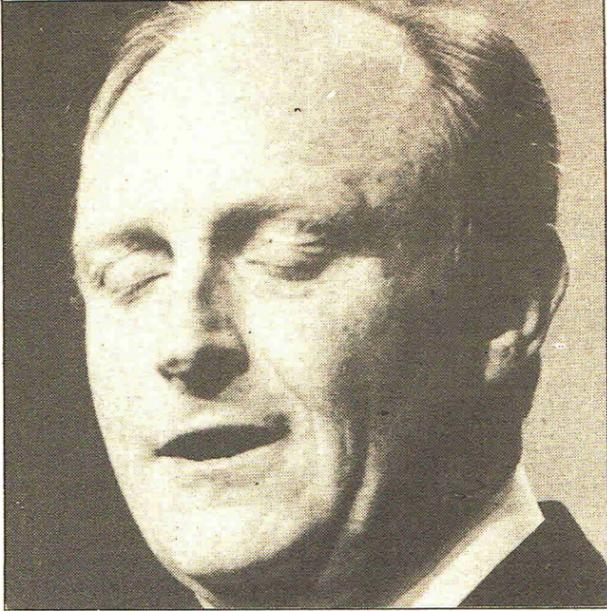
MR KINNOCK had been doing so well. To silence in the conference hall he tore into the Tory destruction of the economy. Then he trod on a mine, when he made his disgraceful attack on the Liverpool councillors. In a split second the conference hall was transformed from attentive silence into uproar. The boos and shouts changed to roars of approval when a furious Eric Heffer stormed off the stage.

Afterwards many angry delegates stormed out of the conference hall. Heated discussions took place in the conference bars and foyers. Right-wing MP Joe Ashton gave a TV interview and to the incredulity of onlookers said that Kinnock's speech had been excellent but had been marred only by a 'handful' of extremists.

When delegates and visitors challenged him he was reduced to shouting abuse back at them. One angry NUM delegate told *Militant*: "Get this in your paper—Kinnock sold the miners down the river and now he's selling out Liverpool and Lambeth".

For many delegates Kinnock's outburst was a blow to the unity of the party. He had been praising the 'freedom struggles' in Nicaragua and South America but the test came when he moved closer to home.

In his usual style he would not name names but made tenuous remarks which everyone knew were about Liverpool and Lambeth. Without explanation he derided Liverpool, not naming them of course, for



Neil Kinnock—attacked fighting socialists but grovelled to the Tory Press.

delivering "redundancy" notices by taxi and "posturing with people's jobs". He said first and foremost they should "defend jobs and services". The delegates' fury was because that is exactly what the Liverpool and Lambeth councillors are fighting for. It is not "posturing" to be surcharged and have the threat of bankruptcy, your home taken away and be debarred from public office.

Principles

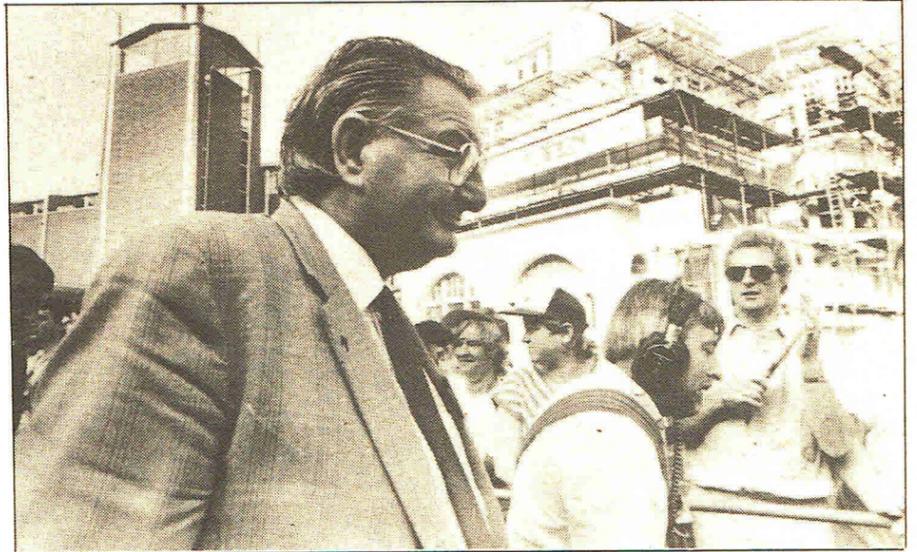
Kinnock talked about "principled socialist policies"—the Liverpool and Lambeth councillors are putting principles before personal interest.

It was not just the dishonesty of Kinnock on the Liverpool issue that angered delegates, but the shock that within just a few words Kinnock had

destroyed the unity that the party had shown over the past few days.

The leaders of the Liverpool labour movement were quick to respond. Tony Mulhearn, president of the District Labour Party told *Militant*: "It was an outrageous statement to make against councillors who are fighting to defend jobs and services. Kinnock has marked himself out as the most divisive party leader since Ramsey MacDonald".

John Hamilton leader of the Liverpool City Council said: "Kinnock had provoked discord where there should have been unity". Derek Hatton, Deputy Leader said: "The council and the Joint Shop Stewards' had repeatedly explained that the redundancy—or more accurately the 90-day notices—are a tactic with which to fight the Tory lock-



Eric Heffer caused a sensation by leaving the platform when Kinnock launched his spiteful tirade against Liverpool council. Dozens of delegates left the hall and about a third applauded the Liverpool delegation.

out. Kinnock has played right into the hands of the capitalist press".

In his speech Kinnock spoke how the achievements of the labour movement had helped him, along with a million other workers. It had achieved the right to decent housing—that is the main plank of the Liverpool council's fight to build new council homes. Kinnock spoke of how he had been given the chance of an education—but Liverpool are fighting for further education. It will be the first section to go if Liverpool lose their fight against the Tories.

Contempt

Kinnock contemptuously accused Liverpool and Lambeth—though not naming them of course—of "barking instead of biting". But Liverpool and Lambeth, by staying firm with the

socialist policies they were elected on, and with a mandate from the local people, are biting hard at the Tory government.

That is why the Tories, their press, the establishment and now the Labour leadership are pouring abuse on their heads. It is where Labour councillors have "barked"—giving off flowery rhetoric, but bowing down to Tory pressure to cut jobs and services—that has resulted in support falling away from Labour.

Kinnock said Labour must achieve "victory with its policies intact". In effect what he and Roy Hattersley before him are saying is: "Don't make any promises, then it won't look bad when we break them". If this is so then inevitably a Labour government would end up patching up capitalism like the previous Callaghan administration, rather than

push through socialist policies and transform society.

The Kinnock lie is that radical socialism is unpopular. After lecturing Liverpool and Lambeth about "principles" he said in effect—"Keep quiet about socialism, get Labour elected". Yet the fact is that when the movement takes a principled stand its support grows. Liverpool Labour Party—in the eye of the storm—is growing in support.

Labour's national standing has gone up since the magnificent stand of the miners. The Liverpool and Lambeth issues follow the miners as a major test for the Labour leadership. Unfortunately Kinnock and the Labour leadership have failed that test.

By Bob Wade in Bournemouth

Cash vital for legal costs

JAMES WHITE, right-wing Labour MP for Glasgow Pollok, has dropped his libel action against *Militant* over our report in February 1983 of a dispute in his vehicle-delivery firm. *Militant* has not in any way retracted its report, which we believe was true. Nor have the editors apologised to White.

Nevertheless, in spite of having a very strong case and in spite of the settlement, we face a bill for our own legal costs of at least £10,000.

In February 1983 *Militant* reported the case of low-paid T&GWU members employed by White at Glasgow Car Collection Ltd.

We still believe that we were totally justified in supporting the workers involved, and publicising their case to the wider labour movement.

White was offered the right of reply in *Militant*, but did not take up the offer. Instead, he pursued his libel action.

We were advised that we had a very strong defence. However, to brief barristers to present our case in court we would have had to put up £25,000 in advance. This was just our own costs for a trial!

Legal Aid is not available for libel cases.

If we had gone to trial and won the case, we would of course have recovered our costs. But the barristers warned us that the court would probably be strongly biased against a socialist newspaper like *Militant*.

Although a jury decides on defamation, the judge decides on points of law and we were warned there was a risk that he could decide adversely on certain issues, swing the odds heavily against us.

Additional pressure was put on *Militant* by the fact that the *Glasgow Herald* which was also being sued by White for similar reports, paid into the High Court £3,500—in effect, admitting that they were not putting up a full defence. This was done without consultation with *Militant*. Whites solicitors approached *Militant* to discuss an out-of-court settlement.

No retraction

Militant has not apologised. We have not in any way retracted our report. White will be making a unilateral statement in court which points this out. But faced with the phenomenal cost of going to trial, we decided that we had no choice, from the point of view of the best interests of the paper, but to agree to a settlement.

Nevertheless, we believe that *Militant* is being heavily penalised for printing the truth. Unless we get the necessary cash within the next four weeks, we will suffer from this serious depletion of our resources.

This is an outrage! Because we couldn't afford to pay lawyers, we are

thousands to present our case in court, *Militant* is being deprived of finances. Unless this is made up, essential resources for the development of the paper and especially for supporting the fight led by Liverpool City Council against Tory cuts will be undermined.

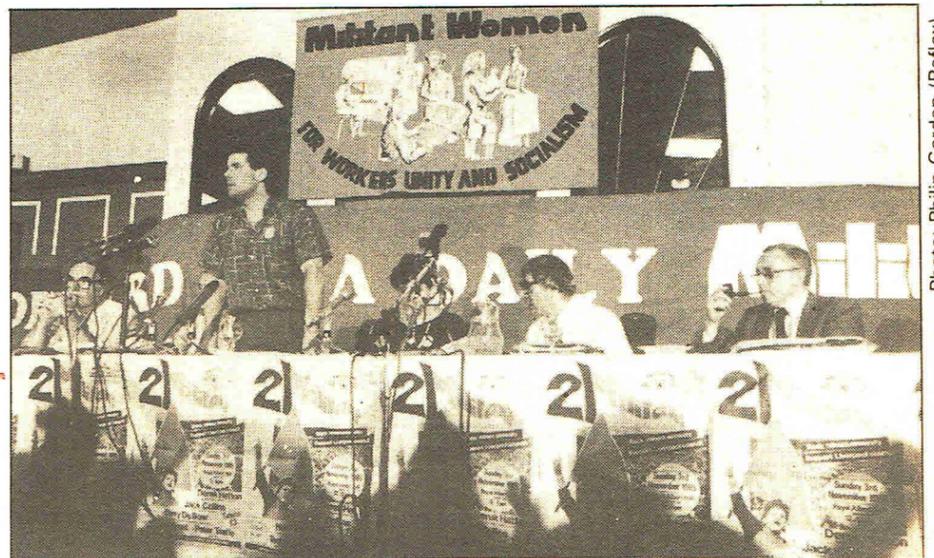
We are therefore urgently appealing to all trade unionists, Labour Party members and Young Socialists to donate generously to our Defence Fund.

Send donations to: Militant Defence Fund, 5 Cremer House, Deptford Church Street, London SE8 4SB.

"Defend *Militant*—The Right to speak the truth" Stickers: £1 per 100 plus p&p. Available now from "Militant Defence Fund," 5 Cremer House, Deptford Church Street, London SE8 4SB.

DONATIONS RECEIVED this week include: £65 from GL Knell; £25 from Abercorn Branch LP; Paisley; £10 from Pollokshields/Shawlands LP, Glasgow; £13.90 raised from a collection at ASTMS A199 branch, Bradford; £6 from Motherwell South LPYS and £5 Leith LPYS; £7.70 collected by readers in South London from TGWU members at Battersea Bus Garage; £6.60 collected by readers in Newham South Labour Party; Shepherds Bush AUEW 35 SE branch passed a resolution of support and donated £5; £5 from Rodney Ballard, Gedling NUM, and £5.89 raised at Derby College of Higher Education.

Biggest Militant meeting ever



The platform of the *Militant* Readers meeting at Labour Party conference.

AROUND 700 delegates and visitors made this year's conference *Militant* Readers' meeting the biggest and liveliest ever. The meeting was on Tuesday night, just after Kinnock's attack on Liverpool council, and this gave an added edge and spirit to the meeting. The contributions and discussion, and the magnificent collection of over £2,100 for the *Militant* Fighting Fund—the highest ever—was the best reply to Kinnock's slurs and mud slinging.

The conference also looks likely to set a record for *Militant* sales. Over 400 copies were sold in the first two days.

Paranoid Powell and the missing letter

A RESOLUTION from Ogmere Constituency Labour Party calling for action to be taken against the *Militant* Tendency failed to appear on the final agenda of party conference. Constituency representatives were informed that this was because they failed to reply to a letter asking if they would accept an amendment.

Outraged Ogmere MP, Ray Powell, arch-enemy of *Militant* claimed that the constituency didn't receive the letter and suggested

that "it could be some *Militant* Tendency supporter at Walworth Road, the party headquarters, who decided that he would not post the letter to us." Or perhaps "it might have been a *Militant* postman who decided not to deliver it, of course. But it was very strange that all the documentation dealing with conference arrangements arrived in Ogmere except this letter dealing with our one resolution which went astray." (*Western Mail* 1/10/85)

Photo: Philip Gordon (Reflex)

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Brixton shooting: No cover-up!

THE ROLE of the police last weekend came as no shock to the people of Brixton, but it ignited all the anger built up over years.

The shooting of an innocent black woman, Cherry Groce, in the back in the presence of her children was seen as part of a police war on local people, particularly blacks.

The police called it an accident. They raided the home at 7 am on Saturday looking for Mrs Groce's son Michael. As she walked down the stairs policemen kicked in the door. Mrs Groce turned in fright to move back upstairs, she never made it, a trigger happy policeman shot her in the back, possibly paralysing her for life.

'Mistake' claim

Other police rushed her demanding to know where her son was. It was obvious that they had come armed intent on shooting the son, but had made a 'mistake'. Even Starsky and Hutch usually warn people before breaking into premises.

The mood of the people in Normandy Road where the Groces lived was of solemn

sympathy for the family, but many people thought something should be done. So a crowd marched on the police station armed with bricks. Many more people gathered round the streets. The police guarded their patch, crouched behind shields, almost bluffing people into running away, but the crowd ran at them and the police were forced to retreat.

"THEY WANT it to be like America or South Africa, where the police can shoot anyone they like." — Brixton resident.

It was about that time that shops like Tandy and Burton began to be looted by black and white alike. People threw out clothes and luxury goods to local people who had no other chance of getting them on social security or low wages. But the police vans were the target, seen as the symbol of repression. They began to be attacked. One van charged at local people; it was either run or be run over.

Although the press emphasised the looting, the underlying point which needs stressing is the totally justified anger at the unprovoked shooting of an innocent woman.

The police oppose an en-

quiry saying it might prejudice the case; they may try adjourning the case for months hoping we forget the incident, but we won't. If we don't have a strong campaign who else will be victims of 'accidental' deaths?

No cover up! Justice must be done, not by an enquiry by a country cop from Yorkshire or by an ex-public school judge. The police should be accountable to people who have to live in these areas. We need an enquiry by local people, local councillors and trade unionists. The police should be accountable to local people at all time.

The 1981 burning and looting didn't solve anything for us. The government gave us Scarman, some cosmetic changes, nice trees and useless consultative police committees, while society decomposed around us. We need a campaign of maximum support for the Groce family, for an independent enquiry with full participation of the local community and for charges against the policeman involved.

But most of all the riots are saying we want change and change that will last.

Eyewitness report by a Vauxhall LPYS member



Cherry Groce's children, Sharon, Lee, Shane, Liasa and Sabin.

Photo: Jez Coulson (IFL)

Militant meeting supports independent inquiry

WELL OVER 100 people attended the Militant Readers Meeting in Brixton on 30 September. A leaflet had been produced for the meeting on the Sunday.

The contributions reflected the anger of local people who demanded that justice should be seen to be done and that there should be no cover up.

Emerson Webster, a local black resident spoke of the terrible living conditions in the area, while Mark Bygrave, a Lambeth local authority worker, pointed out that the Tories were the real looters of Brixton taking £113 million from the council since 1979 and creating

- ★ No cover up!
- ★ Democratic control over the police—through elected local authority police committees, with control over resources, discipline, training, and day-to-day policy.
- ★ Kick out the Tories!
- ★ Return a Labour government committed to a socialist programme to solve the problems of poverty and mass unemployment.
- ★ Guaranteed jobs for all workers and youth.
- ★ A massive programme of public works.

the explosive conditions.

The meeting made firm demands for an independent public enquiry involving the local community and labour movement as well as the local community, the charging of the policeman concerned in the shooting, more accountability for the police and full support for the

Groce family.

The people of Brixton don't want another cover up. Nor do we want to see one law for the police and another for the black community.

By Nilaam De Freitas
(Norwood LPYS)

Inner cities explosion - Tories to blame

THE SHOOTING of Cherry Groce ignited all the pent up anger of Brixton's youth. It showed once again the seeming disregard of the police for the lives and safety of black and working class people.

The weekend's upheavals were a response to both the action of the police and to conditions in Britain's jobless, ill-housed inner cities.

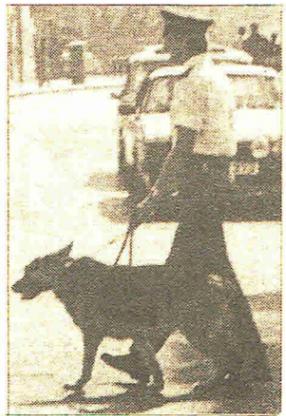
Rioting produces no solutions: "I know it's no good for people to run through shops. It won't stop the police, or get me a job. But something's got to be done" one black teenager told us on Sunday morning.

Police methods

For most of the youth involved it was a spontaneous expression of frustration and anger. At the same time, as in all such situations, a minority can use the spontaneous lashing out at all the local symbols of authority and wealth as a cover for assaults on local people, thefts from homes, and even rape. Together with the labour movement, those who genuinely speak for the local community are totally opposed to these elements.

Predictably, however the gutter press highlights such incidents in order to divert attention from the legitimate anger of the local community and the atrocious conditions underlying the social explosion.

Unemployment reaches about 75 per cent for young blacks in Brixton. Slum housing, vicious policing, all hit hardest here. But local



The Tories only 'solution'

Photo: Militant

people are looking for a long term answer. Blind anger, and another cycle of repression and riots can not end the problems.

The anger must be directed against the real looters and vandals in society, the Tories and big business.

Far from improving after the Scarman report in 1981, conditions in Brixton have got worse. Lord Scarman picked out social conditions and bitter resentment against police methods as the cause of the disturbances amongst both black and white youth in the spring of 1981.

Scarman, a 'liberal' representative of the ruling class did not favour any real control over the police force. Few people would deny that policing is necessary to prevent crime. But the ruling class see the police's function as intimidation of any section of the working class which shows signs of opposing the system, as the millions spent weekly on policing the miners' strike shows. Black youth, at the butt end of capitalism in crisis are also feared as a

potentially revolutionary group.

Scarman's 'alternative' to accountability was the farce of 'consultation'. This has not stopped the repeated police harassment of local people, again particularly local blacks. The GLC still get regular reports of attacks such as prison cell beatings. We must demand full democratic control and accountability of the police force including the tops, and over all aspect of daily policing, by the elected local authority.

Social conditions too have worsened. Since Scarman reported in 1981 the Tories have dealt further savage blows against the inner city areas. In 1981, there were 13,000 people out of work in Lambeth, now the borough's unemployment has reached 27,000. Among black youth, three out of four are now believed to be jobless according to a recent radio report.

Council looted by Tories

Lord Scarman found Brixton had been marked by decay and bad housing. After the 1981 riots, a small amount of money was provided-but overwhelmingly for cosmetic purposes. A few community centres and fresh paint on the lamp posts can not counteract the Tories' plundering of Lambeth council funds by £113 million since 1979. How can the 20,000 families on the council waiting list in the borough see any future—except in a fight back against the Downing Street looters.

It is only the organised



Police in the centre of Brixton, 29 September. Local people showed their anger again at a stormy police consultative meeting on 1 October.

Photo: Piers Cavendish (Reflex)

forces of the working class, mobilising mass support for socialist solutions, which can provide a way out. But the Labour and trade union leaders must take some of the responsibility for the frustration of black workers and youth.

The failure of the official movement to fight for socialist policies against immigration laws, for democratic control of the police and on the economic issues has helped reinforce cynicism and despair. This underlines the need for black workers to join the fight to transform the Labour Party and trade unions which is part of the struggle for a socialist change of society.

We need fighting organisations which would respond to brutal incidents like the shooting of Cherry Groce with mass demonstra-

tions which would stop the police in their tracks and link the issues to the need for a fundamental change.

Black people have a long tradition of voting Labour, many Labour MPs owe their seats to the black vote. And a recent survey in *Parliamentary Affairs* (Summer 1985) shows that 76 per cent of regular Labour voters say their reason is that Labour represents the working class. The Labour leaders must live up to that support by taking up an active campaign on the class issues, the problems affecting all workers.

Campaigning

We would appeal to local people to join with the Labour Party, Young Socialists and Militant supporters in a fight for democratic control and ac-

countability of the police, against racism and for a socialist programme to end Thatcher's destruction of our cities.

If the Tories' system cannot provide the finance for local authorities to build homes, schools and workplaces and provide jobs, then it must be replaced.

The Labour leadership must fight for the working class. To take no action, as recommended by Labour's right wing, the proponents of 'new realism', would be a betrayal. Dreadful conditions, harassment and desperation are the 'realism' of the inner cities today. The labour movement alone has the strength to change it for good.

By LPYS members

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Fight for Socialist policies

(Continued from page one)

Gaitskell tried to alter the whole character of the Labour Party by attempting to remove the fundamental socialist aim from the Party constitution—Clause 4 part 4. The right-wing around Gaitskell wanted the Labour Party to be nothing more than a radical version of the Liberals, without socialist aims or its links with the trade union movement.

The capitalist class would dearly love to see Neil Kinnock emasculating the Labour Party in this way. On the day of his speech, *The Times* editorial commented: "... after two years of hesitation, after his vacillation during the miners' strike, he is joining with the Fabians, the moderate collectivists, the social reformers, the Wilsonites and the Callaghanites to identify the enemies of his social democratic version of the Labour Party." The editorial the day after announced "Exit a man of the Left."

Besides attacking the miners and Liverpool, Neil Kinnock and the coterie of advisers around him have steadily pushed Labour's policy to the right. Even two years in advance, they are anticipating a Labour government that will cut living standards.

British capitalism is in crisis: it is not a question of 'mismanagement' or 'ill will' on the part of the Tories, but the system itself which is dictating cuts in workers living standard. Unfortunately, the Labour leadership are steadily pushing policy toward the idea of a Labour

Government managing the capitalist system.

That will inevitably mean a Labour Government carrying through cuts similar to the Tories—hence the drift towards a new incomes policy and the determination not to make any 'promises' ie commitments, to workers.

But if the Tory press would like the Labour Party to become one, in their eyes, 'fit to govern' capitalism, the ranks of the labour movement will have something else to say.

There is an overwhelming feeling in the party that there needs to be unity. But that will not be bought by going backward to the discredited ideas of the 'Wilsonites' and 'Callaghanites' or the 'social democratic version' of the Labour Party dreamt of in the past by Roy Jenkins and David Owen.

The logic of the right-wing's position may now lead to a wholesale attack upon the left of the Party, *Militant* being the first target but by no means the last.

If the speech was intended as the signal for such a Gaitskellite coup when it will open up long, protracted and bloody civil war in the two years leading up to the next general election. The working class roots of the party will not allow butchery in the name of surgery. Indeed many workers, especially those in struggle, will applaud the gesture of Eric Heffer, in walking off the platform during Kinnock's outburst.

Many former 'lefts' of the Party have now become the 'New Right' around the present leadership. The Livingstones, Peter Hains, the LCC and others have postured on the left in the past, and have now moved to the right,

opening the gate for the extreme right to launch their attempted revival. But the real left of the party is its working class base.

Gaitskell tried to turn the party away from its socialist roots in 1959 and he failed. If the right wing of the party try it now, in a period of mass unemployment and economic and social crisis, they will fail even more ignominiously.

It is not 'conspiracies' or small groups which have pushed the party to the left in the recent years, but ordinary workers reacting to the conditions they see and feel. The growth of genuine socialist ideas, of Marxist ideas, is based upon the living experience of working people. No amount of speeches or organisational measures will remove these ideas from the grass roots of the party.

Liverpool has demonstrated that workers will respond where a lead is given. Well over half the electorate support Labour in that city—an increase on the position last year. That is not an accident, but is due to the fight being put up by the Labour Party.

For the Labour Party to unite around socialist policies and a fighting lead like that of Liverpool would be a real guarantee of an election victory. That is the lesson the movement must absorb from the last two years.

No matter whether the present Labour leadership treats their struggle with contempt; the real future of the Labour Party and socialist ideas in Britain can be seen on the banks of the Mersey, not on the leader's rostrum in Bournemouth.

Labour Party 85 Conference

Massive security at conference

THE LABOUR Party is covered by a massive security operation. "It's not to protect us from the IRA but to protect Neil from the members" is a popular quip.

But the security operation is a serious example of why Marxists oppose individual terrorism. Delegates have to go through a series of police cordons, bag searches and credential checks. Lorries bringing in the documents and material of the Labour leadership are thoroughly searched by the police.

The bomb attack last year on the Tory Party conference by the Provisional IRA did not budge the government from its policies on Northern Ireland one inch. But it gave the Special

Branch and other arms of the capitalist state the excuse to vet and search the political wing of the labour movement. The threat in future to a left-wing Labour Party and a left-wing Labour government can be imagined.

It has also already had a knock-on effect on a smaller scale in the internal politics of the Labour Party. This year Labour Party officialdom has chopped *Militant's* reporting team to two (cutting out *Militant's* short-hand reporter, and photographer). Labour Party officials say the security measures entail cutting all reporting teams down. But *Tribune* with a smaller circulation than *Militant* has been given three press passes.

The Mirror Tendency

A NEW political faction has appeared at Bournemouth—the *Daily Mirror* tendency. That nice Mr Maxwell graciously gave the Labour Party conference an audience on Monday night when he spoke at a Charter for Jobs meeting.

Sadly, Maxwell's second coming was not advertised in the conference diary this year, so only about 50 people attended. Unlike last year the meeting was short of print workers to heap praise upon Mr Maxwell.

Even so, although it was mainly older Labour Party members there were a few dark mutterings. Meeting chairman Alan Tuffin of the UCW introduced the great leader as a man of 'high profile' ('Yeah, sideways' came a remark from the rear).

Then Maxwell outlined

the *Mirror Programme for Jobs*, no doubt debated, voted upon and agreed at a mass meeting of the *Mirror* tendency. He said: "We must end the scourge of unemployment" (except for *Mirror* print workers?). Firstly 400,000 jobs must be created in construction, building homes (he supports Liverpool?). Then he said 500,000 jobs must be created on YTS "real jobs with a guaranteed job at the end" (now he supports YTURC). Ah, yes, but then he said: "We'll get all this with a Labour government, the unions and the employers happily working together." Afterwards YTURC supporters approached the multi-millionaire for a donation. Maxwell made his friend give 40p, Mr Maxwell didn't have any money on him.

Black sections rejected

CONFERENCE ONCE again heavily defeated calls for the setting up of Black Sections in the party. The NEC statement rejecting Black Sections and recommending the setting up of a Black and Asian advisory committee was endorsed.

In the debate, *Militant* supporter Ray Apps, delegate from Brighton Kemptown moved his constituency's resolution which was eventually narrowly defeated, (3,383,000 to 3,081,000). This gave conference a class-based opposition to the formation of constitutional black sections.

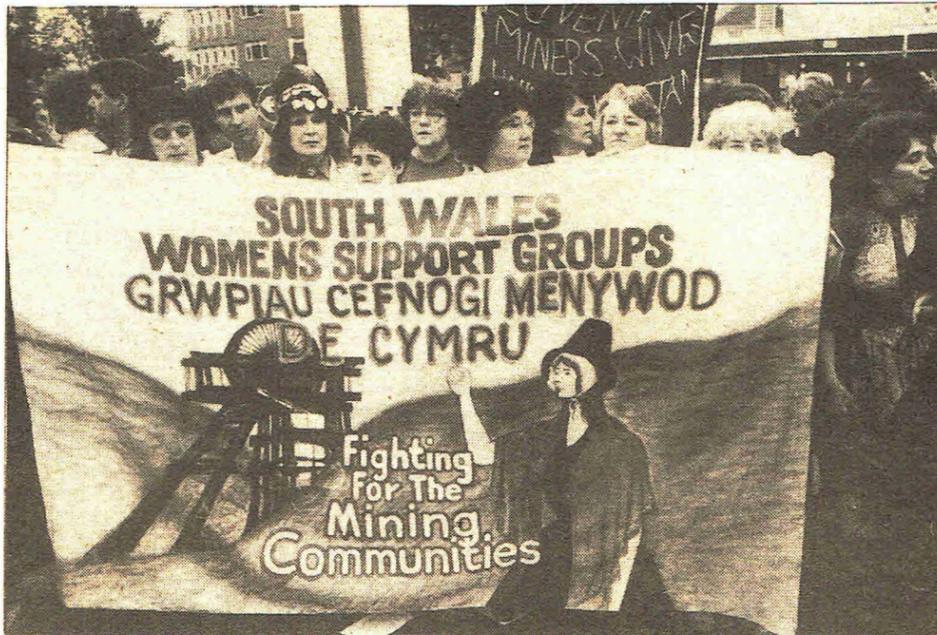
The resolution welcomed "... the initiative taken by the National Executive Committee to investigate reasons for the lack of black people in the Labour Party," but pointed out that the way forward was for a "united campaign by black and white workers mobilised around socialist policies." Ray Apps said he had been told he could not speak out against racism because he had not experienced it. But, he said, he did know what it was like to live in a council home where the roof leaked. He knew what it was like to lose a daughter through NHS cuts, while his son had

repeatedly been made redundant. These were all things which working class people needed to fight against together.

While arguing against black sections, he condemned the right-wing opposition to them. To applause, he explained that their's was just a negative opposition. He called on Roy Hattersley, who had moved the leadership's opposition to black sections, to come out against immigration controls, to demand democratic control of the police, and socialist policies.

Earlier in the debate supporters of black sections

criticised the Labour leadership for doing nothing for blacks. Russell Proffitt (Lewisham East) said he had been on all the committees formed by the party and they had done nothing. None of their proposals were carried out, he said. But he failed to outline what proposals the black section supporters were looking for. Other black section supporters did not explain what policies they wanted to alleviate and solve the problems faced by black workers. All they stressed was the need for black sections and positive discrimination.



Miners' wives lobby conference. Scargill and the NUM were virulently attacked by Kinnock and Labour's right.
Photo: John Smith (IFL)

Lambeth leader demands party support

AT A fringe meeting to support Lambeth council, council leader Ted Knight spoke of the Brixton disturbances:

"The media claims that Saturday was the result of a criminal element is nonsense. It is not the anger of criminals—it was the anger of the unemployed and the oppressed that exploded in Brixton on Saturday" He attacked the police tactics in Lambeth and the policies of the Tory government. "You cannot describe the battering down of the poor and the

shooting of an innocent woman as an accident. And the police cannot then apologise for this 'accident', he said.

There was anger that the Labour leadership has said that the Lambeth issue would not be taken at conference in the local authority debate. "Just as the youth in Brixton said they would not be forced off the agenda," said Ted Knight, "so the Lambeth councillors, the trade unions and the community will not be forced off the agenda at conference."

On the council's fight he said he had met the Labour leadership and been told that Lambeth was an electoral liability and an embarrassment. He pointed to Labour's recent by-election victory and added that if the leadership are not going to back Labour councillors fighting for policies they were elected on, what were they going to do when the IMF came knocking at the door during the next Labour government?

Jim O'Brien for Lambeth trade unions and chairman

of the London Bridge shop stewards organisation condemned the 'dented shield' argument. He said that council workers would not be full of socialist zeal if they were made redundant, whether by a Labour, Tory or any council.

All speakers stressed that the Lambeth and Liverpool struggle were the same. During the discussion a spokesman for Liverpool City Council expressed solidarity with Lambeth.

Herald meeting

ONE OF the largest fringe meetings at the conference was the *Labour Herald* meeting on Monday night. Top speakers like Arthur Scargill, Tony Benn and Dennis Skinner attracted over a thousand people. The editors of the *Labour Herald* said they hoped the *Herald* would be the basis of a new left current in the Labour Party, replacing the ground vacated by *Tribune*. Speaker John McDonnell of the GLC described the 'new look', fold-over *Tribune* as a 'sort of soft-left origami'. However, the speakers offered no clear means of effectively organising this new grouping.

Tribune and tolerance

TRIBUNE HAS just been 're-launched'. The paper of the traditional left-wing in the Labour Party looks different, but MIKE WADDINGTON examines what change there has been in its attitude to witch-hunts in the Labour Party.

"The most deadly potential enemy of the Labour Party at this stage in its history is intolerance. Everyone knows that varying views prevail within the CLP's, within trade unions, within the PLP, among the leaders and rank and file. Such differences can be resolved by open debate. They can never be resolved by mechanical disciplines." (Tribune Editorial, 21 March 1952).

This was written when *Tribune* was bearing the brunt of the political persecution in the Labour Party in the 1950s. Quite correctly they maintained in their own defence, and in the best traditions of the labour movement, that ideas cannot be driven out by bell, book and regulations.

Tribune survived and with it the standard of tolerance. During the period of the expulsion of the *Militant* Editorial Board a *Tribune*

editorial said:

"We were told at the time that the party's constitution had to be upheld and that the expulsion of *Militant* supporters had nothing to do with suppressing ideas. The banning of the newspaper now removes even this pretence." *Tribune* then had a clear understanding of why *Militant* was being attacked—for political reasons.

Parasite

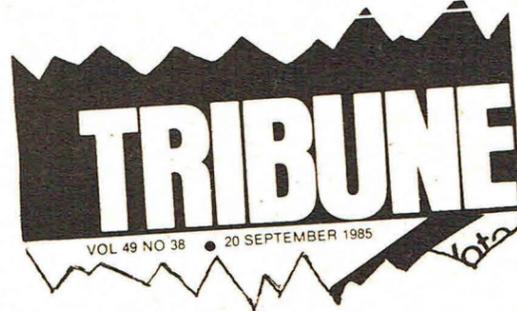
Unfortunately it has now changed its tune. Gone is the protest about the suppression of ideas and in comes something different. In a recent editorial (19 July 1985), they write: "*Militant* is a parasite which, if left alone, will wither, but if it is attacked it will thrive and prosper." You are clearly left with the impression that the evil end to be avoided is a prosperous and thriving *Militant*.

In fact *Tribune* goes much further, as they now provide an apology for more attacks. The same editorial states: "In recent months, Neil Kinnock has persuaded the right to leave *Militant* alone". This is at the least disingenuous and at the worst dishonest.

Where was *Tribune* when Labour Party members were threatened with expulsion in Finchley, Maesteg, Faversham, Riverside or when Party members were actually expelled for supporting *Militant* in Blackburn, Rhondda, Mansfield, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Warley West, Newcastle East, Havant and Sheffield Attercliffe.

Wherever attacks have been pushed back it has been due to the action of the rank and file. Whenever Kinnock has had the opportunity, he has come down on the side of expulsions. Recently at his own GMC he was in a minority that opposed protesting about the expulsion of Chris Peace from the Wales Regional Executive Committee.

In only one case have *Tribune* spoken out—the Isle of Wight. In an interview with Kinnock (20 September



1985), Nigel Williamson the Editor said: "A lot of us would share your delight at the demise of the *Militant*—Tendency as seen in its failure to make any headway in parliamentary selections this time around. But can I put it to you that a far better way to deal with *Militant* was for CLPs like the Isle of Wight to come to their own decision that enough is enough...?" Clearly the 'battle of ideas' has been dropped—local right-wing witch-hunts are acceptable to *Tribune*.

Paper banned

Nowhere have *Tribune* reported what is actually happening on the island. Nowhere do they report that three *Militant* supporters—including one who was elected as Conference delegate—have been expelled from the party and, disgracefully, they do not report that the *Militant* is banned East European style on the island, not by the police, but by the party!

On 3 September 1985 a Labour Party member on the island received the following letter, headed 'Internal correspondence': "...At the public meeting organised by the *Militant* on August 27, you sold or attempted to sell copies of the newspaper in contravention of the GMC's decision... I now give you the opportunity to undertake that you will not sell this paper publicly again, nor support the organisation behind it. If I receive no assurance to this effect, I shall report your action to the Executive Committee."

This comrade faces disciplinary action for selling a newspaper—not on Labour Party premises, nor at a Labour Party meeting but in public. He has to give a McCarthy style 'loyalty oath' not required under any Labour Party rule or conference decision. Is not this the suppression of ideas that *Tribune* originally opposed?

For *Tribune* to deny that there is a witch-hunt in progress is quite simply disgraceful and to state the localised action is legitimate is a significant retreat on the democracy of the labour movement.

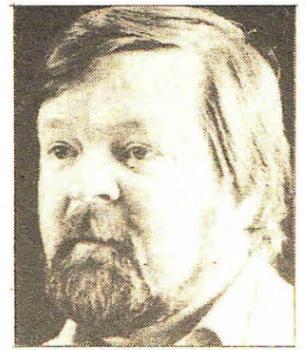
Nobody denies that political differences exist—one of the roles of *Militant* and *Tribune* is to debate fraternally all issues. *Militant* has published plenty of material on *Tribune's* policies and they are invited to use our columns even now. We should be discussing the *Tribune* 'Relaunch Statement' published in the 20 September issue. We do need to discuss precisely how to achieve, "a Labour Party... which clearly puts socialism on the political agenda".

Of course such questions are not unrelated to the shift to the right in policy of recent times. However we must also clarify, if it is not to be a meaningless phase, another aim in the statement—that we need a Labour Party that "encourages the presentation of ideas in a spirit which recognises the legitimacy of minority views."

If *Tribune* wishes to achieve this, it should start with itself and publicly oppose all these witch-hunts.

Midlands Labour Unity

OVER 120 delegations and visitors attended the West Midlands Labour Unity conference which took place on Saturday 21 September. They represented Labour Party wards and constituencies, TGWU, NUPE, AUEW, NUM, NALGO, ASTMS and Young Socialist branches, and Tribune groups.



By Bill Mullins

Dave Nellist MP explained the political basis of the right wing's witch-hunt against supporters of the *Militant* and other left wingers in the West Midlands and nationally. He warned the right-wing that a renewed witch-hunt would only play into the hands of the Tories and jeopardise Labour's chances of winning many of the marginals in the region.

Bill Mullins, expelled from Warley West CLP, gave some details of the undemocratic and KGB methods used by the right wing in drawing up a dossier on his activities of selling the *Militant*.

Other platform speakers included Dugald McKinnon, expelled by Newcastle-under-Lyme CLP, Ian Scofield TGWU Senior Steward, Range Rover and Mark Meredith, LPYS National Committee.

The delegates received with tremendous enthusiasm Liverpool councillor Harry Smith when he explained the marvellous fight being put up by the council against the Tory government.

Many delegates gave further reports on the activities of the right-wing in different parts of the region. In Telford, six party members (including five councillors) face expulsion for selling the *Militant*. In Yardley CLP, left wingers have been refused transfers. In Northfield, an NGA member has been refused admission into the party because he was seen with a *Militant* in his pocket!

A collection of £125 was raised and a further £425 pledged after delegates report back to their organisations.

The conference concluded with a vote in favour of a statement calling for party unity and an end to witch-hunts.

The campaign will continue with a newsletter being circulated to all affiliated organisations keeping them in touch with any further attacks and also successes.



Lobby against expulsions at LP headquarters in 1983.

Youth delegate fights ban

THE SOUTH Tyneside District Labour Party has prevented the delegate from Jarrow LPYS from taking part in a recent meeting. As the delegate, *Militant* supporter Mark Potter, entered the meeting, in South Shields Labour rooms, he was approached by an officer of South Shields Constituency party (CLP) and told to leave the premises or else the police would be called to evict him as a trespasser.

This move followed a decision of South Shields CLP a year ago to ban Mark Potter from their premises after totally unfounded allegations were made against him to which he was not allowed to reply either directly or through a representative, nor was he allowed appeal against the decision.

Since Mark Potter is the Northern Region LPYS chairman, this was a clear attempt to isolate South Shields LPYS from the influence of the Marxist leadership of the LPYS.

Jarrow LPYS will not allow anyone to tell it who can or cannot elect as its representative, and will campaign within the labour movement in South Tyneside for the right of Mark Potter to attend all meetings of South Tyneside District Labour Party. Already Jarrow CLP has indicated its support for Mark Potter and there have been calls for Jarrow to boycott meetings unless Mark Potter is allowed to attend.

By a Militant reporter

Chris Peace vindicated

MILITANT SUPPORTER Chris Peace has been vindicated in his fight to take his place on the Labour Party Wales executive committee. The Labour Party National Executive Committee has ruled that the right wing on the Wales executive acted unconstitutionally in attempting to bar Chris Peace from their meetings.

Summoned

Representatives of the Welsh executive are being summoned to London to have the matter spelt out to them by an NEC delegation. The Welsh representatives presumably will include George Wright, Regional Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union and Ray Powell MP who has led the attack on Chris Peace.

Chris Peace commented: "In their haste to try and silence me, George Wright and Ray Powell have run rough-shod over the rights of individual members of the party as well as the party's constitution. Now they are being firmly put in their place."

A massive campaign over the issue was taken to the Labour movement in Wales resulting in overwhelming support for Chris Peace's right to sit on the executive. Chris Peace added: "I hope that now we can get on with the business of fighting the Tory attacks on working class people and returning a Labour government at the earliest possi-

ble opportunity."

Applications for delegates credentials for the Wales Labour Unity Conference are flooding in from Labour Party and trade union organisations. The conference will call for an end to witch-hunts and for party unity around bold socialist policies. Speakers include: Chris Peace, Terry Fields MP, Derek Hatton, Deputy leader of Liverpool City Council, and Ian Isaac of South Wales NUM.

Wales Labour Unity Conference

5 October, 11am
Temple of Peace,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff
Credentials £2
from
21 Manor Street,
Heath, Cardiff

FIGHTING FUND

Deadline 31 October

This week: £1,702

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 Wales West	1205		2950
2 London East	879		3250
3 Eastern	861		3500
4 London South East	507		2100
5 London West	615		2650
6 Lancashire	280		1300
7 London South West	238		1200
8 Southern	1030		5400
9 East Midlands	554		3050
10 Scotland East	506		3150
11 Scotland West	600		3750
12 Merseyside	973		6550
13 Humberside	264		2100
14 Manchester	312		2850
15 South West	227		2150
16 West Midlands	457		4700
17 Yorkshire	567		5800
18 Northern	360		4750
19 Wales East	147		3000
Others	2269		5800
Total received	12852		70000

THE TORY campaign against Liverpool is intensifying. A barrage of distortions hits the streets daily intent on sowing confusion, hoping to undermine support for the council and divide the workforce.

Only *Militant* can counter this. But we are hampered by having only a weekly paper, a daily is needed in times like these. Our fighting fund is the way we can raise the necessary money for that daily voice.

Over £200 was collected on the streets in collecting tins for the fighting fund on the 25 September demonstration, clearly revealing which paper the people of Liverpool believe. One supporter collected over £40 in one tin! We have produced a new

sticker "Militant—Support Liverpool's socialist council" which can be used to raise funds for our work there.

Many areas are now collecting money at workplaces. After hearing the case against the witch-hunt a NUPE (Ancillary) branch unanimously condemned the attacks on *Militant* and the branch secretary donated £5 to our fund. Workers at Ford's, Dagenham collected £5, a collection outside Six Bells pit in Gwent raised £2.50, at Newcastle Breweries £1 was raised and £2.95 came from UCW members in Preston.

£6.33 was raised at Wandsworth JSSC and £2.10 at Greenford Dust Depot. New collections have been started at Plessey's in Liverpool and at Jaguar in Coventry. These collections can be repeated at

thousands of workplaces and should bring us in a small fortune. Just ask!

Every area must plan for the rest of the quarter. Have you organised a party or a social? Have you asked every reader for a donation? Are you taking collecting tins on all paper sales? There are a thousand ways to raise money. With the battle in Liverpool we need every pound now.

DONATIONS:

J Bingley Mansfield CLP £2; C&B Rice, Cupar £10; J&C Patterson Crossgates £8, N Lindsay, Dunfermline £2, D Morris Bedford £7, M Caron Manchester NUPE £20; Liverpool G&M members £3; S Ellington St Helens £16.27 (a week's supplementary benefit cheque), A Fidler Newcastle £5, Helen Reading £3, K Taylor Blackpool £50; Mr Kidd, Tooting, £10.

"Why I'll back Militant"

ALMA IS a 65 year old pensioner. For the first time in her life she went on last Wednesday's march in Liverpool.

"I have never really known what to chose between Labour and Conservative" she said. "But that Thatcher woman made my mind up. She has really got it in for the likes of Liverpool. I have lived in that one room bedsit for 15 years and what have they ever given me? Not even a postage stamp. Most people like me

just take it but I felt I should do something—so here I am.

"I joined the army during the war, my husband was killed during the last day of the war. It feels like most of my life since has been wasted. I get up in the morning, spend the day reading, go to bed at night and sometimes ask myself 'what have I done today?'"

"But coming on this march, seeing so many thousands united together to fight for what they believe

in, well, it's really opened my eyes. Listening to people like Derek Hatton and reading the *Militant*, it's like going back to school, there's so much to learn.

"I can't give you much money, but I can afford about 10p each week for your fighting fund. But I'm right behind you in the council. If we all get together and more people get to see what I've seen, we can beat the Tories and get a victory in our fight."

This week: £3,404

THIS WEEK, the magnificent sum of £3,304 has been sent in solidarity with Liverpool's battle.

Liverpool has no option but to fight—there is no other way of making ends meet in Liverpool apart from mass redundancies.

Neither has *Militant* any option. Only our paper has given full support to the fight of the Liverpool workers and councillors. We have to keep up our campaign of support.

We really need a daily *Militant* to counteract the press lies. We need to produce thousands more leaflets and posters to explain the case to those workers in Liverpool who didn't vote to support the council last week.

Donations have been sent in from every area of the country this week to help

Marxist Daily Building Fund

	£		£
Eastern	3566	Scotland East	2253
East Midlands	3660	Scotland West	2546
Humberside	2337	Southern	4325
London NE	4038	South West	1059
London NW	4540	Wales East	2065
London SE	2178	Wales West	1652
London SW	1895	West Midlands	2313
Lancashire	765	Yorkshire	2040
Manchester	2787	National	1302
Merseyside	5393		
Northern	4048	Total	54762

finance our campaign. Individuals are too numerous to mention but we've had over £600 collected by supporters in Tyneside and £300 from readers in Hackney. Sixty-five pounds has come from Maesteg with the simple message: "Good luck!"

£113 has been collected by readers in Aire Valley, £160 by those in West Leeds and Chris Broomhead, a supporter from Rotherham has sent what must be his week's wages of £95. There's £106 from Nottingham and £75 from Swansea. Dave

Foreman and Nick Rayner, two Essex readers have sent in £50 apiece to the special appeal we made last week. Two readers in the West Midlands have sent us their week's wages as a response to our earlier appeal—£51 from the Black Country and £80 from South Staffs.

The fight in Liverpool is only just beginning. Make sure that your area sends us the money we need to build a Marxist daily.

By Dave Campbell

IT'S AN ideal week for our sales campaign with opportunities everywhere for sellers to realise their highest ever sales.

Not since the miners' strike has politics been such a topic of conversation among workers. Supporters everywhere should be out on the streets, on estate sales, and especially at council workplaces ensuring that press attacks and distortions about Liverpool are answered with the truth.

London's campaign got off to a flying start with higher sales reported at many tube stations, including the ever increasing Hounslow East, where 25 were sold. Four hours before the riots erupted in Brixton, sellers there sold an above average 26 papers.

About 1,000 papers were sold on the march in support of Liverpool council, most

Get Militant

of these to union members. The paper was sold at all the strike meetings last week, including 18 sold at the National Union of Teachers meeting.

At Shiel Road Security depot a fifth of passing workers bought papers, despite sales at their mass union meeting the night before. At Friday's lobby of the Town hall one worker said: "I didn't used to buy

Militant but since this has been going on I've been getting it regularly because it's the only place you can find out what's really happening."

Get out there and give everybody the opportunity to read real news for a change.

By Alan Beacham

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.

"YORKSHIRE" *Militant* badges, enamelled metal badge, red fist on white rose. £1 each plus 20p p&p. Free postage on orders of 10 or over. All proceeds to FF. Orders and cheques to: Mike Gibbs, 37 Lincoln Street, Wakefield. Phone 386845.

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

Now available on cassette: all centre-page articles from issue 730-755. Send either seven blank C-90 cassettes or £6.30 payable to *Militant* tapes, 18 Blandford Grove, Woodhouse, Leeds 2. Phone: (0532) 455936.

SCHOOL STUDENTS UNION: recruitment leaflets—£8 per 1,000, stencils for leaflets—70p each, posters—£5 per 50, activists pamphlets—20p each (orders over 20, 15p each), Badges—2Cp, Stickers—£10 per 1,000. All prices include p&p. From YTURC, c/o 109 Rannoch Road, London W6.

MILITANT Liverpool Broad-sheet 'Defend our City' 25p (including postage) Orders of 10 or more 10p each. To Circulation Department, 3-13 Hepscoth Rd. London E9 5HB.

LPYS 'Fighting for our future' T shirts (red, yellow and green on white). Available now from Lesley Phillips, 5 Alverstone House, Kennington Park Road, London SE11 5 TS.

M, L, XXL for £4 or for £4.50 get an enormous baggy one! Cheques to: 'London LPYS Campaign Fund' and add 25p p&p.

Militant Meetings

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

MILITANT Marxist Discussion Group meetings held monthly in Swindon. Phone Martin on 24796 for details.

SUTTON (West Yorkshire): *Militant* readers' meeting: "The Silentnight strike—the way forward". Tuesday 8 October, 7.30pm, Eastburn School, speakers: Steve Davison (Keighley Trades Council), Gerry Cumiskey (FTAT shop steward) and other Silentnight strikers and a member of Yorkshire NUM.

EAST HAM Militant Readers' Meeting: "Liverpool and the way forward for Labour." Tuesday 8 October 7.45pm, The Lister Room, East Ham Town Hall, Barking Rd E6.

LEEDS MILITANT post-Labour Party Conference meeting. Speakers: Jane Ingham, West Leeds LP Conference delegate. (personal capacity). Members of Sheffield Attercliffe CLP (fighting expulsion) Richard Clarkson (Prince of Wales NUM) and Wakefield CLP delegate. 7.30pm Sunday 6 October at The Bridge Pub, Kirkstall, Leeds.

WANTED: Co-op stamps. Loose, part or full books for F/F. Send to Circulation Dept, 3/13 Hepscoth Road London E9 5HB.

MILITANT FF pocket address books, Diaries 60p, plastic paper sleeves 20p, pens 20p, bookmarks 40p plus post to: Militant, 10 Rodney Court, Anson Drive, Sholing, Southampton, SO2 8RU.

THE AUTUMN 1985 issue of the *Militant International Review (MIR)* will be on sale very shortly. Articles on prospects for the next Labour government, South Africa, Lebanon, science report, economic notes, Austria 1934, book reviews on the miners' strike and the soldiers' strikes of 1919. Also the second part of Alan Woods' history of Bolshevism.

Make sure you get your copy of the new issue. Price 80p plus 20p post and packing from: *Militant International Review*, 3-13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

Militant meetings "Support Liverpool's socialist council"

SWANSEA: Tuesday, 8 October, 7.30pm, Dynevor School Hall Swansea.

CARDIFF: Speakers, Cllr Tony Mulhearn and Clare Doyle, Wednesday 9 October, 7.30pm. Joint Students' Union, Park Place, Cardiff.

HACKNEY: Thursday 3 October, 7.30pm. Downs Pub, Downs Road, Clapton, E5.

BIRMINGHAM: Wednesday 9 October, 7.30pm. Carrs Lane Church Centre.

TEESIDE: Sunday 6 October, 7.30pm at St Mary's Centre, Corporation Road, Middlesbrough. Speaker: GMBATU shop steward from Liverpool.

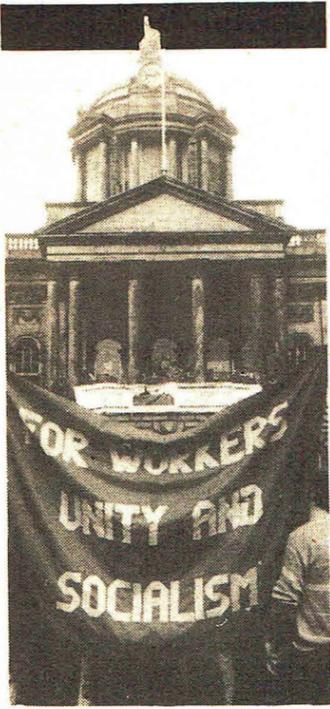
NEWCASTLE: Tuesday 8 October, 7.30pm. Moorside Community School, Beaconsfield Street, Newcastle. Speakers: Liverpool shop steward, Jeff Price, delegate to Labour Party conference, and Karen Walker, newly-elected Newcastle councillor.

GATESHEAD: Thursday 10 October. Venue to be arranged. Liverpool shop steward speaking.

SUNDERLAND: Date and venue to be arranged. Liverpool shop steward speaker.

COVENTRY: speakers: Cllr John Mutton, Coventry SE conference delegate, and Liverpool councillor Harry Smith. Hand and Heart, Gosford Street, Coventry, Thursday 10 October, 7.30pm.

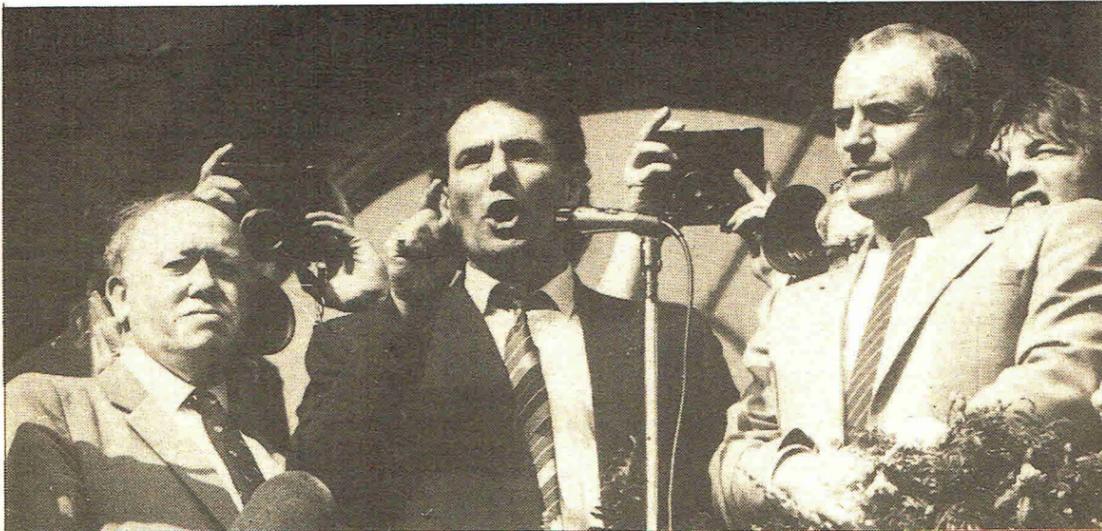
BRIGHTON: Venue: Sallis Benny Hall, Brighton Poly, Grand Parade, Brighton. Tuesday 15 October, 7.30pm.



Liverpool - strategy to defend the gains

The Tories, the Liberals, the press, Labour's right wing and the Communist Party have all deliberately chosen to misinterpret the issue of 90-day notices by spreading the lie that the council wants to sack all its workers.

Photo: John Arthur (Reflex)



Liverpool councils' deputy leader, Derek Hatton (above) addressing last Wednesday's magnificent demonstration (below) in support of the council.

Photo: Dave Sinclair



THE SITUATION in Liverpool has been changing with bewildering rapidity in the last two weeks.

Many workers are asking, precisely what is going on in the city. Can it be that a socialist Labour Council has decided to sack 30,000 workers? How is it that there appears to be a split within the workforce, between manual and the white collar unions?

By John Pickard

The confusion has been created to a large extent because of the enormous campaign of lies and disinformation spread by the Tory press, particularly over the issue of the 90 day redundancy notices by the council. The press is bitterly opposed to the Labour council because it has conducted a unique fight against the public expenditure cuts, the job losses, and the cuts in living standards imposed by the Tory government on all other councils.

It is for their determined defiance of the government and their willingness to fight for the interests of working people, that the Tory media has conducted such a vicious assault upon Liverpool council and personally upon the councillors.

What has further clouded the issue, however, has been the disgraceful attacks upon the council from within the labour movement, and from the so-called 'communist' party and its former newspaper the *Morning Star*.

These have been prepared to attack the council with a vehemence they have hardly used against the government itself. Their supporters in the trade unions in Liverpool have adopted conscious 'spoiling' tactics, to throw dust in the eyes of their own members in Liverpool, thus weakening the fight of the council to defend jobs and services.

Out of the original 20 councils which decided to defy the government over expenditure cuts, Liverpool is the only one which has stood out to the end. All the others including some run by former lefts, ran for cover at the last moment.

Two groups of councillors, in Lambeth and Liverpool, have been surcharged a total of a quarter of a million pounds. The imposition of surcharges, carrying with it the threat of bankruptcy, disqualification or even prison is intended to intimidate any other councils who may be thinking of following the lead of Liverpool.

If the Lambeth and Liverpool councillors are successfully surcharged there is no doubt that in a further act of political victimisation

the Audit Commission will surcharge councillors from some of the other authorities which were late in setting a rate after April.

However, it is only Liverpool which now finds itself in direct conflict with the Tory government. The councillors, backed by the majority of the workforce, are not prepared to lose one single job, cut services or put up rates to compensate for cuts.

The Tories are absolutely determined to punish Liverpool especially after the council extracted concessions from the previous minister of the Environment, Patrick Jenkin, in 1984.

Liverpool council has a marvellous record unequalled by any Labour council in Britain. Whereas the previous Liberal administration had not built a single family unit of accommodation in the previous four years, by the end of its fourth year, the Labour council in Liverpool will have built or started well over 5,000 homes.

Thousands of jobs have been created directly on the council and indirectly in the building industry as a result of the council's much needed building and renovation programme. The councillors fought the last two municipal elections on a programme of refusing to make cuts, to impose high rate rises to compensate for those cuts or to sack workers. A pledge was given to the thousands in dirty tenements and to those in old slums without indoor toilets and bathrooms, that the council would start to build homes.

The councillors have been prepared to risk their own personal financial security in order to carry through this programme and defend it. They had no alternative but to put the onus on the government to come up with the cash, to restore to Liverpool some of the money taken away from it in the past.

But the crisis was brought to a head in September, when it became obvious that the council would run out of cash by the end of the year. The Public Works Loans Board, the body used normally by councils to acquire loans for current expenditure would not give loans to the council, unless it issues letters to its workforce announcing the fact that the money would run out, in other words, technically giving notice of redundancy. There is no facility in local authority contracts to 'lay off' all its employees.

The legal position of the council, therefore, was such that it has to issue 90 day 'redundancy letters' to all its employees. The Labour Party were prepared to do this, not

(Continued on next page)

Capitalisation means cuts in housing programme

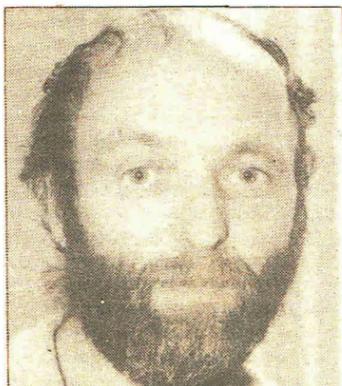
Interview with Tony Byrne

A RECENT report prepared by the Liverpool NALGO branch leadership has urged the council to use the financial device of 'capitalisation' as a way of escaping a showdown with the Tory government this year. Neil Kinnock has supported this idea. What is 'capitalisation' and what will be the consequences for jobs and services?

Militant spoke to councillor Tony Byrne, Chairman of the City Council's Finance and Strategy Committee.

What is 'capitalisation'?

Capitalisation means taking the capital resources of the authority and using them to cover the revenue deficit produced by government cuts in grants. The council's spending falls into two



Tony Byrne

categories: the revenue budget, financed by rates and Rate Support Grant (RSG), which pays for day to day expenditure like wages and

Photo: Dave Sinclair

housing repairs; and the capital budget, financed by borrowing and capital receipts, which pay for the council's capital programme (building council houses, sports centres etc.).

The council has lost, in real terms, £170 million in RSG since 1979. This has meant a loss of £69 millions on the housing subsidy, £96 millions on the Housing Investment Programme, and £24 millions on education grants.

We have estimated that we need £255 million for the revenue budget for 1985/86. But the government is telling us that we can only spend £220 million. 'Capitalisation' is seen by its supporters as a way of bridging the gap between what the council needs to spend to retain all

its workers and maintain its programme and what the government is telling us we can spend. However, at best it gives only a temporary respite and postpones the inevitable show down until say April of the next year.

The council and other unions representing council workers are opposed to capitalisation. Why is this?

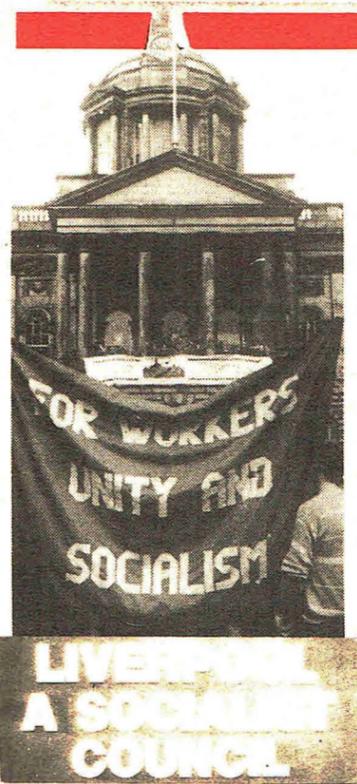
Because capitalisation not only fails to get to grips with the underlying problem—government cuts—but would mean taking £27 millions away from our housing programme. The result would be that 1080 houses and bungalows would not be built, or 3,375 improvement grants would not be available, or 1,500 improvements or conversions to council housing

stock would not be carried out, or any combination of these.

In addition, capitalisation would stop 'starts' on 2,200 council houses, and 3,600 'starts' on improvements and conversions. Then we have to consider the economic importance of the construction to other industries in Liverpool.

Curtailling the Housing Programme in this way would inevitably have a knock-on effect on supply industries. Something like 10,000 workers in the private sector are dependent for their livelihoods on the capital programme. In Liverpool we already have 15,000 building workers on the dole and the council does not intend to add to that number.

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Liverpool - strategy to c

ahead and that the strike would not hurt the old and the young or the sick. Trade unionists and councillors representing the key sectors involved were drafted onto the committee.

But whereas the leaders of the manual unions took the campaign seriously, unfortunately some others did not. The leadership of the National Union of Teachers made it clear that their members were not prepared to strike from the 25th.

Using arguments that would have graced the rostrum of a Tory conference, "Communist" NUT leaders complained about the "effects on the children" and refused to support the strike. The NUT refused to ballot its membership.

Similarly NATFHE, the college lecturers' union, were not prepared to campaign among their members or explain the issues properly, with the result that their membership voted overwhelmingly against the strike.

NUPE, like the NUT, was not even prepared to allow its members any say in the decision. Without any mass meeting or democratic votes, NUPE members read in the press of the decision not to strike that had been taken on their behalf by their union leadership.

The leadership of NALGO, the biggest white collar union in the council, verbally supported the decision of the JSSC but in practice campaigned against. The NALGO newsletter distributed the week before the strike, made it clear to the members that the NALGO leadership were themselves not behind the strike and hinted very clearly that they were against it.

Ferocious campaign

At the mass meetings of NALGO members the leadership did not allow any speakers from the JSSC or the Labour Goup. Two resolutions were presented to the membership, the first in effect the "fall-back" position of the NALGO leadership implying that "capitalisation" was a way out. Although capitalisation was not NALGO or JSSC policy, papers on the subject were being made freely available to members. The second resolution at the NALGO mass meetings was down in the name of the JSSC and this was only voted upon by ballot after the fall-back resolution had been agreed.

Whatever the NALGO leadership may say in words, in practice this meant they campaigned against all-out industrial action.

The ballot results were a marvellous testimony to the determination of the workers to fight for jobs. The votes took place in the teeth of a ferocious campaign by the local and national press trying to create an impression of mayhem and chaos on the streets of Liverpool.

The full time officers of GMBATU instructed their 300 shop stewards by letter not to strike, despite the 58 per cent vote in favour. Even more overwhelming votes were recorded in UCATT, and in the Transport and General Workers Union.

The NALGO result, showing over a two to one vote against the strike, was not surprising after the spoiling campaign of the leadership. What was surprising was the fact that 1,445 of its members had voted, in such a hostile climate, for all-out industrial action.

Altogether more than 7,000 workers saw through the mountain of lies and disinformation, for the need for an all-out strike in defence of jobs and services.

The day before the all-out strike

was due to begin, the JSSC reconvened to consider the vote. There was no alternative at that time but to call the strike off, since an overall majority of those voting opposed it.

The workforce at that particular time was split. It would have been folly to go into an all-out industrial strike with the majority of the members of the GMBATU in favour, and the majority of NALGO members against.

Some papers on the sectarian fringes of the labour movement, have argued that it was wrong to be "held back by talk of unity". For these know-nothings, every industrial dispute is like the Charge of the Light Brigade, no matter if it leads to a glorious debacle.

It was absolutely correct at that time that the JSSC should call off the all-out industrial action. Moreover, it did not remove other options which would allow the trade unions more time to campaign and prepare an all-out strike at some stage in the future.

The initial disappointment over the strike vote soon gave way to a mood of grim determination. While the same ultra-lefts who complained about the decision of the JSSC now wrote off the Liverpool struggle altogether, ("It means the collapse of the last bastion of resistance to the Tories...", etc.) the mood among the manual workers was different.

They had been forced to take a step back, but they would live to fight another day.

That mood carried over to the one day stoppage on Wednesday 25th, when a monster demonstration wound its way through the streets of Liverpool, to a rally at the Town Hall, addressed by the council leaders, the city's Labour MP's and leaders of the JSSC.

The mood of the demonstration was one of defiance and determination. Anyone who believed the fight was over was a million miles from reality as far as those 40,000 workers were concerned.

When the JSSC re-convened the following day, Thursday, it was necessary to weigh up the alternatives. One option was to back capitalisation, which meant massive job losses in the building sector as well as among council workers, and the suspension of the council's house building programme. This was a policy which the JSSC had already rejected and no-one proposed it at the meeting.

A second alternative was just to go on as before, without any 90-day "redundancy" letters, but with the money running out in the following week. This option, which meant a fight for jobs now was rejected in effect by the ballot decision of the workforce not to strike at that particular time.

The leaders of the JSSC,

Breathing space

therefore, were prepared to propose to the committee that the only alternative available was to approach the council to issue the 90-day notices—in the knowledge that the council's policy was against any redundancies—in order to give the council, the labour movement, and the JSSC itself the valuable breathing space to campaign for an all-out strike at a later date.

Unfortunately, at this stage the white collar unions NALGO, NATFHE and MATSA, all walked out of the JSSC. A delegate from NATFHE had actually moved that redundancies should not be discussed, and when his own resolution was put to the vote, he walked out with his members before the vote could be taken.

Alternative is housing cuts

(Continued from page 7)

Then we have to think of the thousands of Liverpool people living in unimproved houses with outside toilets or in run-down tenements, who, if we capitalise, would have to be told "you will have to continue living in these conditions for a lot longer."

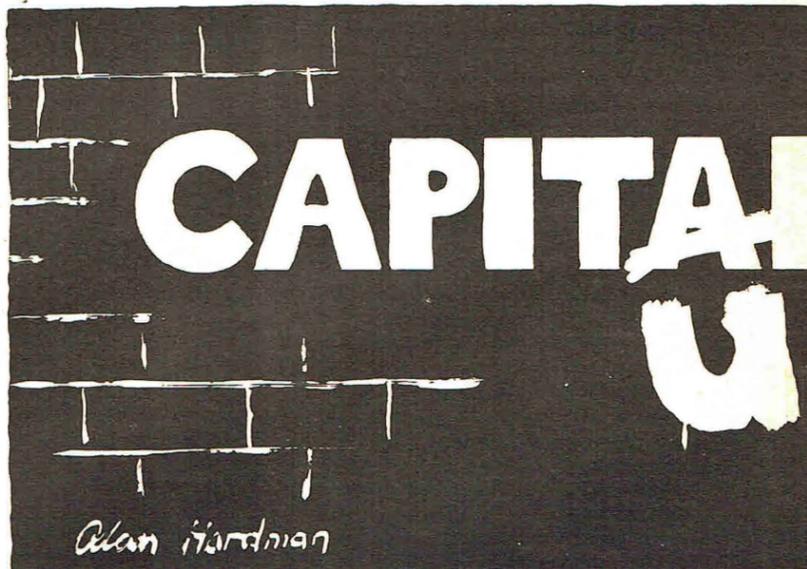
These are the reasons why we are totally opposed to capitalisation. Prior to this report those NALGO leaders who prepared it said they fully supported the council's programme. Their report says they are still opposed to cuts in the capital programme and in the revenue budget. They then go on to call for capitalisation, which is completely contradictory.

The NALGO report argues that the council has already used other financial devices like selling council mortgages, deferring payment on capital schemes, and rescheduling debts, so why not capitalisation?

We will explore every financial device available to us to ease our financial situation, providing it does not mean further cuts. Capitalisation means cuts and plays into the hands of the Tories. I have no objection to people putting capitalisation forward as an option but they should be honest enough to spell out that it means cuts.

How do you feel about the threat of fines and disqualification?

I feel it comes down to what you



Ian Lowes announcing the decision by the JSSC for all-out one day strike after the vote for indefinite strike was narrowly defeated.

The NALGO, NATFHE and MATSA delegates on the JSSC were given every opportunity to express an opinion or put forward an option or an alternative at the JSSC, but all they could offer was a deafening silence and a walkout.

Later at a press conference, the NALGO secretary, representing his own union and NATFHE, accepted the "good faith" of the council in not wishing to make a single employee redundant. But when pressed, he was not able to put forward any constructive alternative to the one proposed by the JSSC.

The NALGO leadership have demonstrated the utmost political dishonesty throughout the last

week. In reality they have not been prepared to say clearly and out loud what is in their minds, the idea of capitalisation. Before their walkout, the combined votes of NALGO, NATFHE and MATSA would have carried a majority on the JSSC. That they chose to walk out of the committee rather than push through any alternative of theirs is itself a demonstration of their political bankruptcy.

They are opposed to an all-out industrial strike now and they are opposed to the council sending out 90-day notices. In actual fact, the only alternative left, the one which they really favour, is capitalisation.

What they want, although they

Photo: D. Sinclair

Defend the gains

value most. I am one of the luckiest councillors who ever lived because I have had the honour of being one of those responsible for implementing the most exciting programme this city has ever seen. I am more concerned about seeing the programme through than what might happen to me. This Labour council has brought homes to the people of the city.

The Liberals and Tories are as one in demanding that the courts and unelected officials be used against elected councillors. This is not surprising since the Liberals stand no chance of winning an election in this city.

The Tory press and media peddle the myth that what is happening in Liverpool is all a "Militant conspiracy". What is your answer to that?

I am not a supporter of Militant,

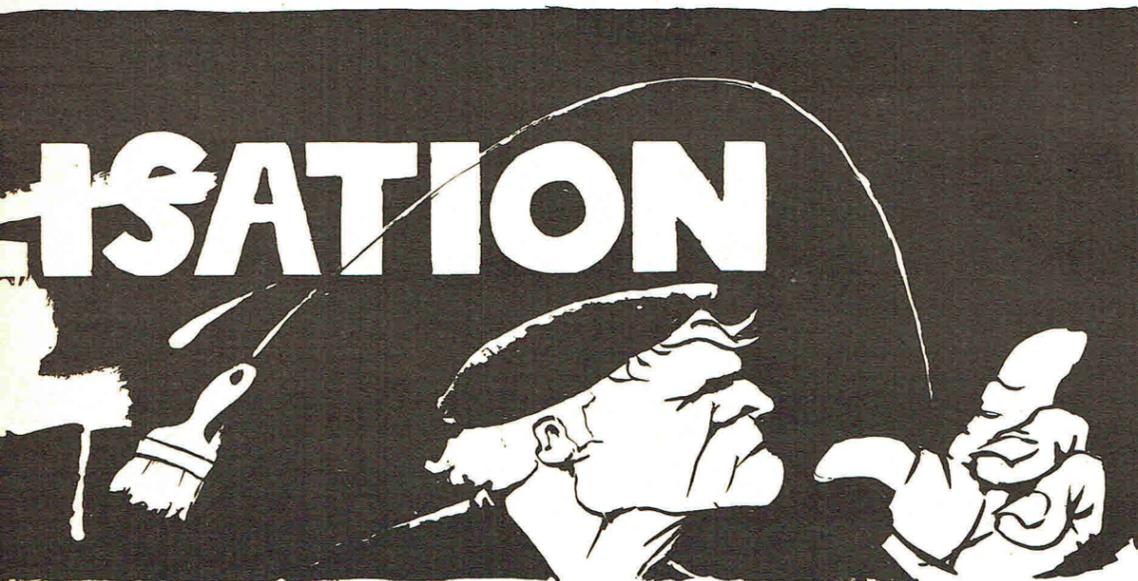
I am a member of AUEW/TASS and of the Labour Party. I am as committed to the policies of the District Labour Party and Labour Group as anyone else. All the councillors are determined to carry through the promises made to the people of the city. Talk of a 'Militant plot' is classic right-wing stuff. Whenever the establishment is threatened they try to whip up hysteria about reds under the beds and left-wing bogey-men.

Council workers, like the councillors are left with no alternative but to stand up to the government. If we bend a knee it will mean 5,000 job losses amongst the council workforce alone and an end to our programme. The government has branded us 'illegal'. But we are not being illegal for the sake of it. We are defending jobs and services, defending the people of this city,

and being socialists. We do not want to stay in office to make cuts.

How do you think the crisis that the council is now entering into will be resolved?

Our case is obviously reasonable and responsible. We are seeking to maximise resources for a city which desperately needs them. If we are taken to court I am confident that we will win because it would require a 'bent' judge to find against us. I expect Labour to be in office for the next ten years. The only thing which could remove us from office is if we renege on our promises to the Liverpool people. In that event we would deserve to lose office. The government must give us back the money it has taken away from us.



have not got the honesty to admit it, is to save NALGO jobs at the expense of building workers' jobs, and at the expense of those families who live in slums. The behaviour of the NALGO leadership, in misguiding their own membership, in conducting a mischievous campaign against the open and honest campaign of the JSSC and the councillors was absolutely disgraceful and unforgivable. Their strike-breaking role will not be forgotten in the future, by the other trade unions, or by the significant minorities within their own unions.

Fierce arguments will now be raging inside NALGO and the unions which voted against or were not allowed a say on the strike. Over 1,400 NALGO members were prepared to go on all-out strike to defend their jobs. Some NALGO members struck on Thursday in protest against the branch decision to stay in! The forthcoming weeks will see a growth of genuine discussion and debate inside NALGO in which the issues will be properly discussed, and which will eventually lead to a change in the policy and leadership of that particular branch. When the issues are properly explained to them, the NALGO members will reject the policy of their leadership, as 1,445 already have done.

The Liverpool City Council has enormous support within the population and within its workforce for its stand on jobs and services. The issue of 90-day notices, now gives the council and the JSSC time to build a massive campaign on Merseyside and nationally to force the Tory govern-

ment to recognise economic and political realities. Liverpool just cannot manage on the money which has been allotted to it by the Tories.

In the next three months workplace meetings must be held at all the depots, offices and workplaces of council employees and in the private sector throughout the whole of Liverpool and Merseyside.

The decision of the JSSC after the NALGO walkout was in favour of the council issuing the 90-day notices. When this tactic has been explained to the workers it is seen clearly as a ploy to extend the financial life of the council and to extend the wage packets of the workers, for another three months.

No alternative but to fight

There is simply no other alternative for the movement at the present time. Not once, in all their rantings and condemnations, have the critics of Liverpool Council come up with any alternative except for careful hints of...cuts in jobs. Another not insignificant factor that the JSSC took into account was the fact that if the notices were not sent out, the Labour councillors, already surcharged over £2,000 each, could face extra legal charges of hundreds of thousands of pounds each. Kinnock and Liverpool's critics have not even mentioned that.

At the same time the JSSC has made it clear that their acceptance of the notices is linked to a call for all-out strike action at some time before the 90 day notices expire.

The JSSC now has almost three months to campaign among the workforce and obtain a far bigger strike vote next time than was obtained this time.

The left within the workforce will be also organised within NUPE and NALGO to remove the strike breakers from the leadership of those unions. A campaign of discussion and explanation will remove the misgivings and fears in the minds of white collar and blue collar workers alike.

But the issue must be taken also to the wider labour movement. The decision to send out the notices was backed by the Liverpool District Labour Party on Thursday evening, by 200 delegates and visitors, with only nine or ten voting against.

The DLP and the CLP's must be used to mobilise the mass of Labour Party members to organise regular mass canvasses of the council estates to explain the policy of the council and the shop stewards committee, and to campaign for massive popular support.

Mass canvasses and mass meetings must be a regular feature of the campaign.

It seems at the present time that everyone opposes the Liverpool Labour Party and its Marxist influence—The Tories, the Liberals, Labour's right-wing, the Communist Party, the ultra-left sects and the Bishops—everyone, that is except the Liverpool workers, who want jobs and homes.

Liverpool is now the most political city in the whole of Britain. As a crushing refutation of the policy advanced by the right-

Kinnock's speech condemned

Immediately after Neil Kinnock's devastating attack on Liverpool council's stand against the Tories, the City Council switchboard was jammed with callers appalled at the Labour leaders' remarks. It is clear that Kinnock has not only offended those councillors prepared to make great personal sacrifice to carry through policy but he has also snubbed the thousands of council workers and great mass of Liverpool workers who support the council.

Anger in NUPE branch

Jane Kennedy, Secretary of Liverpool council NUPE branch made a screeching attack on the council at Labour Party Conference. Yet the NUPE branch was never allowed to vote on the all-out strike. No-one has pointed out that as a result, Kennedy has lost her basis of support in the branch.

THE NATIONAL Union of Public Employees (NUPE), held a mass meeting of home helps in Liverpool last Thursday night.

A couple of us were in the pub over the road. We asked some of the women in the pub why Jane Kennedy, their convenor, or their branch secretary didn't give them the chance to ballot and express their opinion on the strike, like every council worker except those in NUPE and the NUT. They were all in agreement that they should have been given a ballot.

We went over to the meeting, spoke to nearly everyone who went in and leafletted them. The response we got was fantastic. There was no doubt in our minds that they had come down to complain about having the right to vote on the strike taken away from them.

They had the meeting in the Municipal Annexe, but the room they'd booked was too small. Over 700 turned up, a lot more people were outside the meeting than inside. Some of the domestics came down and said: "We'll meet in the car park over the road". All these

women were getting really angry about it, so they came out and stood on the pavement.

Next minute, totally unrehearsed, they all moved into the road and blockaded Dale Street. All the traffic was stopped. The police came and diverted the traffic down a side street. Radio City came down and did a report. One of the lads, Dave Armstrong, a steward, gave a statement to Radio City condemning the NUPE leadership.

Jane Kennedy wouldn't come out of the meeting room. She sent a message down saying the meeting would be reconvened the next week. By the time all this had happened she had to have a police escort out—to protect her from her own members!

We are going to try and get a leaflet out to all NUPE members in Liverpool. Already a convenor from NUPE has phoned the council requesting Derek Hatton to speak at a meeting of home helps. They are obviously not too pleased at what has been going on.

By Mick Myers

wing of the Labour Party, two opinion polls have both demonstrated a big swing in favour of the Labour Party in Liverpool as a result of the campaign of the council.

The most recent of these polls, the *Sunday Times* MORI poll, showed that 55 per cent of the electorate in Liverpool would vote Labour in a municipal election, an increase of nine per cent on the result of last May.

Significantly, another poll showed that 75 per cent of those under 35 years old were prepared to back the council in its fight against the Tory government. If those results were extended nationally, Labour would achieve a massive majority in a general election. That one figure alone completely and crushingly refutes the idea put forward by Neil Kinnock and the Labour right-wing that the fighting policy of Liverpool City Council has been "unpopular".

Liverpool is demonstrating in practice that where a lead is given, where a Labour council is prepared to put itself on the line to defend the jobs, services and living standards of the workers, then workers will respond and support that council.

Without any doubt the decision of the Liverpool workforce not to have an all-out indefinite strike from last Wednesday was a setback for the campaign of the council.

But it was by no means a crushing defeat. As Derek Hatton, deputy leader, said, "the first round may be lost on points, but that is not the end of the fight."

Liverpool now has three months to prepare itself for the inevitable

confrontation with the Tory government.

The whole labour movement—Labour Parties, trades unions, local authority unions and Labour councils—must respond to Liverpool's call and back the council and the JSSC: There is no other course of action open to a Labour council, but to show the same determination and resolution fighting for the working class it represents as Thatcher shows fighting for the rich and privileged.

Peter Lloyd Obituary

ON WEDNESDAY morning Liverpool City Councillor Peter Lloyd died in Spain. He failed to recover from serious injuries he received in a car crash while on holiday. Aged 43, he leaves a wife and two daughters, one of whom was also badly injured in the crash.

As councillor for the Old Swan ward and vice-chairman of the council's Campaign Committee, Peter was always solidly behind the fight to defend jobs and services. A dock-worker, he epitomised the spirit of Liverpool working class struggle. His cheerful character and sense of humour was a source of inspiration to all his comrades.

The Militant Editorial Board, on behalf of all its readers, sends its condolences to his family.

Open letter to the Communist Party

Whose side are you on?

IN AN open letter, the *Militant* Editorial Board appeals to rank and file Communist Party members in the Liverpool City council unions to fully support the fight by the council and other trade unionists for the working class of Liverpool.

Comrades!

You undoubtedly joined the Communist Party believing it to be an organisation which would fight for the socialist transformation of society. You believed the CP would support workers in struggle.

But we have to ask you: What game are the CP leaders playing in relation to the stand taken by Liverpool's Labour Council against Tory cuts?

The *Morning Star* and leading CP'ers have consistently opposed the socialist policies which alone can ensure victory. The *Morning Star* is no longer the official voice of the CP, which is itself torn by splits. But regardless of their factional allegiances, representatives of the CP are at one in their attacks on the Labour councillors leading the struggle.

Local CP'ers in key positions in unions like NALGO and the National Union of Teachers have failed to campaign for action amongst their members. On the contrary, there has been a stream of backstabbing criticism from those speaking for the Communist Party.

The *Morning Star* (26 September) rightly praised the mass action on Wednesday 25 September: "Liverpool Council workers, both manual and white collar, responded magnificently yesterday to the call for a 24-hour strike and mass demonstrations..." It was forced to recognise the success of the action!

However, only the previous day, the *Star* had repeated its criticisms of the City Council's leadership, referring to "the danger that opportunism and ultra-leftist adventurism, which has been a feature of the Liverpool struggle, could play into the hands of the Tories."

On the very eve of mass action, moreover, the *Star* once again called for a policy of "capitalisation", which would mean scrapping the housing programme and throwing 10,000 building workers onto the dole.

We recognise that many rank and file trades unionists who have supported the CP in the past wholeheartedly support the lead of the city council and have fully participated in the mass action. But we ask you: Are you aware of the pernicious line being taken by the *Morning Star*? Do you realise the damage to the campaign that the policies and tactics of the CP are doing—insofar as the party still has an influence in Merseyside and nationally?

Support has to be built!

Under the heading "Help Liverpool now", the *Morning Star* (17 September) suggested that the city council was going too far and isolating Liverpool: "... Councils have a key role to play of course," but they should develop the movement by "... tailoring their decisions to the level the movement has managed to reach at any given time and place."

But what decides the "level of the movement"? The reason the movement in Liverpool forced the Tory government to make concessions last year and has built up the strike on Wednesday 25 this year, is because of the bold socialist lead given by the Labour council.

The manual workers' unions in the local authority, GMBATU, UCATT, TGWU, were solidly behind the call for all-out strike action. But this was not just the "level" these unions happened to be at.

The majority of manual workers took action because the shop stewards had campaigned for action, explained the real position, spelt out the policies being fought for, and argued for tactics that would gain mass support.

In mobilising support for mass strike action, the Labour councillors and leading members of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee had to combat the lies of the Tory press and the attacks from the Liberals. They also had to overcome the outright opposition of right-wing trade union officials, who intervened to try to prevent strike action.

Yet whose side was the *Morning Star* on? On 24 September, the day before the strike, they commented: "the dangerous ultra-leftism within the struggle at Liverpool was again reflected yesterday in attacks on regional officials of the GMBATU by Deputy Council Leader Derek Hatton..."

Fifty-eight per cent of members of the GMBATU, the biggest of Liverpool's local authority unions, voted for all-out action. Yet the "Communist" *Morning Star* denounced Derek Hatton for taking up regional officials who refused to back a struggle for their members' jobs and future.

Confusing the issues

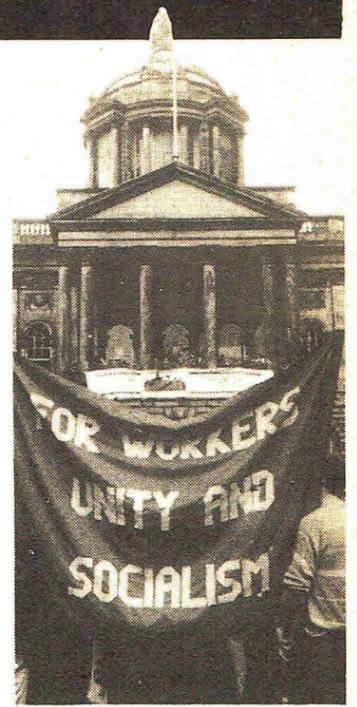
The Labour councillors are risking their jobs, houses, and are threatened with removal, and even imprisonment, because they have remained firm against cuts and sackings. Instead of supporting them CP leaders and the *Morning Star* are either deliberately or stupidly confusing these clear cut issues. Conscious socialist workers expect distortion by the capitalist press, but what sort of "Communist" paper supports those who want to capitulate without a struggle—going against those workers and leaders who are prepared to fight attempts to cut services and jobs. On the one side are a handful of leaders confusing their members and on the other are the workers and people of Liverpool behind the magnificent stand of their council for jobs, houses and services.

The *Morning Star* has repeatedly highlighted "disagreement over tactics" between the local authority trade unions. For instance, while NALGO members supported the strike call on the 25th, a majority voted against the call for an all-out strike.

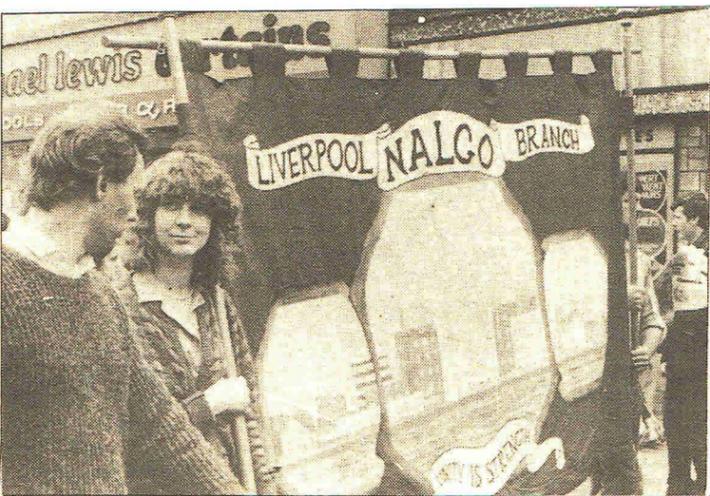
But why? The amazing thing is that any NALGO members at all supported action after the leaflet put out by the NALGO leadership. This is when the NALGO Branch Chairperson is Graham Burgess, who has long been identified with the Communist Party.

In the first paragraph of the NALGO leadership's pathetic call for action they confess: "We initially suggested that no action be taken until the money ran out." They then grudgingly say: "But the majority of the trade unions voted for a strike, and we have an obligation to put that before our members." At the end of the leaflet, which confused all the key issues instead of clarifying them, Graham Burgess and co said: "There can be no doubt that a strike, if NALGO members vote for one—would be long and difficult. None of the other options seem to present a long-term solution to the desperate problems we face."

This is not a serious call for ac-



UCATT members who have voted to support the council because they see their jobs are threatened by capitalisation. Photo: Militant.



Liverpool NALGO members march in support of the city council.

tion! In fact, if Burgess and co were trying to sabotage the campaign for all-out strike action, they could have not done a better job!

Yet in spite of this, 1,400 voted in favour of strike action. We believe that if the NALGO leaders had campaigned for action, spelt out the real options, and boldly called for support for the council's socialist policies—there could have been a majority of NALGO members in favour of action.

The *Morning Star*, Graham Burgess, and other local leaders associated with the Communist Party, have all called for "capitalisation" as a way of

avoiding all-out action. In *Campaign News* of 19 September, the NALGO branch leadership claimed "the precise implications of capitalisation have still not been established..."

The truth is, however, that anybody who bothered to look into it can see that capitalisation would mean a halt to the city council's magnificent house-building and house-repair programme.

UCATT members in Liverpool, including members of the Communist Party, have solidly supported the city council's call to action. Yet their faint-hearted CP

comrades in unions like NALGO and the NUT are calling for "capitalisation"—which would threaten the jobs of UCATT members and then more NALGO members as well.

The *Morning Star* and the local spokesmen of the Communist Party indulge in the luxury of backstabbing criticism of the council's policies, without themselves spelling out any viable alternative. On 28 September the *Morning Star* sided with "key union figures" like GMBATU leader David Basnett in attacking the city council's decision to issue redundancy notices to 31,000 council workers. Yet this is after they refused to support the call for all-out action—which, if it had gone ahead, would have forced the Tory Government to back off and make concessions, thus avoiding the need for any redundancy notices.

The council's policy of issuing redundancy notices to all workers is the only way of keeping the whole workforce together and gaining time to prepare for further united action. Who exactly do the CP consider should be sacked in order to save £30 million? GMBATU members? UCATT members? NALGO members? Why don't they spell out the implications of their bankrupt policy.

Council will fight all cuts and job losses

But the Labour council has no intention of sitting back and waiting for this to happen. In the coming weeks, the policy of the city council, the Liverpool District Labour Party, and the trade unions who support the struggle to defend jobs and services in Liverpool, is to continue to build a massive movement for action to defeat the Tory government.

The Tories were defeated last year and forced to make concessions. They can be defeated this year too. But this requires bold socialist policies, mass campaigning and resolute tactics.

Members of the Communist Party who genuinely support the Council's struggle! We call on you to reject the dirty, backstabbing tactics of the *Morning Star* and leading members of the CP locally.

Neither wing of the Communist Party today has anything in common with the organisation that was originally founded on the genuine ideas of Marxism. The *Morning Star* can no longer be regarded as a Communist paper.

We appeal to all CP members who want to fight: join with the Marxists in the Labour Party! Support the socialist policies of Liverpool City Council! Fight to defeat the Tories! Fight to defend the jobs and services of Liverpool workers!

Letters

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

Support for Liverpool council

Dear Comrades,
In the build-up to the momentous struggle between Liverpool and the Tory government we visited about ten factories and Wirral council bus depot.

On every occasion we left Liverpool Labour Council posters and leaflets explaining the facts about the dispute.

On finishing our work in and around the factories we prepared for the next task, fly-posting. Myself and another comrade set off to do the centre of Birkenhead. On our way around Birkenhead we decided that fly-posting was necessary in the local park. One position we thought a poster would be required was right next to a Wirral Borough Council van. As we were putting one

of the posters up an angry voice came from the van: "Ay-come here". With visions of a visit to the local police station we approached the van. "Slap some of them on the van will ya", without needing to be asked twice we hastily placed three 'Support Liverpool Labour Council' posters on the van. Then he said: "It's about time we got these Tories out, they've messed all the services up by making them go private!"

I then asked him if he would be coming out in support on the 25 September and he replied: "You try and bloody well stop me."

With this kind of attitude being shown on the opposite side of the Mersey how can we fail to defeat the Tory government?

Yours fraternally
Paul Heron
Wallasey

Message for Kinnock

Dear Comrades,
In the forthcoming confrontation of Liverpool with the present government, it is perhaps the actions of one person which will prove the most decisive in bringing about a victory for the 49 Labour councillors.

This person is none other than the leader of the Labour Party, Neil Kinnock. Mr Kinnock is in a very fortunate position with regard to the Liverpool people's plight. We have heard his incessant pleas to the rank and file not to damage the party's chances in the next election by alienating potential Labour voters, hence his refusal to support the

miners' struggle and his continued dissociation from the Liverpool Labour council's stance.

Will he dare to suggest that by fighting to maintain jobs and services Liverpool city council is damaging the party's vote? Or will he at last realise that his position compels him to mirror the strength of the Liverpool labour movement.

Our councillors have set a precedent and we will accept no less from one who regards himself as the head of the labour movement. We will not forget where you stood when this battle has run its course.

Yours fraternally
Martin Cummins
Gilmoss Ward
Labour Party

An unpopular policy

Dear Comrades,
Alistair Graham, the right-wing general secretary of CPSA wrote in the September edition of the union's journal that the labour movement should go for 'wages policy'. It would, he said, improve Labour's chances at the next general election.

What these people don't seem to realise is that experience has taught workers that 'wages policy' means cuts in living standards. Limiting wage increases always seems to be more suc-

cessful than limiting price rises.

In reality Labour's right wing share the same fundamental view as the Tories—both believing that only cuts in wages will enable the economy to grow. (Everybody else's wages, that is).

But why is it, if that policy were true, that the poorest countries in the world also suffer from mass unemployment? Why has Northern Ireland both the lowest wages and the highest unemployment in Europe?

The answer to this is investment. British bosses do not invest the surplus produced by labour in manufac-

Media propaganda



A hanger on HMS Hermes on its way to the Falklands. Media reports during the war were vetted to keep public opinion on the side the government.

Photo: Martin Weaver

Dear Comrades,

The true nature of the BBC has once again been exposed for what it actually is, an extremely effective instrument of the capitalist state.

It has been revealed by the Glasgow Media Group that a film they produced called *War and peace news* due for screening this week has been censored.

The film, which was scheduled for the *Open Space* series, deals with television news coverage of the Falklands conflict.

The Media Group obtained leaked minutes of confidential news and current affairs executive meetings in which it shows that the BBC banned interviews with bereaved relatives—reporting was distorted to

(wait for it) "suit the emotional sensibilities of the public". The "normal detached" style of reporting was felt to be an "unnecessary irritation" meaning that the BBC coverage was used to put across government statements of policy.

Yours fraternally
Pat McKeown

Unploughed Field

Dear Comrades,

At a recent meeting of Birkenhead GMC a delegate made a complaint about 'political censorship'. He explained that his local library had offered for sale a mint condition copy of a book written by Frank Field (the local MP), and proposed that we write to the local

paper, the *Birkenhead News* complaining that the book was obviously being sold because it was written by a Labour MP.

However another delegate then stated that he was a librarian and that books were only sold when they hadn't been borrowed for a certain length of time. He went on to say that he had recently come across another

book written by Frank Field in the library where he works and had discovered that this book was last borrowed from the library five years ago!

The chairman tactfully stated that maybe we'd better not write to the *Birkenhead News*.

Yours fraternally
Dave Clark
Birkenhead CLP



Alistair Graham—bring back "wages policy".

turing industry. Japan's capitalists, for example, invest about \$2,600 per head per year, whilst their British counterparts invest about

\$1,000.

It does not take a genius to deduce that the Labour Party would radically improve its chances at the next election if, amongst other things, it attacked the bosses for their failures rather than trying to pin the blame on workers for trying to obtain incomes they can live on.

Right wing leaders, unless the left defeats them in elections, will be an albatross around our necks with policies as attractive as yesterday's warmed-up dinner.

Yours fraternally
Steve Appleton
CPSA Leeds

Memorable meetings

Dear Comrades,

On Tuesday 17 September I attended a Cleethorpes Labour Party meeting in which the branch was to discuss the resolution put forward by the LPYS against the recent expulsions of the Attercliffe members of the Labour Party.

What a farce it turned out to be. Once the resolution had been proposed and seconded only one person was allowed to speak from the floor in support of the resolution and even though others wanted to come in the chairman closed the discussion and went straight into the vote with great protest

from the floor.

However, even the voting was farcical and when someone called for a re-count it was refused. So much for democratic debate within the Labour Party. Although the LPYS lost the vote, we did however sell 11 papers.

Also on Monday 16 September I attended a rally in Sheffield against the expulsions. What a memorable occasion it turned out to be. After hearing the speakers a financial appeal was made for the libel case in which £307 was raised, £60 being donated by the Asian and Pakistani community.

Yours fraternally
Andrea Studd
Cleethorpes

Littlewoods article

Dear Comrades,

I would like to endorse the article on Littlewoods in *Militant* (27 September). The new style management are provoking a great deal of resentment. Communications between management and workers you could describe as the mushroom system: keeping us in the dark and feeding us on manure (to put it more politely than usual).

So-called investment is almost entirely in new technology which has cost thousands of jobs. Facing this concerted attack, workers have turned to the unions, but because they have no clear alternative policy and no regular accountability they have made it more difficult to resist management's psychological warfare.

We are calling for full accountability of officials, for branch meetings to be on site with creche facilities and for a fighting union.

Desmond Pitcher, Littlewoods' boss has another idea to "bring investment to Liverpool." The *Daily Mirror* reported he now had plans to entertain 12 visitors from Hong Kong who are considering setting up a textile works on Merseyside for clothes for a mail order business. Sounds suspiciously like UK Sweatshops Ltd to me...

Your article provoked tremendous interest at work, the first time a true picture of life at Littlewoods was given. Workers asked "why don't we read stuff like that in the *Sun* or *Mail*?" We all know the answer. Keep up the good work. We need a daily *Militant* to put the truth.

Yours fraternally
Ron Flower
USDAW Littlewoods
Mail Order Crosby
personal capacity

LEFT and RIGHT

Beer drinkers vote yes

ACCORDING TO the *Financial Times* one beneficiary from the crisis in Liverpool has been the Cross Keys pub. It is opposite Liverpool Boxing Stadium, venue of last week's mass meetings. On the Monday, the time of the General and Municipal union mass meeting, business was so brisk it ran out of beer at lunchtime. On the Tuesday the stadium saw the mass meeting of the local government officers' union, NALGO. This time the pub ran out of white wine.

Fairly expensive

A MAJOR row has broken out in Canada over the siting of the World Fair extravaganza in Vancouver, in the province of British Columbia. While little has been done to aid the province's 13.6 per cent unemployment rate, the government are splashing out £797 million on the fair. The World Fair's Vancouver site is only one mile from the city's soup kitchens for the unemployed.

Loosening their belt

THE LATEST survey reveals that the top 55 British company executives earn at least £200,000 a year. Richard Giordano, Chairman of British Oxygen still tops the poll as the highest paid man in Britain with his salary of £771,600, an increase of 48 per cent this year. Second highest paid is a director of Thomson International who won an increase of 552 per cent this year. Recession? What recession?

A 'successful' government

Dear Comrades,

Chancellor Helmut Kohl, leader of West Germany's Conservative-Liberal coalition government, has recently described it as "the most successful government in the world".

According to the German Marxist newspaper *Voran*, there are now a record three and a half million unemployed in West Germany. Unemployment benefit has been reduced by as much as 25 per cent and pensions by eight per cent.

It's clear that Kohl's government is highly 'successful'—in representing the interests of capital.

To protest against the government's policies the DGB (the German TUC) has called a week a action for 14-19 October. Marxists believe that the trade unions and their political arm, the Social Democratic Party, should use this week of action to recruit thousands of unorganised workers, women and youth into their ranks.

In West Germany the opportunities exist now more than ever for mobilising the working class behind a Social Democratic Party committed to carrying out socialist policies which can put an end to capitalism's 'successes' once and for all.

Yours fraternally
Mora Maclean
Glasgow

Students back Liverpool

THE EXECUTIVE of the National Union of Students has voted to support Liverpool City Council's fight to defend jobs and services. This follows a lobby of its meeting on 29 September by members of Further Education Labour Students from Liverpool and London.

Cheryl Varley, a Liverpool Further Education sabbatical officer and Jackie Bates, convener of the Merseyside Area Students Organisation (MASO), both addressed the executive, which also voted to fully support the special one-day conference called by MASO on 20 October to build national support for the city council.

The executive's decision must now be turned from words into action, with all the resources of the student

movement mobilised to defend those defending education in Liverpool. Unfortunately, the executive could not find time to discuss proposals for practical measures from its Further Education National Committee. There must therefore be a massive campaign from rank-and-file students to pressure the executive to match their words with deeds.

By John Jennings



Students and Young Socialists lobby the NUS executive on Sunday.

MERSEYSIDE AREA Student Organisation one day conference: 'Support Liverpool City Council. Sunday 20 October, Venue: Stanley Theatre, Liverpool University Student Union, time: 10.00 am - 4.30pm. Invited speakers include: Tony Mulhearn (President Liverpool District Labour Party), Paul Lucock (Deputy Chair FE Committee, Liverpool Council), Speaker from Joint Shop Stewards Committee, Cheryl Varley (FE Sabbatical Liverpool), Phil Woolas (President NUS), Jackie Bates (MASO Convenor). For more information about the conference contact J Bates MASO convenor, Haigh Buildings, Maryland Street, Liverpool 1, phone: 051 701 4047.

Students and workers unite

THE CAMPAIGN Against Redundancies in Education (CARE) came into existence originally in response to a decision by the college authorities in Aberystwyth to sack a politics lecturer in order to save money. A meeting was organised, with the lecturer concerned speaking, along with representatives from other unions and the local Trades Council.

Following this meeting an emergency meeting of the Students' Union was called at which a resolution calling for the establishment of CARE was passed overwhelming by several hundred students. CARE began meeting twice a week with representatives from all the unions involved in education locally.

The first event we organised was a march and rally to coincide with a meeting of the college Senate.

As a direct result of our campaign the college was forced to back down on the sacking of the lecturer.

CARE has shown us that it is only when students and workers fight together that we really stand a chance of resisting attacks on our education system.

By Dave Richards
(Chair, Wales Labour Students)

Council promotes education

IN THE light of the battle of Liverpool City Council, *Militant* interviewed Liz Snape, president of Liverpool Polytechnic Students' Union, who outlines the steps taken by the Labour council to defend and expand the facilities provided by the Polytechnic: "Immediately the council was elected, the plans of the previous Liberal council which initially meant 37 course closures was reversed.

Previously the attitude of the eight directors who ran the Poly had been: "What cuts can we make this year"? The rector prided himself in saving money through cuts. These gang of eight were removed immediately. The council then increased spending by £1.5 million.

The first improvement that was

undertaken was to expand the nursery facilities in the polytechnic. The nursery was previously partially subsidised by the student union. The new Labour council paid the extra to make the facilities free and also increased the number of places available to students.

The whole attitude of the council is expansion and improvements rather than cuts. With the £1.5 million funds, an academic plan has been drawn up by the academic board and the board of governors.

The board of governors has replaced the Liberal-Tory clique who ran the college by members of the labour and trade union movement in Liverpool. As a result the poly is now being run with the interests of the working class in mind.

As well as free nursery places, courses have been opened free to the unemployed. The whole idea is to open up education to those who are denied an opportunity to enter higher education, ie the working class.

For the first time in ten years, the big black cloud that has hung over the polytechnic of hit-lists of courses to close, and jobs to be lost has been lifted. The Labour council has provided the basis of an education system that should be every socialist's dream.

The Labour council has really got it together. If they can do this in just two years, imagine what a Labour government could do based on the same policies."

School students organise

AT THE founding conference of the Scottish School Students' Union on 14 September, there were school students from Dundee, Falkirk, Stirling and Glasgow—a wide representation from all over Scotland.

Over 15,000 leaflets were produced and distributed in preparation for the conference and there was wide coverage in the press, Scottish TV and the BBC news.

The conference discussed many issues, including Liverpool and the teachers' strikes. School students who had never been to a con-

ference before got up and made excellent contributions.

In a session on how to establish and build branches of the union in the schools, Mandy Graham, a fourth-year school student from North Kelvinside school in Glasgow said: "We set up our branch of the union by getting the local LPYS branch to help us leaflet and set up stalls outside the school."

The conference was extremely enthusiastic and optimistic and the Scottish Committee which was elected will discuss plans to produce a charter, as a means of recruiting school students to the union.

The SSU in Scotland can only go from strength to strength. This was summed up when Tony Quinn, the fraternal speaker from the LPYS said: "This union has the potential to become the largest union in Scotland and nationally, larger even than the TGWU".

By Tricia Moore
(Organising Secretary, Scottish SSU)



School students marching past Liverpool Town Hall on their one-day strike in April.

Un-
'Democratic
Left'

IN THE one-day strike in Liverpool last week, members of the Labour Party Young Socialists set up a picket line in support of the council, at the North East Technical College.

As a result 1,500 students and lecturers joined the strike. Old Swan Tech was also solid in support. Members of the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS) in the further education (FE) colleges in Liverpool have been in the forefront of the battle against the Tories.

The "Democratic Left" leadership of NOLS claimed in their manifesto for the last years NOLS conference that their priority was to expand in the FE sector. This will leave a sour taste in the mouths of Labour Students in NE Tech and Old Swan Tech since neither have received any NOLS membership cards—four and a half weeks into the start of the new term!

The 'Democratic Left' have increasingly turned to bureaucratic manoeuvres to try to hamper the growth of clubs which do not support the ideas of the leadership. They have been backed up to the hilt in these attacks by the Labour Party bureaucracy.

Disputes

As a result, at the beginning of the new academic year, instead of putting all their efforts into winning students to the Labour Party, Labour club officers are being forced to waste time and money in disputes with the NOLS office.

It seems likely that again this year deadlines for affiliation of new clubs will be early November, despite the recommendations of the Labour Party Appeals and Mediation committee that the deadlines would be discussed well in advance of being set.

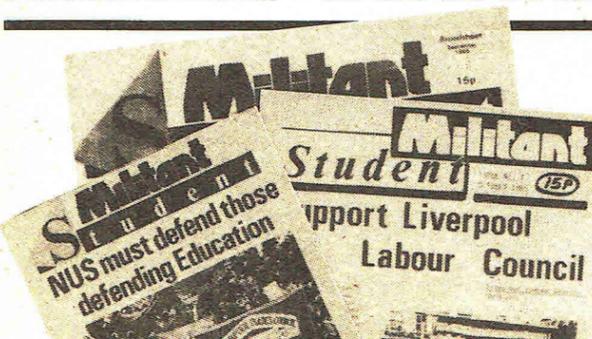
Already NOLS leaders have refused to inaugurate Bathgate Tech Labour club on two separate occasions. Tom Sawyer, chair of the party's youth sub-committee must be flooded with resolutions of protest at this decision.

The 'Democratic Left' have always tried to maintain a mask of opposition to witch-hunts. In Wales however this has slipped to reveal the truth.

According to minutes circulated to their members the 'Democratic Left' are proposing mass expulsions from NOLS and the sabotage of the South East Wales Student Association which brings under its banner 30,000 students. This shows that the 'Democratic Left' are prepared to put their own narrow interests before those of rank and file students.

Despite their attempts to stop the growth of the ideas of Marxism in the student field, by showing rank and file students on a local and regional level what a Marxist leadership can, do *Militant's* ideas will grow from strength to strength.

By Simon Kaplan



ORDER NOW for freshers' fayres, from *Militant Student Publications*, c/o 3-13 Hepscott Road, London E9 5HB. Student Bulletin—15p, Broadsheet—15p, Leaflets—3.50 for 500.

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

London buses back Battersea

BUSWORKERS AT Battersea garage in South London began a strike on Monday against closure of our garage.

The nine to one vote in favour of striking showed a recognition that the time for reliance on campaigning for public support has ended.

A meeting of representatives of garages in the Abbey district, which covers central London, met on Tuesday, and nine will be curtailing services in support of Battersea.

Battersea garage in South London began a strike on Monday against closure of our garage.

By Seamus Mullen
(TGWU branch committee, Battersea garage)

Support is also expected from the Merton garage where a meeting is going on at time of writing. Severe disruption of central London services is expected.

The workers are par-

ticularly angry at the intimidatory attitude of management. This morning, for instance, the garage manager, shouting in an insulting way, ordered strikers out of the canteen. But we've had enough of that kind of treatment.

A further meeting of Abbey district representatives will take place on Friday where escalation of the action will be discussed if management have not given ground.



Strikers outside Battersea bus garage.

Rick Matthews (FL)

Teachers' Pay

CHANCES OF settlement of the teachers' pay dispute improved last week.

The education committee of the Labour-controlled Association of Metropolitan Authorities finally voted (20 to 10) to break from the other employers on the Burnham negotiating committee. It will now support negotiation on the pay claim without any of the strings about conditions of service and pay scales which Education Secretary Keith Joseph has been insisting on.

This will produce a party polarisation on the management side of the



Teachers rally in London last Tuesday.

Rick Matthews (FL)

Burnham committee. Labour will need the support of just one of the SDP/Liberal or independent councillors to have a majority. All will be revealed at the next meeting of the management side this Friday.

In the meantime the teachers' action continues.

Over 14,000 English and Welsh NUT members struck for half a day on Monday and NAS/UWT members took action on Tuesday. In Scotland, the EIS's longer-running dispute will close 110 schools during the week as part of its selective strike campaign.

Print union unity agreement

"ABOUT TIME!" will be the response from printers and journalists to the agreement between the NGA and NUJ concerning the introduction of new technology in the provincial press area.

Now the employers will have to agree. And of course SOGAT who are not included and whose involvement must be a priority.

The petty squabbling of union tops over the last year has divided the workforce whilst giving confidence to the bosses. It must be ended now.

The agreement has provision for joint chapel meetings, the honouring of picket lines, 100 per cent union membership. Rates and conditions to be based on the best.

Unfortunately there is no commitment to fight for jobs. It only declares its opposition to compulsory redundancy.

The battle is nevertheless far from over. The bosses offensive aims at breaking the power of the unions.

The pre-entry closed shop is its central target. This gives the unions control over hiring and firing, an element or workers' control under capitalism.

The closed shop, won decades ago because the various processes required to print and finish material needed separate skills, has now vanished with the advent of new technology.

The task today is to defend the strength that era gave printers—to fight again for the pre-entry closed shop

instead of taking it for granted.

But the question remains whether the present union leaders are up to the task.

The key to this present crisis is the membership. The whole membership of all the print unions must go into the battle.

A campaign of explanation to the rank and file of the dangers if the introduction of technology is on the bosses' terms must be waged.

This must then be followed up with mass membership meetings.

The message must be made clear to every employer who attacks even an individual union member that standing behind them is the full force of the print unions.

Miners fight back

Kent breaks even

KENT MINERS at Tilmanstone pit refused to be intimidated by the new manager, McAlpine, recently brought from Scotland to close three pits.

At a general meeting last Sunday resolutions were passed supporting Liverpool Council and donating £100 to the South African NUM.

A decision was made to hold pit gate meetings during the week to report back from the colliery review meeting on the fate of Tilmanstone, due to close next March.

The NCB informed the union that all meetings would have to be outside of Coal Board time against well established custom and practice over more than 30 years.

The NUM decided to go ahead with the meeting anyway. McAlpine then threatened that if the

meeting hadn't finished by 6.30 the gates would be locked and a whole day shift lost.

The men decided the report back needed to be heard in full, continued the meeting till 7.00, and then went straight home. The same thing happened with the afternoon shift.

The piece of information that the coal board didn't want the men to hear was the so-called loss made by the pits this year was £8 million and the total cost of redundancies was £8 million.

So the coalfield is effectively breaking even and there is absolutely no economic reason for closing Tilmanstone colliery or Betchanger or Snowdown.

By Andy Roberts

Durham Walk-out

MINERS AT the Ep-pleton/Murton/Hawthorn pit complex in Durham walked out on Monday night after two Eppleton miners were sacked for clocking off early.

Eppleton was picketed out and the rest of the complex joined the strike after a visit

from the night shift. 2,500 came out but management refused to negotiate.

A meeting on Tuesday afternoon agreed to return, but to come out again with support from the whole Durham area, if the NCB refuse to negotiate reinstatement.

Yorkshire mining community organises against pit closures

THE mining town of Wombwell, near Barnsley, faces economic and social devastation unless MacGregor and Thatcher are stopped.

Three miles south of Wombwell lies Cortonwood colliery, earmarked for closure.

Darfield Main colliery can be seen from Wombwell town centre. And in June the Board announced their intention to close the pit.

Many workers at Houghton Main colliery, three miles away, now believe that last week's announcement has placed the

future of their colliery in jeopardy.

At Darfield Main colliery the NCB have been attempting to demoralise the workforce into meeting the pits closure.

Cynical choice of coal to be mined has meant that poor seams are being worked. Hardly any coal is being produced and consequently bonus rates are virtually nil.

The Coal Board's aim is clear—demoralise the workforce with low wages and eventually they'll give up and either accept redundancy or a transfer to another colliery.

The Coal Board would then claim that the workers themselves had decided to close the pit.

But miners at Darfield Main have seen through the NCB's strategy. In October a march is being organised, in Barnsley, to protest.

Also the Darfield Main and Community Action Committee has been established to campaign for the pit's future.

We plan to organise public meetings, and a march and rally in the Wombwell area, to get the local community fully behind our campaign.

Our first task is to raise

money. We made a magnificent start by raising £56 from a petition and collection in Wombwell town centre.

Similar fund raising events are also planned. However, donations, and messages of support from the rest of the movement are also urgently needed. In particular invitations to address labour movement bodies would be welcome.

Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to "the Darfield Main and Community Action Committee". Messages of support and requests for speakers should be addressed to M. Marshall, 17 Rinnington Road, Wombwell, Barnsley. Telephone Barnsley 757700.

By a member of Darfield Main and Community Action Committee

Houghton Main meets Rambo

AFTER SIX months of Rambo-style management miners at Houghton Main pit have started to push back.

All the normal consultation and conciliation procedures have either been ignored by management, or where they have taken place were a farce.

We have had difficulties distributing union papers and our branch officials have been subjected to unprecedented intimidation.

Last Tuesday a dispute over 'Wet notes' (permission to leave the mine early because of wet working conditions) led to the vast majority of men walking out.

Within 24-hours we had a guarantee that immediately work resumed all four branch officials could participate in a stage one meeting. Previously only two officials had been permitted to attend.

It was also agreed that if this meeting failed to resolve the dispute then a stage two meeting would take place within three days.

However emotions at the pit were running high and most men felt that we should stay out in the hope that a show of strength and unity would be a warning to management.

Attitudes have also hardened as a result of a let-

ter from the manager written prior to the dispute. It outlines the situation in each of the three seams worked and procedures on 'Wet notes', conciliation and incentive payments.

He claims procedures and agreements are being adhered to, which doesn't convince the men, but also makes it clear that he is about to tear up all the written agreements on incentives.

From the beginning of the scheme we opted to have all face teams paid on an average rather than face by face. This is an option which is clearly laid down in the agreement and the decision

should be made by the face men and noone else.

Now the manager says he will introduce face by face payments for an experimental period of six weeks—without any consultation whatsoever.

On Thursday last week at a special meeting it was decided to return to work this Monday. The list of grievances that has built is a long one. It may be that we have to take action to resolve every issue. But it would be less painful all round if NCB management abandon Rambo and try reasoned negotiation.

By a Houghton Main NUM member

A long year at Addenbrookes

Hospital workers call for national action against privatisation

LUNCHTIME A year ago on Sunday September 30 1984. Women domestics gathered in the concourse of Addenbrookes hospital, Cambridge. Years of friendship, of working together, began to swell up into tears. They were meeting to say goodbye.

By Graham Heneghan
(Addenbrookes Strike Committee)

The axe of privatisation had fallen, splitting 300 domestics down the middle.

Goodbye to their friends made redundant. Goodbye to their own jobs. Tomorrow would be the first day of their strike.

OCS (Office Cleaning Services) had won the cleaning contract by throwing out the window Whitley Council conditions of employment cutting staff and sickness benefit.

It meant cutting cleaning hours so low to get the cheap contract, that they can't properly clean Addenbrookes!

In April, Cambridge Health Authority serviced notice on OCS that improved standards of cleaning would have to be met by June or ending of their contract would be considered.

In May, ward sisters held a special meeting to express their alarm at the low standard of cleaning. The sisters' report stated that between January and May 600 cleaning complaints were made.

On June 25, Cambridge Health Authority members voted for dirt at Addenbrookes Hospital by continuing OCS' contract.

How much longer will patients have to suffer the complacency of shabby management which puts their lives at risk! This was clearly stated by the Royal College of Nursing:

"Cleaning standards at Addenbrookes Hospital are potentially dangerous. The centres of wards appear to be clean but areas around the beds and lockers are filthy. It is in this sort of environment in a hospital where in-

fection grows very rapidly." (Cambridge Evening News, June 25).

Cambridge Health Authority, the people who make the decisions about our local health service are not elected but appointed by Government.

Members do not have to have any knowledge of the NHS and are not accountable to the public or patients who they should serve!

They are more concerned to push through Government policy to the detriment of patients. The Addenbrookes Hospital dispute shows the need for democracy and accountability, which means elected health authority members, accountable to the community they serve.

On Monday May 13th, 1985 200 NUPE and COHSE members from other strikebound hospitals converged on Addenbrookes.

At this Rally, Sue Smith of Barking Hospital said: "We feel each of these



Addenbrookes strikers lobbying the TUC this year.

disputes is standing in isolation. The women of Barking are asking for a co-ordinated fight against privatisation."

Yet at the TUC conference in 1983 Unions were committed to a co-ordinated campaign against privatisation!

Leadership

Words have been spoken, words have been printed, but no proper support has been given by union leaders.

There is no co-ordination, no linking together of the struggle. Instead each strikebound hospital is left isolated, to get on with their own thing according to the

quality of local union leadership.

When you consider what is happening at Addenbrookes is beginning to happen all over Britain. We wonder why the union leaderships are not backing it as a national campaign of co-ordinated action?

We went to the TUC this year hoping for support. We asked if we could do a collection—out of the question were told. We asked if we could show a banner, just to say that we were here...out of the question! If the working class can't come to the TUC where do we go?

The National Action Committee was founded on

the initiative of the strikers at Barking Hospital. The Barking Strike Committee declares:

"Born out of joint meetings and rallies by strike committees up and down the country, the NAC is the new force for change. The NAC is the way to regain the initiative in the struggle against privatisation.

"We must unite our unions in the hospitals and in local government around a common strategy to defeat the national menace of contracting firms. The committee is dedicated to the breaking down of the sense of isolation felt in the districts by those in struggle."

Brum teachers' mass meeting

OVER FOUR thousand Birmingham members of the National Union of Teachers met in the centre of Birmingham on Thursday 19 September, to hear their local union executive's plans for escalating industrial action in support of their pay claim.

This dispute has been the longest teachers' battle to date. We are now entering the ninth month and further away from a settlement than at any time in the dispute.

The angry mood among teachers was shown at the meeting. Last week's Burnham Negotiating Committee offered us less than in July.

Teachers' salaries have fallen in real terms by 35%. In fact, now it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain loans and mortgages from the Building Societies because teachers are considered to be a bad risk.

At the meeting, it was reported that in the recent

ballots for escalation of action, over 91% of teachers in Birmingham schools replied to Ballot 7 (no after school activities, no trips etc) and over 82% replied to ballot 8 (½ day strike).

The latest ballot, No 9, is now asking NUT members to come out for a half day strike in each month of October, November and December. No doubt by the mood shown at yesterday's meeting the vote will be a yes vote.

Sir Keith Joseph and the Tory press have waged a massive campaign against the teachers, accusing the National Executive Committee of manipulating its members by keeping the facts from the members about the new pay rise which is on offer until 11 October.

Teachers are not going to be conned by this kind of tactic. We realise exactly what's on offer—a few crumbs on the table.

Conditions of service are

worse now than ever before. Teachers are working harder than ever before, coping in terrible conditions under immense pressure.

All the teaching unions must get together to co-ordinate their activities into positive action, to show Sir Keith Joseph and the rest of the Tories exactly what they can do with their offer.

A Birmingham NUT member

Silentnight strike grows stronger

AS THE strike at Silentnight bedding company in Cheshire enters its seventeenth week, enormous support has been generated throughout the country.

This has been achieved by the efforts of strikers. Travelling all over the country to visit factories and speak at trade union, Labour Party and other meetings.

The workers now understand the power of the rank-and-file membership to influence the actions of the leadership of their union, the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union. Pressure from strikers forced the FTAT leaders to put an emergency

resolution to the TUC conference.

At a mass meeting in Barnoldswick, on Monday, 23 September, FTAT members called on the national officials there for positive leadership and an overall strategy for winning the strike.

By Linden Stafford
(Skipton Labour Party)

The leadership were urged to call for more support from FTAT members nationwide and were pressed to take a more forceful role themselves, rather than leaving everything up to the strikers.

On Saturday, 21 September, Pat Wall,



Looking for support at the TUC

President of Bradford Trades Council, Bob Cryer, Labour Euro MP, and other speakers addressed a rally in Keighly, where £635 was raised for

the Silentnight strike fund.

Militant supporters are now producing a weekly strike bulletin called *The Silentnight Striker*, which

is being prepared with the help of FTAT members and will be given to all those on strike.

Leicester DHSS

THE LONG-RUNNING dispute at Leicester DHSS continues.

The union presented a report to management during talks last week in Nottingham.

It stated that 50 more full-time staff are needed in Leicester office.

Management agreed not to employ any further casual staff for four weeks but to present the union's proposals to their bosses in London.

In the meantime discussions continue locally between the DHSS group manager and the CPSA regional chairman.

By Adrian Schartz
Leicester West LPYS

Sussex print

SEVENTEEN PRINT workers have been sacked by the *West Sussex County Times* in Horsham for refusing to give up their union rights.

Between them the workers have over 150 years of service to the firm.

After lengthy talks on pay and conditions the men have been locked out unless they agree to sign away their union rights.

Management are using scab labour to produce the paper. Amongst other actions workers are encouraging people not to buy the paper and to persuade their friends, neighbours and relatives to boycott the journal.

Alan Lanbirth spoke to G Bishop NGA FOC.

Militant

**Brixton shooting:
no cover up**

See page 3

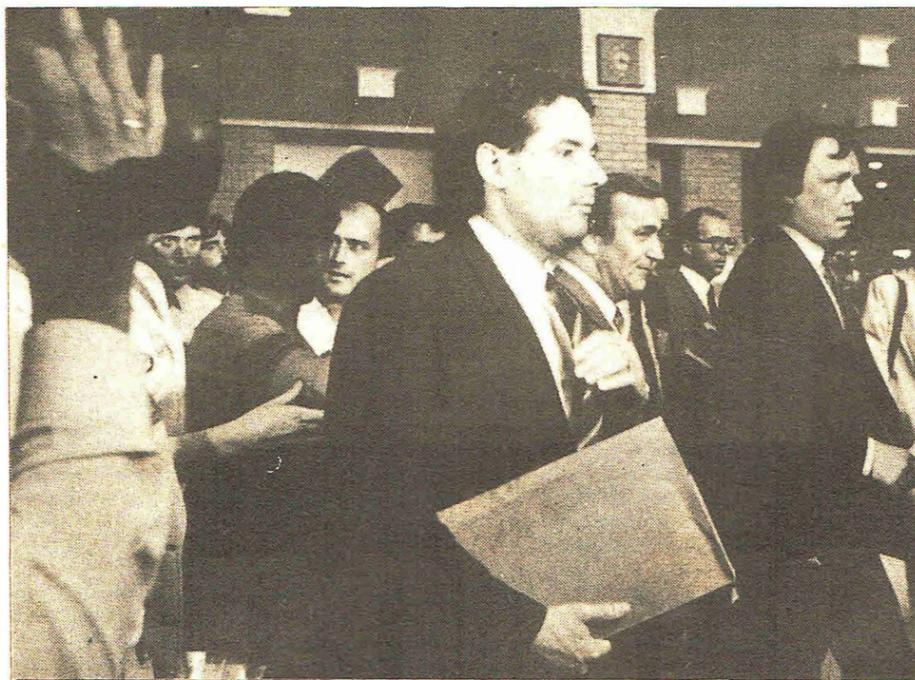
Liverpool council defiant

WORKERS IN Liverpool are furious that Neil Kinnock has added his voice to those of the Tories, the Liberals, the press and the bishops in condemning the city council's fight to defend jobs and services. Cleansing department worker, Steve Sullivan, reported that workers in his depot were unanimous in their condemnation.

Kinnock told delegates that he owed: "everything I ever had" to the labour movement—a decent house, education and a "chance in life". These are the very things that he condemns the Liverpool councillors for providing.

By the end of next year, 5,200 new houses will have been built, 3,600 are already completed. 2,000 jobs have been created or protected; six new nurseries have been opened, sports centres built, further education saved from cuts and new parks created.

None of this could have



Derek Hatton leaving the conference hall after Neil Kinnock's speech.

been achieved if the council had agreed to comply with the directives of the Tory government, which has robbed the city of £360 million. They had no alternative but to budget for less than their anticipated expen-

diture. Otherwise either rates would have soared by 92 per cent or up to 10,000 workers would have faced redundancy.

David Blunkett for the Labour Party National Executive Committee (NEC)

has offered to send a delegation of trade union leaders and members of the NEC and Parliamentary Labour Party to get together with the leadership of the city council to open up the books to see if ways can be found to

bridge the gap between income and expenditure without making cuts.

The Liverpool councillors are confident that such an investigation will totally vindicate their policy. They bitterly dispute Kinnock's charge that they have made "impossible promises". Every promise made to the voters has been kept.

There has been anger too at Kinnock's distortion of the council's decision to issue letters to all their workforce explaining that in 90 days, unless the Tory government gives back £30 million of the money taken from the city, there will be no cash to pay wages. This course of action was urged on the council by the overwhelming majority of the members of unions which organise the manual workers, after the narrow vote against strike action.

It was done to prevent the councillors from immediately becoming liable to criminal prosecution. It was not imposed on the workforce, but agreed with them, in order to give both the councillors and the unions time to extend their campaign of explanation to the

entire workforce and the voters of Liverpool.

The deliberate misrepresentation of this tactic by Kinnock and some national trade union leaders is deplorable.

The conference has shown the vital need to spread the Liverpool campaign nationally to counter these distortions. The National Local Authorities Coordinating Committee, at its recall conference last Saturday pledged its support for the stand taken by the Liverpool council and the Liverpool Joint Shop Stewards' Committee. The message must now be urgently relayed to every council depot and workplace within Britain. Kinnock's intervention will have hindered the task of explaining the issues at stake, which make the visits to every corner of the movement more vital than ever.

With privatisation and next year's budget meetings looming large, there is not a council worker in the country who is safe. Victory for Liverpool will be the best possible boost to workers in every other authority.

Toxteth anger erupts

RIOTS ERUPTED in Toxteth, Liverpool 8, on Tuesday, after four black men were arrested, charged and remanded in custody in connection with an incident where a Londoner was stabbed at a carnival in Toxteth in August.

At the court 80 to 100 black youth were boiling with anger, chanting their opposition to the police. Shortly afterwards youth began to stop, overturn and burn cars. Black families told how they saw a Post Office van overturned with the driver in it; he and his mate escaped before the van was burned. A taxi driver bitterly complained that he was threatened and his taxi burned.

Crowds of local black and white people gathered on the streets, but only 200-300 were involved in the rioting.

The police were obviously well prepared for their response. Riot squads moved in swiftly and brutally in large numbers, banging on riot shields, dispersing crowds and sealing off the main Toxteth triangle. Personnel carriers, a type seen in Northern Ireland, were in use. The police drop-

ped all pretence of community policing and showed they had learned lessons from the riots of 1981. Skirmishes continued for several hours.

Working class families stand to gain nothing from these methods. The riots were a blind outburst of pent-up rage against the police and the harassment suffered by youth in the area.

Tension has been heightening for some time. The police have been involved in raids in recent weeks which have inflamed the situation. A previous arrest led to the local police station being besieged by a crowd breaking windows.

Militant opposes riots, but social deprivation, slum conditions, mass unemployment, racial harassment and heavyhanded policing are the ingredients for an explosion of rage.

It is only the heroic efforts of the Liverpool labour movement, especially the City Council, which has alleviated some of the worst conditions imposed on black and white families in Liverpool 8 by the Tories and capitalist class. For instance 1,400 of the 3,800 new council homes built are

in the south end of Liverpool.

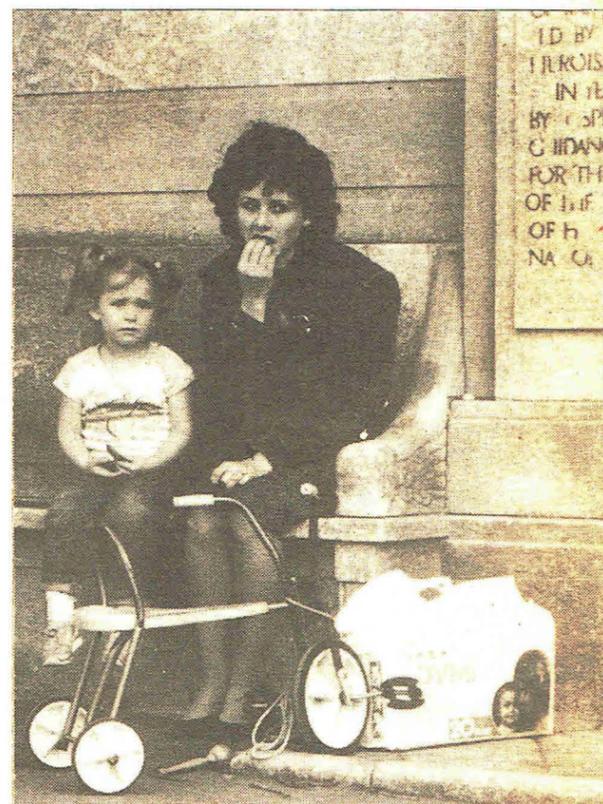
It is only the mass movement of organised class unity against the Tories, mobilised by *Militant* supporters and the left on the City Council that has prevented riots from erupting throughout the city before now and not just in black areas.

These incidents reinforce the need for Labour's leadership to support the council's campaign against the government.

The need for democratic control over policing operations is underlined, but above all, the urban decay and capitalist barbarism in inner city areas must be eradicated by a mass movement for socialist change if the underlying causes of riots are to be removed.

The anger and underlying bitterness displayed in blind, aimless rioting needs to be channelled into a political movement against the class enemy, behind the city council in an organised struggle to transform society.

By Militant reporters in Toxteth



Toxteth—an area of deprivation. Photo: John Arthur (Reflex)



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