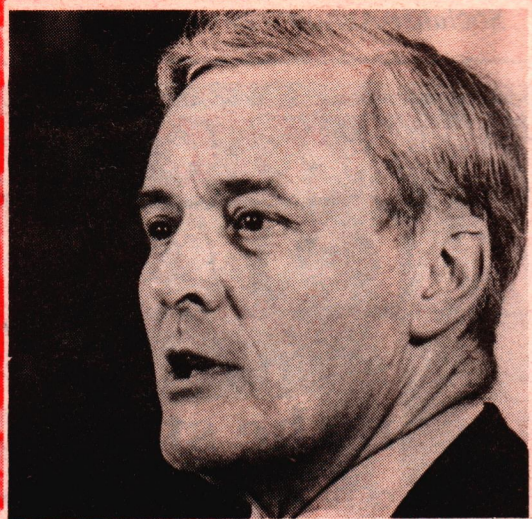


A **Socialist** **ACTION**

No. 64

29 June 1984

30p



ALL OUT WITH THE MINERS!

TONY BENN says:

‘THERE ARE two things which the movement should be doing right now for the miners.

First, trade unionists in a whole range of industries and services should plan to take industrial action where they work. This would be the best and most direct way to help now, and no-one need wait for permission to begin.

We have learned that from the women’s movement.

An extension of strike action would directly assist the NUM and give them a tremendous boost at the same time.

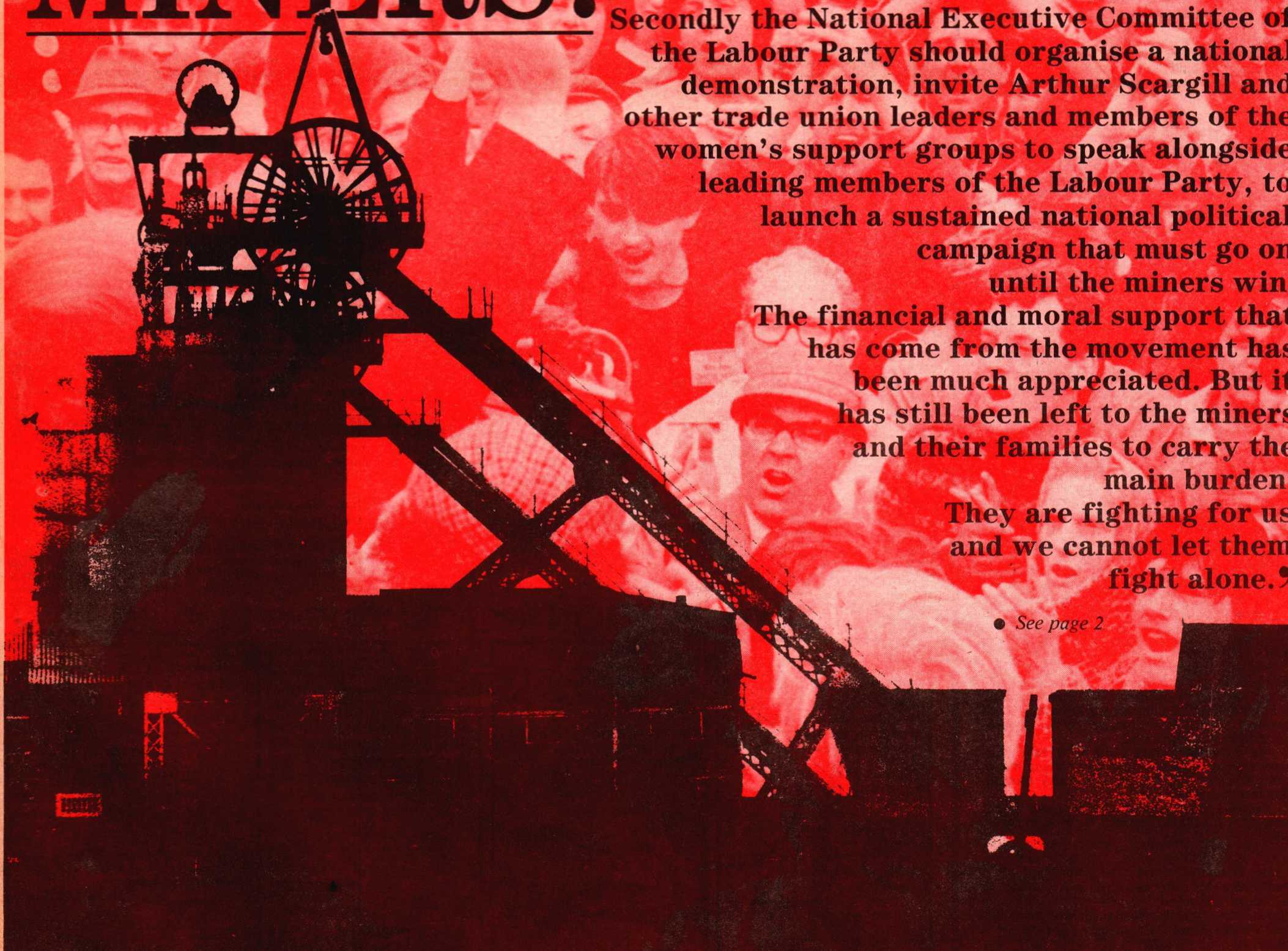
Secondly the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party should organise a national demonstration, invite Arthur Scargill and other trade union leaders and members of the women’s support groups to speak alongside

leading members of the Labour Party, to launch a sustained national political campaign that must go on until the miners win.

The financial and moral support that has come from the movement has been much appreciated. But it has still been left to the miners and their families to carry the main burden.

They are fighting for us and we cannot let them fight alone.’

● See page 2



Socialist ACTION

Next steps to win the strike

WHEN THATCHER and MacGregor broke up the negotiations between the NCB and the NUM ten days ago they thought they were on a winner. The police had defeated the miners at Orgreave. Every major paper was calling for the government to drive the miners into the ground.

But within a week determined action by the NUM and the NUR has turned that situation around. By Tuesday it was clear that the strike was beginning to bite more sharply than ever before.

What is vital now is that individual groups of workers are not left to fight alone. The government is going to have to try to break up the rail blockade and boycotts. It is vital now that the entire weight of the movement is thrown behind the NUM.

That is why Tony Benn's statement on Monday night calling for strike action and a national Labour Party demonstration is right. Not because it is Tony Benn. But because what he said is right on what is needed to win the strike.

To break up the isolation the government is trying to create around the miners, and those engaged in active solidarity with them, the entire weight of the Labour Party must be thrown behind them. A national Labour Party demonstration — with Arthur Scargill at its head, is the best way to achieve that.

The way to get effective solidarity strike action however is not to leave it to individual groups of workers. The only way a strike call can be made effective is for the NUM, in collaboration with other unions, to name the day for such solidarity strike action.

Following the successful regional days of action, a national day of action, a 24 hour general strike, can be built.

Building on the boycotts and local support the demands which are needed to win are:

- A national Labour Party demonstration in support of the miners.
- A national solidarity conference for the trade unions called by the NUM.
- A day of national strike action, a 24 hour general strike in support of the miners.

The whole labour movement has to concentrate on these goals in the weeks to come.

An unwelcome visitor

ON 14 JULY a most unwelcome visitor from France will be arriving in Britain. No, it won't be a consignment of French golden delicious apples, nor French lorry drivers, nor those other things the Sun likes to carry on its revolting tirades against. It will be a visit by French fascist leader Jean-Marie Le Pen.

Le Pen is coming to celebrate Bastille day in Maidstone with the National Front.

It is ironic really. The 14 July is one of the greatest days in human history. The anniversary of the day the people of France stormed the prison fortress of the Bastille and began in earnest the French revolution. That revolution, in turn, did more than anything before October 1917 to spread democracy, liberty, and the concept of equality throughout the world.

It was, in short, a revolution which stands for the reverse of everything which Le Pen stands for — which only goes to show that it is the revolution and not the country that made it which is important.

Unfortunately the policies of the French Neil Kinnock, Francois Mitterand, allowed Le Pen's fascists to gain 11 per cent in the Euro-elections in France. The SDP-Liberal controlled Maidstone borough council has appealed to the government to ban Le Pen's visit.

We disagree. Please come to Britain monsieur Le Pen. Only we propose the labour movement ensures it organises a suitably internationalist 'greeting'.

Perhaps 'the storming of Maidstone' would represent a suitable festivity for Britain on 14 July?

Editor: ALAN FREEMAN
Published weekly except two weeks in August and the last week of December.
Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent Socialist Action's views. These are expressed in editorials.



Striking German metal workers

The 35 hour 'quake'

THE WEST GERMAN strikes for the 35 hour week are the biggest labour conflicts in that country since the Second World War. JOHN ROSS looks at the development of the campaign by the West German metal and printing trade unions.

Given the weight of West German industry in Europe it didn't take long for the strikes led by the German metal workers union IG Metall to bite. The union launched its first wave of indefinite strikes on 14 May. By mid June 80,000 workers were on strike and 300,000 locked out by the employers in retaliation. The great bulk of German car production was shut down.

The effects of the strike spread rapidly outside West Germany itself. Among the key companies picked out for strike action by IG Metall were Robert Bosch, producer of fuel injection systems, Zahnradfabrik Friedrichshafen (ZF), Europe's largest producer of transmissions and steering assemblies, and Mahle, producers of pistons for virtually all Europe's high performance cars.

By mid June not only German vehicle producers were shut down but also the General Motors Antwerp plant in Belgium, which has a normal capacity of 240,000 cars a year.

By mid June Saab and Volvo in Sweden were running down production due to shortage of fuel injection equipment imported from West Germany. Vauxhall and Ford in Britain were running short of similar parts. Scania and Leyland vehicles were running out of power steering gear.

It is difficult in Britain to imagine the sheer scale and power of the IG Metall. With 2.6 million members, the union is best visualised as a combination of the AUEW and the manufacturing sections of the TGWU rolled into one — with the ISTC added on

for good measure.

In the last three years IG Metall has raised £112 million for its strike fund. The total assets of the union are calculated at £375 million.

In addition to the metal workers fight for the 35 hour week a parallel campaign for the same demand is being waged by the printers union IG Druck. The printers union has called out 12,000 workers in a series of rolling strikes which included shutting down, or crippling, the main West German newspapers in Frankfurt, Berlin and Munich.

On 18 June the public workers union OTV, which with 1.2 million members is the second largest union in Western Germany, also adopted the demand for a 35 hour week.

Confronted with this campaign the West German employers have taken an ultra-hard line, concentrating on splitting the West German unions and defeating the demand for the 35 hour week at all costs.

Their chief negotiating weapon has been introducing the idea of 'yearly working time' and proposing early retirement as an alternative to reducing the

working week. Reduction of the retirement age to 58 on 75 per cent of overall pay has been agreed in the textile industry for example. The other alternative has been for the employers to propose to allow workers individual days off. But the bedrock of the bosses' position has been to refuse any reduction in the basic 40 hour week for the entire workforce.

The advantage of these partial proposals to the employers is that they do not involve the hiring of extra workers. The days off would be taken at times of the year when production is slackest anyway and would not involve closing down the factories. The workers who retire early would not be replaced.

Goals

Instead of becoming a means of reducing West Germany's 2,100,000 unemployed — which is one of the chief goals of the 35 hour week demand — the proposals to reduce the working year would simply be used to launch a campaign for flexible working and productivity increases.

The employers' tactics have been successful in breaking off the right wing of the West German trade union federation, the DGB, from support of IG Metall. The chemical workers, miners, construction workers, textile workers and catering workers have all accepted the lowering of the retirement age as an alternative to the shorter working week.

The second tactic of the employers has been to

try to break up the internal solidarity of IG Metall itself. The employers have offered reduction of the work week to 38 hours for shift workers — but this would affect only 15 per cent of the IG Metall's members. A proposal is being floated to extend this to piece workers — which would mean more than a third of the membership. But the bedrock of the employers' position remains no reduction of the workweek below 40 hours for the bulk of the IG Metall's members.

Arbitration around the metal workers' claim has been set up under the extreme right wing Social Democrat Georg Leber and will be reporting this week.

The printing employers, probably in consultation with the metal industry bosses, have taken an ultra hard line. Arbitration over the print workers claim led to a report by Christian Democrat arbitrator Biedenkopf proposing a settlement on the lines of reducing the working year but not the working week. This was accepted by the union, but then rejected by the employers.

Faced with this hard line the two union leaderships have moved in opposite directions. The position of IG Druck has hardened with an extension of strike action. The IG Metall leadership has retreated by accepting bringing forward the annual holidays in companies such as Volkswagen — thus demobilising the workers involved in the struggle.

Largely verbal support for the unions' campaign has come from the leadership of the West German

Social Democratic Party (SDP). This in practice, however, has been urging a compromise on IG Metall.

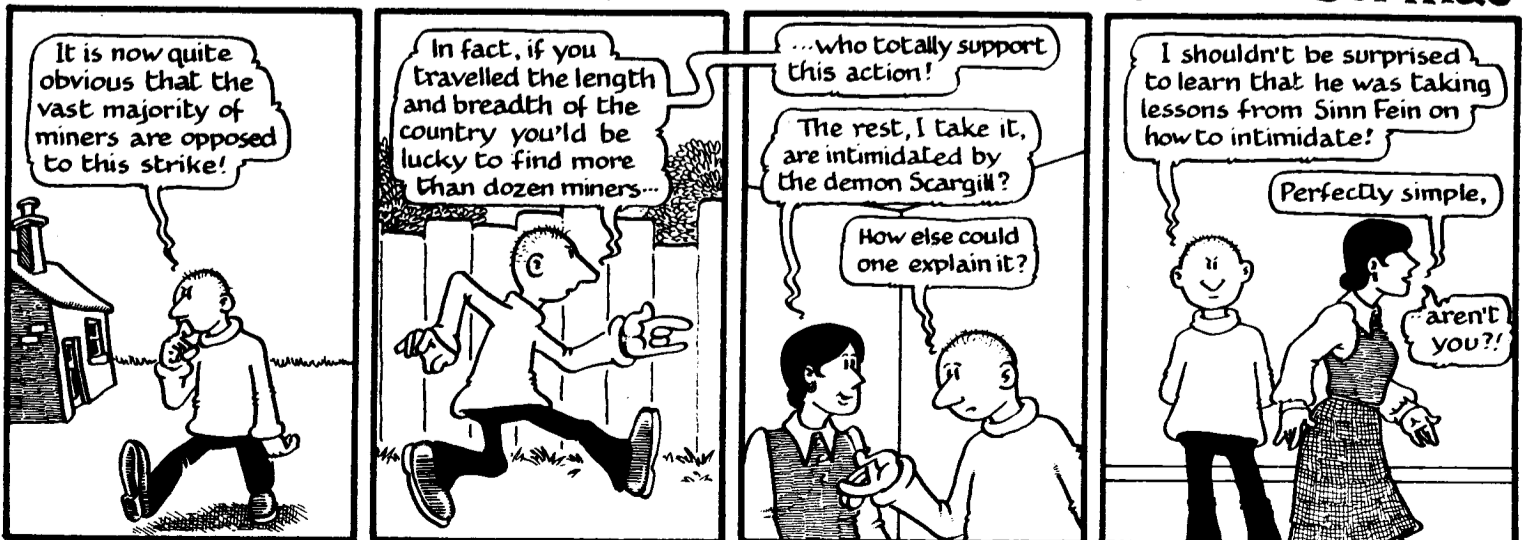
The 'Green' party, the ecologists, who won a major success in the Euro-elections, have a more radical position on paper — demanding the granting of the 35 hour week and positive discrimination in favour of women and immigrants among the new workers who would be taken on. But the Greens organised support in the trade unions scarcely exists.

At the parliamentary and state level the Greens demanded in Hamburg that the lockouts staged by the employers be declared illegal. But they made no such demands in the state of Hesse during their negotiations with the SPD over forming a new state government.

The long term effect of the strikes on West German politics however are going to be profound. West Germany already has the largest anti-missiles movement in Europe. In the Greens it has a party to the left of the SPD with a significant popular vote — 8 per cent at the Euro-elections. What was lacking in the political situation in West Germany was major struggles by the labour movement itself. The struggle over the 35 hour week, however, has for the first time well and truly shaken a section of the West German trade union movement from its post-war acceptance of social peace.

The effects of that step are going to reverberate through European politics for many years to come.

A PIECE of the ACTION





Kent NUM members occupy NCB headquarters

Jack Collins 'How much longer are miners expected to be up front with only a few unions giving active support.'

The ISTC are saying that they've made a £20,000 donation to our strike fund. Well I thank them for that.

But I'd also like to remind them that the Kent NUM with 2,500 members made a donation of £15,000 during the 1980 steel strike.

We also refused to allow any steel to come into the pit. We also refused to allow scrap metal to be removed from the pit. The steel we stopped coming in held up the development of the pit. This retarded the growth of our pits and miners lost wages.

We received steel workers into the pit villages who were on picket duty in Kent. We boarded them, transported food, gave them office space, and stopped work for a day to join the picket line in

THIS WEEK the miners' strike really began to bite. ● By Tuesday the blockade of Llanwern steel works had cut off iron ore supplies.

● The number of trains running from the Nottinghamshire coal field to the power stations via Shirebrook had been cut by three quarters.

● London's rail system was taking widespread solidarity action for the South East day of action on the 27 June.

After a drift round the time of the negotiations the NUM is taking the initiative back into its own hands. Socialist Action asked JACK COLLINS, secretary of the Kent NUM, for his comments on the recent events in the strike, and the need for solidarity.

Sheerness.

Whilst at Sheerness our members were beaten by the police and some were arrested and fined. So we feel offended when some steel workers decide not to support us now.

The main problem is Bill Sirs, I never know whether I'm talking about

Bill Sirs or Sir Bill ... time will tell I suppose.

With regard to the Labour Party I have to differentiate between the thousands of Labour Party members who have rallied behind us and leaders like Roy Hattersley and Neil Kinnock.

I would say they're taking out insurance. They're saying these things now so that in the future when they really want to come down hard on the miners they can say they've been consistent.

And to those Labour Party leaders who attack Arthur Scargill, I say that I wish those same people were as determined to implement Labour Party policy as Scargill is to implement NUM policy.

Our policy is no pit closures, and so is the policy of the Labour Party and the TUC.

Scargill is bound by national conference decisions, which not one member of the NUM opposed at the time. The NUM and its executive has no option but to stay out and fight until we've won on that policy.

The Labour and trade union movement have repeatedly declared their opposition to the Tebbit laws. I think I'm entitled to ask how much longer are miners expected to be up front with only a few unions giving active support? Food and money is very important, but the most important support is physical solidarity.

We're asking for solidarity action on 27 June, the SERTUC day of

action, but I'm also for extending that into more days and if necessary weeks of action. We're calling on the rest of the labour movement to join us in this fight.

I'd like to remind everybody that the escalation of the violence out on the picket lines is entirely the responsibility of the police. Kent only sent six miners at first to each pit in Leicestershire and Staffs. The police stopped us at the Dartford tunnel.

When we arrived we found thousands of police greeted us. They're responsible for the law breaking because they've been making the law up as they go along.

I have a letter in front of me now from Jack Jones complimenting the Kent miners on their behaviour in the first weeks of the strike. Now the police are knocking miners to the ground like ten pin bowling pins. The police have caused the violence not the miners.

We need a lot more people on the picket lines. I'm not a supporter of the Ayatollah Khomeini but the Shah had the most sophisticated army in the middle east, the most repressive spy network, and the people turned out in their masses and were able to defeat the Shah.

As for MacGregor's letter, a lot of NUM activists stuck it right back in the envelope and sent it back with appropriate slogans.

He's told us that production is going to be cut by four million tons. That means 20,000 jobs will go. He's forecasting increased output but only in the big new coalfields.

He's started to talk about 'our people' and 'his people' in coal industry. What a disgraceful, insulting stupid man he must be. Doesn't he know that if it wasn't for the tremendous support we've been getting he would be guilty of infanticide.

Like a hangman labourer he's supporting the government in the attempt to starve people out and yet he tries to pretend he's on our side.

BRITISH Rail and South Wales hauliers have stepped up their blackmail to try to break the blockade around the steelworks of Llanwern.

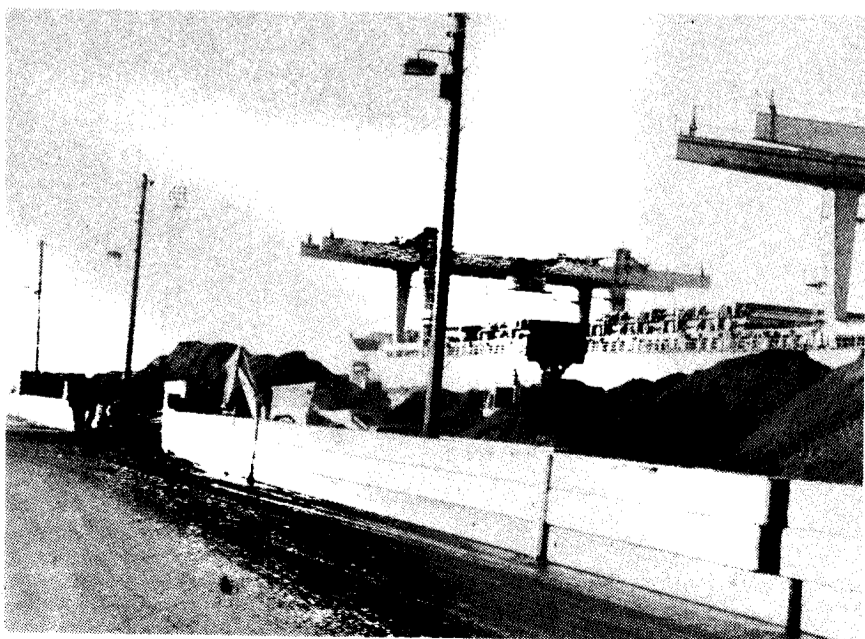
Socialist Action spoke to PETE KUCK, TGWU shop steward at Hazell's Haulage, Newport, about his victimisation for refusing to cross the Llanwern picket lines.

'On Thursday morning I had delivered a load of steel to West Wales. I returned to Llanwern where there were more loads to be delivered. I was informed by the Llanwern transport office that they had been told by Hazell's not to load me.

'I returned to Hazell's yard where I was told either I drive coal from Port Talbot to Llanwern through the miners' picket lines or I would be laid off indefinitely.

'I asked for the exact reason and was told that there was no work for myself, or Rev. the other driver who refused to carry coal. I answered that there was work, carrying steel

'I've never crossed a picket line in my life'



Coal stocks at Newport docks

from Llanwern. They replied: 'We know that but we want the lorries for coal.'

'However, the drivers at another haulage firm voted 10 to 13 against carrying the coal. Those who refused to carry the coal are still working carrying steel.

'The drivers who carried the coal received £25 a load. They are expected to do three loads a day.

'I wouldn't cross the picket lines because, apart from the fact I've never crossed a picket line in my life, I believe that those who are crossing are prolonging the strike. If everyone had refused it would have brought things to a head a lot sooner.

'I don't know if I'll keep my job, but I did what I think is right. Sometimes there's a difference between what you think is right and what you think is good for you. I only know that I couldn't sell out my conscience for any amount.

'If I get the sack at least I'll have the satisfaction of knowing that I didn't carry the weight of fear so heavily that I let it break my beliefs.'

Photo: P. HIGHFIELD

Interview: "The NCB is frantic"

THE illusion is over. There is not now going to be a quick negotiated end to the miners' strike. Once again the two sides face each other in a head-on confrontation.

JOHN KIRBY talked to DAVE PARRY from Thurcroft pit in South Yorks about the situation following the end of the talks. Both are members of Healy Labour Party.

John: What was your view of the negotiations?

Dave: The traditional NCB management are frantic about the state of the pits, the industry and even their own jobs. But they are dominated by MacGregor and Thatcher. So any negotiated peace has to be seen as a defeat for Scargill. Thatcher wants to be seen to defeat a determined, socialist leadership of a trade union.

She wants no admission that 'mob rule' has any effect on government. But I don't care what she says, it does. Scargill was not ditched by the rest of the NUM so MacGregor wrecked the talks.

What are the latest moves by the NCB and the government?

They seem to be based on hoping for a drift back to work. But I can't see it happening. We've got a number of problems, especially with gas and electric bills, and we'll have to get organised to try to stop disconnection.

But people are determined. They have got used to having no money, living from day to day, even collecting their food parcels as now become part of everyday life.

How do you think the Triple Alliance has helped in this dispute?

Right from the start we were in the front line, fighting the government. The steel union asked us to be generous to them as they were not involved in a struggle situation themselves. So we gave dispensations and risked the economic impact of our strike being watered down for the sake of this paper unity with the ISTC leadership.

The EEC is after a big cut in steel capacity, and the steel unions will need our help in this.

We should have developed a line of fighting together and not succumbed to the management arguments about markets which Bill Sirs has been using. As a result we've had no direct contact with the workers in the

steel plants in this area.

I think the area leadership should think about leafletting some of the plants or having a public meeting of some sort.

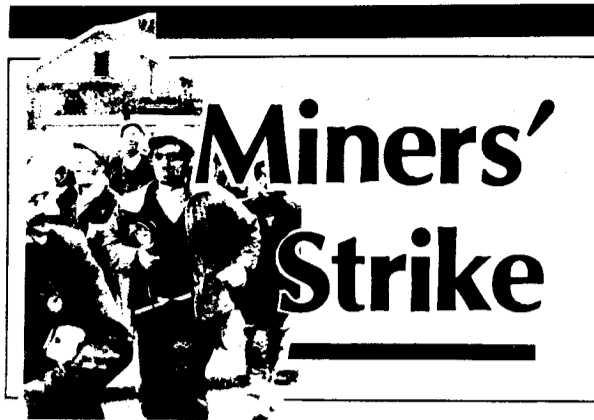
What do you think of calling on the TUC to act?

Some of our leadership are very wary of calling the TUC in and therefore have been against it. In the past the TUC has been the kiss of death — you only have to look at the Stockport Messenger dispute or the train drivers to see that.

The TUC has to be called in to support the struggle, not as 'mediators'.

Whatever is required to build more channels of solidarity action should be tried. We are not in the same situation as '72 and '74. We do not have the same economic muscle, and we depend more on solidarity action in the form of blacking and, hopefully, strike action.

We provide a focus for a fightback but we cannot be sustained just at the



level of food parcels. We need other workers drawn into the front line, like the NUR, ASLEF, and the seamen's union. Thatcher sees this and that is why she tried to buy off the railworkers.

What do you think of Scargill's call for a four-day week and retirement at 55?

The NCB has a redundancy and early retirement programme, in some cases with what seem to be big pay-offs.

We need to fight this with the union policy of retirement at 55 on a de-

cent pension for every miner, coupled with the recruitment of school leavers so there are no job losses.

Also if we are talking about a shorter working life, we have got to be talking about a shorter working week. A four-day week with better conditions for all miners in Yorkshire, Wales and even the non-striking Notts miners.

But even more important, we are saying that the miners are not going to pay for the problems of the industry, which have been brought on by government policies.

Kent women march in Dover

ABOUT a thousand people attended the march and rally in Devon on Saturday organised by the Kent Miners' Wives Group. Banners from Labour Parties, trade unions, trades councils were joined by a delegation of black organisations from London.

By Jane Kelly,
Peckham CLP

Women dominated the march and rally with speakers from wives' support groups in Yorkshire, Coventry and Nottingham. Pam Oldfield repeated that the miners in Nottinghamshire are absolutely firm in their resolve but that even after the strike is won, they will still have a fight on their hands to get back their old jobs now being done by scabs.

She also called on anyone who could to go and join the picket lines in the area and support the miners there.

Greetings were also brought from a delegation from the CGT Miners Union in France, with money and offers of holidays for miner's children in France, and from a representative from the Workers' Union of Borodo, in Inida.

Wilmette Brown spoke on behalf of the large black delegation and lastly Jack Collins, secretary of Kent NUM, gave thanks to all those trade unions who have supported the miners.

He called on everyone present to build the SER-TUC/Kent Day of Action on 27 June, asserting the need for days of action to become weeks of action in order to win the strike.

Reply on Orgreave

Dear Comrades,

YOUR coverage of the strike so far has been first class, but as part of the area leadership at Barnsley, particularly as far as the direction of pickets is concerned, I feel I must take up a bit of what Dave Parry said in 8 June edition.

I must admit to being amazed that a member of the NUM committee has to speculate as to the strategy being pursued and seems badly misinformed as to the relative balance of forces. NUM panels meet at least every week (reps from each panel and observers in the area) and report to branches. Delegates report weekly — some daily — to mass meetings of the men.

Questions, ideas and criticism can and are put at all of these meetings and the current strategy with regard to picketing, although it has its origins in the Co-ordinating Committee, cannot be prosecuted and endorsed without the approval of the delegates.

I have no intention of arguing over the overall ideas behind the strategy in public (its essence is secrecy and not forwarning the police) but some corrections need to be made.

Arthur Scargill did not target Orgreave on the Saturday as stated. This, like all other operations was planned and organised by the Yorkshire Area Co-ordinating Committee and members of that committee (including myself) were present on that picket. Arthur subsequently turned up on the picket lines (3 or 4 days in total) to show support and regain the past glory of Saltley — also, of course, being stationed at Sheffield, Orgreave is easy for him to reach, especially at times when most of the coke is moved.

reave on a number of occasions, the Tuesday in question was one when the national office decided to move in support from other areas. This was most welcome but it was a one off gesture. National Of-

fce has made no attempt to organise a sustained stayover by pickets from other counties.

I am afraid 'a call' such as it is for Orgreave, Scunthorpe or whatever is not a lot of good without organisation: organisation for those who respond to the call. It stands to reason that the body which makes 'the call' must organise to fulfill it. Anyone can make an abstract 'call' for mass pickets if it is left to someone somewhere to organise the nuts and bolts of the operation.

The major inaccuracy in the interview with Dave is that pickets have been demobilised. At no point have we stood down pickets and at all times we have begged, pleaded and demanded that all miners come forward for picketing. Negotiations have not affected either the numbers or direction of pickets at any stage. Nobody is playing the Grand Old Duke of York, but if Dave is marching up and down the wrong hill, it must be because he is following the wrong directions and ignoring the elected leadership of this area, who have been charged to run the picketing operation.

Any suggestion that miners should organise 'independently' of their own union and elected officials is a plan for division and defeat. Usually, this idea has been put forward by splitters such as the SWP who have told themselves that they are the Grand Old Duke of York for so long and now cannot find anyone to follow them. They resemble the Kings new suit of clothes, they stand naked and impotent with few if any pickets taking any notice of them.

Mass picketing is the priority and will remain the priority until victory. The NUM will prosecute and run this strike on the endorsement and approval of the membership and not any outside body.

Revolutionary Greetings,
David Douglass,
Yorkshire Area NUM EC

Miners' Support Committee

Leicester
56 St Stephens Rd.
Tel: Leics 552386

Coventry
Donations to: D Jones, 11
De Compton Close,
Keresley, Coventry.

Bristol
c/o TGWU, Transport
House, Room 1, Victoria
St, Bristol BS1

Manchester
c/o FTAT, 37 Anson Rd,
Victoria Park, Manchester
14

Preston
c/o John Parkinson, Trade
Union Centre, St Mary's St
North, Preston

Huddersfield
c/o Friendly and Trades
Club, Northumberland St,
Huddersfield

Vauxhall
c/o Joan Twelves/Greg
Tucker, 1 Alverston Hse,
Kennington Park Estate,
London SE11

Southall
c/o 14 Featherstone Rd,
Southall, London

Birmingham
c/o Trade Union Resource
Centre, 7 Frederick St,
Hockley

Ealing
c/o West London Trade
Union Club, 33 Action
High St, London W3

Southampton
c/o NUPE District Office,
93 Leigh Rd, Eastleigh,
Hants

Cardiff
Room 219, Transport
House, 1 Cathedral Rd,
Cardiff. Tel: 0222 31176

Hounslow
c/o Ian MacDonald, 220
Wellington Road South,
Hounslow, Middx. Tel:
01-577 3429

Medway
c/o Vince Drongin,
Medway Towns Trades
Union Council, 19 Randall
Rd, Chatham, Kent.

Bury
c/o Brian Marden, 061-764
9648

Oxford
c/o Claimants Union,
Princes St, Oxford

Leeds
c/o District Labour Party,
9 Queens Sq, Leeds 2

Lewisham
c/o Labour and Trade
Union Club, Limes Grove,
Lewisham, London

Haringey
c/o Unemployed Workers'
Centre, 28 High Rd,
Tottenham, London N17.
Tel: 801 5629

York
c/o Terry, 3 Scaife St,
York. Tel: 0904 25223.

Brent
375 Willesden High Road,
London NW10

Birkenhead
Trade Union &
Unemployed Resources
Centre, Argyle St South
(next to Central Stn),
Birkenhead. Tel: 051-647
3904.

Leamington
Meets Sunday 7.30pm,
Stoneleigh Arms, Clement
St.

Birmingham Saltley gates March

In solidarity with the striking miners and to remember their historic victory in 1973.

Saturday 7 July

Assemble: 10 am Saltley gates
Rally: 1pm Chamberlain Square (behind
Birmingham Town Hall)

Speakers include: ARTHUR SCARGILL;
BETTY HEATHFIELD; BRUCE KENT
(CND); NAJ HAFEZ (Labour Cllr.)

VICTORY WITH THE MINERS

THURSDAY 5th July 1984 8pm
BATTERSEA TOWN HALL
Lavender Hill SW11

TONY BENN MP
MALCOLM PITT
President Kent NUM
KAY SUTCLIFFE
Kent Women Against Pit Closures
NICK WRIGHT
Wandsworth Policing Campaign



IRELAND UNFREE

Ireland votes



IN IRELAND and in Britain, the lack of relevance of the EEC to ordinary people was dramatically registered by the two lowest turnouts in Europe — 48 per cent and 32 per cent respectively.

Despite the politicians' attempt to make the Euro-vote say something about more parochial concerns within the individual countries, it could only be successful when there was a really burning issue. In the Six Counties of Northern Ireland, there was such an issue — it was the 'stop Sinn Fein campaign' led by the 'big man', Ian Paisley, aided and abetted by the authors of the New Ireland Forum Report, the SDLP, the security forces, the media and anyone else who cared to lend a hand.

Paisley's vote was staked on the credibility of the Sinn Fein threat, and he succeeded in raising the DUP's Westminster vote by 100,000 to 230,000. This was the biggest vote of any candidate, anywhere in Europe. In a poll which was double that of Britain as a whole (triple in Bobby Sand's constituency, Fermanagh and South Tyrone), the so-called 'softer' Official Unionists were squeezed into a poor second place.

The SDLP leader John Hume will be pleased with his convincing 60,000 first preference votes lead over Sinn Fein's Danny Morrison who, in a reduced poll only managed to maintain and not increase the republican vote in percentage terms from last June.

It is clear that the SDLP succeeded in wooing the moderate Alliance vote; it might even be the case that some SDLP votes which tactically went to the Official Unionists in order to keep Paisley out might return to the SDLP fold at a later date. But it would be vastly premature to speculate on the tailing off of Sinn Fein's popularity in the nationalist community. Whereas a defeat for the SDLP would most likely have meant their end, Sinn Fein have developed a stable working class base which is unlikely to blow so easily in the wind.

In the South, the most notable feature of the election was the disaster that hit the Labour Party. Their vote was halved from the last EEC elections and they lost all four MEPs. Dissidents in the party were not slow (it took them about ten minutes) to get out the knives, arguing (correctly) that it was Labour's coalitionism that had lost it the elections.

Elsewhere, dissatisfaction with government policies which have led to rapidly declining living standards and growing unemployment was expressed in a slow falling off of support for the governing Fine Gael party to the opposition Fianna Fail. But the vacuum left by the absence of an effective working class opposition party to articulate an alternative is keenly felt.

Sinn Fein picked up a five per cent vote in Dublin which has been achieved very quickly compared to seven per cent for the Workers Party and 10 per cent for the Labour Party — both have established election machinery built over the years. That this is due very much to Sinn Fein's record of campaigning on social issues, like the anti-pusher campaign, can be seen by comparing the votes in working class Dublin to the more 'traditional republican' areas on the border where their vote was only around two per cent.

At the same time as voting on the EEC Assembly, Irish voters were considering a referendum to extend the franchise to all residents of Ireland. Portrayed largely as a reciprocation of the right of Irish citizens to vote in Britain, this was passed by a majority of three to one.

Fascism in the colours of France?

THE MOST electrifying development of the French Euro-elections was the spectacular gains of the neo-fascists led by Jean-Marie Le Pen. STEVE ROBERTS, writing from Paris, looks at the victories of the right in France.

While the right wing opposition parties led by Simone Veil maintained their vote at 42 per cent this time compared to the last EEC elections in 1979, the total vote of the right wing parties in France jumped enormously to 55 per cent. The biggest gainer was the neo-fascist Front National (FN) which increased its vote from 1.3 to 11 per cent.

This result was a shattering verdict by French electors on three years of broken promises, and a fifty per cent increase in unemployment, under Francois Mitterrand's Socialist Party government.

Forty one per cent of electors, the majority of left wing voters, abstained. The Socialist Party vote fell to its lowest level for ten years. The French Communist Party's vote was shattered — falling to its lowest since the Second World War and finishing only marginally ahead of Le Pen. An obvious question is how enduring is this neo-fascist threat and what will follow Le Pen's 'break-through'?

Gains

It was not unexpected that the FN should make gains in the 17 June ballot. Over the last year increasingly impressive results had been recorded by their candidates. In March 1983 Le Pen became a councillor for Paris's 20th arrondissement with 11 per cent of the vote. Similar successes were recorded in Aulnay-sur-Bois, an outlying Paris suburb, with 9.3 per cent and Morbihan with 12 per cent.

However the Front first gave serious substance to its claim to be the 'third force' of the opposition when it won 16 per cent of the vote in Dreux, a large town to the west of Paris, where Jean-Pierre Stirbois, the general-secretary of the FN, won 16 per cent of the vote in the first round of a municipal by-election. His showing was impressive enough for the opposition parties, the Giscardian UDF and the Gaullist RPR (led nationally by Jacques

Chirac), to present a unified slate with the FN in the second round of the elections.

Return

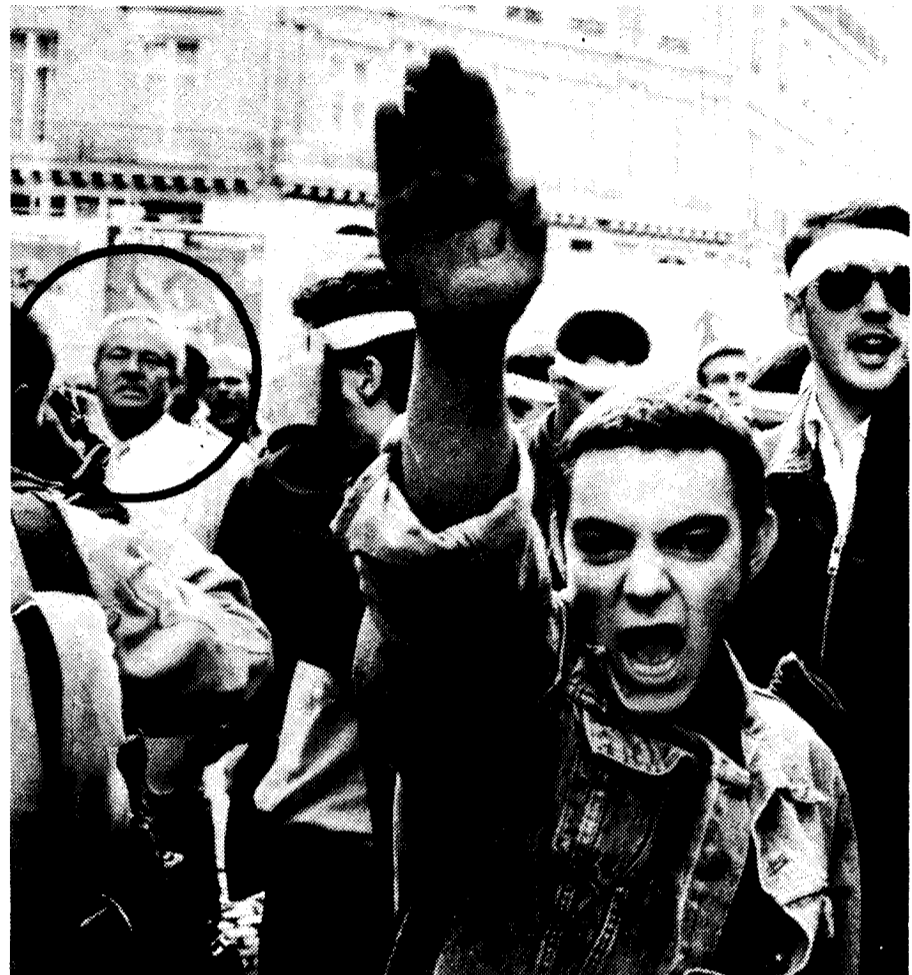
The Dreux election marked Le Pen's return to the national political stage after a 25 year period on the margin of French politics. In 1956, Le Pen had first been elected as a 'Poujadist' deputy for Paris. This movement led by Pierre Poujade, was based on the discontent of small independent tradespeople and shopkeepers with the political instability of the 1950's French Fourth Republic.

But Poujadism also drew considerable support from those dismayed by the defeat of the French Army in Vietnam at Dien Bien Phu and those who were determined that similar reverses should not be suffered in Algeria.

Fears

Le Pen embodied these fears. After having served in Indochina, he volunteered for service in Algeria in the notorious First Parachute Regiment in 1956. Like others in this regiment he was accused of carrying out brutal tortures on FLN detainees. From the defeat in Algeria he then graduated into the ranks of the OAS — the secret terrorist organisation which carried out reprisals against those who they saw as responsible for the defeat of the French.

Le Pen's burly frame and distinctive black eyepatch (the result of an electoral rather than military engagement) made him a charismatic figure among the motley fascist groups which emerged at the end



Le Pen and supporters

of the sixties and whose eventual 1972 regroupment produced the Front National.

Today the eye-patch has been discarded. Instead an effective poster campaign depicts Le Pen as a 'respectable' politician advocating 'Churchillian democracy'. This ambiguous platform — 'democracy is probably a very bad system, but I don't know of a better one' — is given its real substance by the party's campaign against integration of Arab and black workers into France and for their repatriation. This is souped up with anti-Communist rhetoric and attacks on the taxation system and bureaucracy.

The impact of Le Pen's rise cannot be measured only by his electoral support. Prominent former

members of fascist groups like Alain Madelin (now a UDF deputy, in 1968 a fascist commando) have risen to positions of influence on the right. This new network of the far right has been promoted through the National Centre for Independents and Peasants (CNIP), the official third component of the right wing parties' alliance.

The influence of the far right cannot be attributed to 'entryism' however, it is rather more right the ruling class parties have moved, despite the reassuring presence of Simone Veil — the Strasbourg Madonna — at the head of the right's list for the EEC elections.

It is against Veil that Le Pen directs his most ferocious polemic. Referring to her liberal civil

rights record, he accuses her of being an abortionist, and draws oblique attention to her being Jewish.

But the politician that Le Pen fears above all is Chirac — and with good reason. Recent analysis of Le Pen's electoral base has revealed that 70 per cent of those questioned singled out Chirac, mayor of Paris, as the major politician they would most like to see play an important role in the future.

Voters

At the present time Le Pen's party is able to attract almost double the numbers of defecting Socialist Party voters as the right wing opposition as a whole. However as the major right wing parties build on their electoral successes and resolve their crisis of leadership, Le Pen can see a more gloomy future for himself as the man who drew voters away from the Socialist Party only to see them consolidated by a 'democratic' Chiracian right which is playing all his best tunes.

This too is the main danger facing the workers movement in France. The rise of Le Pen is a sign-post on the road to the 1986 Parliamentary elections. Unless the present course of the Mitterrand government is rolled back by an all-out resistance to austerity, anti-immigration laws and French military intervention in the third world, as well as against Le Pen himself, then the 1968 election will produce an alliance of the right thirsting to finish off what the SP-CP government have begun.



Immigrants march from Marseille to Paris to protest against racism

Stop all steel

AFTER sixteen weeks of the most bitter strike struggle since the '20s the miners' strike has reached a decisive stage. Neither side is in any position to compromise.

For those who doubted it, the Tory government has made it clear: their aim is to impose a terrific defeat on the NUM and the entire labour movement.

The NUM cannot afford to compromise either. That's why the miners can no longer afford to put up with the open scabbing of other sections of the trade union and labour movement. The

blockade of steel is vital, not only for the miners but, in helping the strike to victory, is in the interests of the whole movement, including the steelworkers themselves.

As Ray Davies of the ISTC in Llanwern says on this page: 'If the coking pits can be kept open then Llanwern has a future. So even for selfish reasons steelworkers should support the miners.'

The same could be said for every other section of the labour movement.

AFTER A week of mounting tension the first convoy of coal moved down the motorway from Port Talbot to Llanwern last Friday. This followed the refusal of rail union members to continue moving coal to Llanwern after ISTC officials failed to come up with a deal on steel production by Thursday's deadline.

In preparation for the pickets, wire mesh had been welded to lorry cabs. Eyewitness reports spoke of hundreds of police being involved in the operation. All motorway junctions were occupied. Obviously scared of ambushes police lined the side of the M4.

But only token pickets were waiting to greet the convoy. The local NUM leadership has decided to try and avoid confrontation and has asked the rail unions to cut off all supplies to Llanwern.

By Graham Atwell

While it is possible to supply Llanwern with coal by road it is anticipated that BSC will have considerable problems moving and handling the large quantities of iron ore that the steel plants need if the rail blockade can be made effective.

The coal and steel industries in South Wales have always been closely linked — with six Gwent pits producing coal just for Llanwern steelworks. The industry itself is a major user of steel and in the 1980 steel strike miners refused to use steel despite the threat to their own jobs.

The question of dispensations arose early in the dispute. The deal agreed between the NUM South Wales executive and the ISTC and the steel bosses was generous to say the least. Indeed rail workers at Radyr depot, which controls coal movements to the steel works, reckon that at one stage they were moving more supplies than usual into Llanwern.

While the dispensation meant only token pickets at Llanwern, Port Talbot was a different story. The steelworks uses foreign coal, imported direct to their own dock. The NUM attempted to agree production levels with the steel unions, but it never bore fruit.

In fact at both Llanwern and Port Talbot near record levels of production have been reached since the start of the strike.

Trouble developed at Port Talbot when following the refusal of



The pits ensure steel's future

LLANWERN workers have to realise that the management of the BSC have already decided that Llanwern and Ravenscraig are eventually to close. We have to persuade the workforce that their only salvation is for the miners to achieve a victory.

If the coking coal pits can be kept open Llanwern has a future. So even for the most selfish reasons steelworkers should support the miners.



By Ray Davies ISTC Llanwern

Steelworkers in Llanwern can support the miners by putting pressure on the national executive and branch officials both to hold regular collections and to refuse to handle coal lorries.

If trade unionists refuse to handle scab coal lorries then whatever BSC does they will fail.

The problem is that the members haven't got the support of the ISTC executive.

The leaders of the NUM have to play a part. The lack of pickets at Llanwern leads the workforce to believe the coal is coming in with the tacit support of the NUM.

The NUM should have a large picket outside the plant giving regular leaflets to the workforce and telling them what's going on. They have to appeal to the steelworkers over the heads of the ISTC leaders.

Bill Sirs continues to scab on behalf of his members and against the Triple Alliance. His latest manoeuvre, to get Len Murray to intervene in the strike because he says another union's jobs are threatened, is disgusting.

Scabbing is also taking place within the trade union movement. It is being led out at front by my leader Bill Sirs and from behind by Len Murray, Terry Duffy, Frank Chapple and co.

The task of trade unionists everywhere is to give total support to the miners in their efforts to defend and build a strong trade union movement.

The blockade of steel must be made effective.

VICTORY IS OURS. HAVE THE COURAGE TO REACH FOR IT.

Yours in Solidarity
Tyrone O'Sullivan
(Lodge Sec, Tower NUM)

The above appeal is taken from South Wales Steel Sheet — a regular bulletin produced by steelworkers.



An appeal to steelworkers

MANY rank and file NUM members are gravely concerned about the rift between miners and steelworkers. The industrial future of South Wales — a future for our children and grandchildren depends on expanding coal and steel industries.

We in the NUM understand the fears of the steel industry — we have experienced them ourselves when people believe that by voting not to strike to save jobs the government will favour their pits. But this government has no favours to bestow on working class people — only on the rich.

They already know the pits and steelworks they want to close and whatever you do to curry favour will not save any steelworks or any mine.

They are playing off one group of

workers against another. The demands of the profit seeking rich should not be allowed to decide if you or I have the right to work.

We do not want to see steelworkers on the dole. In 1980 we allowed no private steel into our pit, we allowed no steel to leave our pit to go to other pits. We came out on days of action, we joined your picket lines. I believe if you had declared your strike then for jobs and not waited to the later weeks of the strike you would have had our total support.

We must all build for the future, for the industrial survival of South Wales and all of Britain. We must plan for an expanding coal and steel industry. We must demand the right to work for ourselves and our children. Together we can do this. Working apart we will all fail.

Win the strike

FOR Thatcher's government no holds will be barred and no expense spared in the concentrated effort to make this strike an industrial version of the Falklands war. As the Euroelection results demonstrated the Tories are throwing everything into the miners' strike because they can't afford to lose.

Every section of the ruling class understands that, which is why the Tories have received such unanimous backing from the press. The only note of dissent has been from those like David Owen of the SDP and the extreme right in the Tory Party who demand, not compromise with the NUM, but the use of the Tebbit laws to financially cripple the union.

Like a well disciplined army the ruling class has allowed the Thatcher government to mastermind every stage of the struggle with the NUM. It was the government that decided on no early use of the Tebbit laws and instead to campaign to split the NUM.

By Redmond O' Neill

It is the government that has masterminded the occupation of the coalfields and the qualitatively new level of police violence aimed at terrifying the miners and totally isolating their picket lines. It was the government that broke up the NCB-NUM negotiations for the foreseeable future.

Now it is the government that is considering giving the green light for court action against the unions if solidarity action by the transport unions is effective in blockading the steel plants.

Unfortunately the labour movement as a whole, unlike the NUM, has had benefit of no such 'general staff' in the conduct of its side of the struggle. The miners themselves and the mining communities have demonstrated the kind of courage and determination which 3500 arrests and a 20,000 strong police occupation army is incapable of breaking. The NUM leadership remains united around Scargill. Any illusions some may have held in an NCB compromise have been dispelled by MacGregor.

But as the strike enters its sixteenth week its chief weakness is not in the coalfields but in the open scabbing of the TUC leadership and the mealy mouthed, hand wringing of Kinnock in

Labour can unlock the strike

the Labour Party. This is the obstacle which must be broken through if the miners and the working class as a whole are to win this momentous struggle.

Scargill has quite rightly refused to give the scab wing of the trade union leadership, led by Len Murray, any say at all in running the miners' strike. In an interview with the *Financial Times* last week he said: 'There is a view being expressed that the strike should be taken out of the hands of the people who know what it is all about. And there is another view — I didn't say it was mine — that if it was, then remember what happened to ASLEF and the NGA. The TUC can give us support provided they want to give that support as individual unions.'

But last week on the TV programme *Union World*, Bill Sirs, leader of the steel union, threatened to bring in the TUC against the NUM if plans to blockade the steel plants went ahead — and he repeated the call on Monday.

Oaths

The Tories are making it increasingly clear that if the rail unions refuse to move iron ore, or supplies to the power stations are stopped, then the law will be used against the unions. The statements by Len Murray, Bill Sirs and the leaders of the EETPU are clear signals to the ruling class that if the laws are used the 'new realist' wing of the trade union movement will not lift a finger to help the NUM — quite the opposite.

They are prepared to divide the labour movement from top to bottom even if that means a permanent split in the TUC. That is the lesson of the NGA.

Inexorably, as this strike continues and the stakes become clear for all to

see, the split in the NUM between scabs and trade unionists is being extended into the whole labour movement.

This is the fact which the left-wing of the labour movement and all who support the miners must grasp and act upon. The ways must be found to reduce the scab wing of the labour movement to the kind of minority position it now occupies in the NUM.

Despite Len Murray's intervention days of action have now been organised in most areas of the country. They have shown a powerful minority organised in support of the NUM. The leaderships of the transport unions have made commitments to organise solidarity. The left-wing of the Labour Party has organised support committees, levies and food collections all over

the country.

But the Labour Party leadership — above all Kinnock and Hattersley — have concentrated their energies on condemning 'picket violence' and campaigning for negotiations.

As Scargill commented: 'It would be better for them to use their time and energy to aid our dispute.'

Scab

Nothing will move the TUC leaderships to do anything but scab on the miners. But, as the 50p levy decision has shown, the Labour Party leadership can be forced to act.

As the open role of Thatcher in the strike becomes clear now is the time to

launch a campaign for Labour to show where it stands by calling a national solidarity demonstration in support of the miners. This could be the focus for the first national day of action for the NUM.

The right-wing have shown no hesitation at all in risking a split in the labour movement in order to avoid fighting the Tories. It is therefore all the more necessary that the left nationally organises behind the miners.

A national solidarity conference called by the NUM and those union executives prepared to take a stand offers a way to ensure it is those who support the miners who have the initiative not those who are betraying them.



Tolpuddle - a case of class justice

EVERY YEAR the trade union movement honours six village labourers from the Dorset village of Tolpuddle. These six men are remembered — and rightly so — for their heroic and dignified defence of working people's right to organise.

Tolpuddle has gone down in the annals of the workers' movement as one of the first and most important steps towards building a trade union movement in Britain. But Tolpuddle has a significance far beyond trade unionism and repression of elementary rights.

By Bob Pennington

It should also be remembered as an example of how the ruling class controls the courts, the judiciary and the whole paraphernalia of law-making and how it manipulates these, to serve its own interests. The martyrs, as the Tolpuddle six were known, were charged with using 'unlawful oaths' under an act of 1797.

Their leader George Loveless described how they came to see the need to organise as farmers in the area kept reducing wages below even the low rates paid in the surrounding area.

He says: 'From this time we were reduced to seven shillings a week, and shortly after they told us they must lower us to six shillings ... The labouring men consulted together what had better be done, as they knew it was impossible to live honestly on such scanty means.

'I had seen at different times accounts of trade societies; I told them of

this and they willingly consented to form a friendly society ... shortly after two delegates from a trade society paid us a visit ... gave us directions how to proceed...'

To stop themselves and their families starving these labourers formed a society to defend themselves. Such audacity brought down on their heads the wrath of the landowners and the establishment. At that time the Whig government was becoming increasingly disturbed at the reports of trade unions being set up among the farm labourers.

The then Home Secretary, Lord Melbourne, had family connections in Dorset and he engaged in an exchange of letters with the presiding magistrate, one James Frampton, and Lord Digby who was Lord Lieutenant of the county. The three of them decided that the men from Tolpuddle should be made an example of.

Trial

Justice and so-called impartiality never entered into their considerations. In fact these three worthies were not even sure what law to use. But such matters have never troubled our worthy Lords for very long. Melbourne told magistrate Frampton to try an act of 1817 which was aimed at 'preventing seditious meetings and assemblies' under which any group whose members undertook oaths not required or authorised by law would be regarded as unlawful combinations.

This was used despite the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1817 whereby trade unions had ceased to be illegal. Then Lord Melbourne thought there might be a loophole in the 1817 Act under which they had been detained. But not to be outdone he and his advisors at the Home Office suggested

linking their offence to the 1797 Mutiny Act. The ambiguous wording of this Act meant it could be used against groups other than the armed forces for whom it had been specifically drafted.

The 1797 Act had another advantage in the eyes of the government and the landowners — it carried heavier sentences such as deportation. During the trial the judge made clear why the six men were in the dock when he explained that if trade unions were allowed to continue 'they would ruin masters, cause a stagnation in trade and destroy property.'

Signals

From beginning to end their trial was a political frame up. In her book *The Tolpuddle Martyrs* Joyce Marlow explains that they were as good as guilty before the trial began and describes their conviction as 'a beautifully spun web'.

Even *The Times* wrote: 'The crimes which called for punishment were not approved — the crime brought home to the prisoners did not justify the sentence.'

The defendants were all sentenced to seven years deportations and despite great protests and demands it was two years before they were pardoned. Tolpuddle showed that behind that great facade of alleged majesty and dignity with which British law invests itself there stands a naked, vindictive class interest. It was used against the martyrs of Tolpuddle and in the 150 years since their trial, it has been used to attack and deny the working class.

Those labour leaders who put the law above the rights of the working class enter — albeit unwittingly — into a conspiracy against the interests of trade unionism.

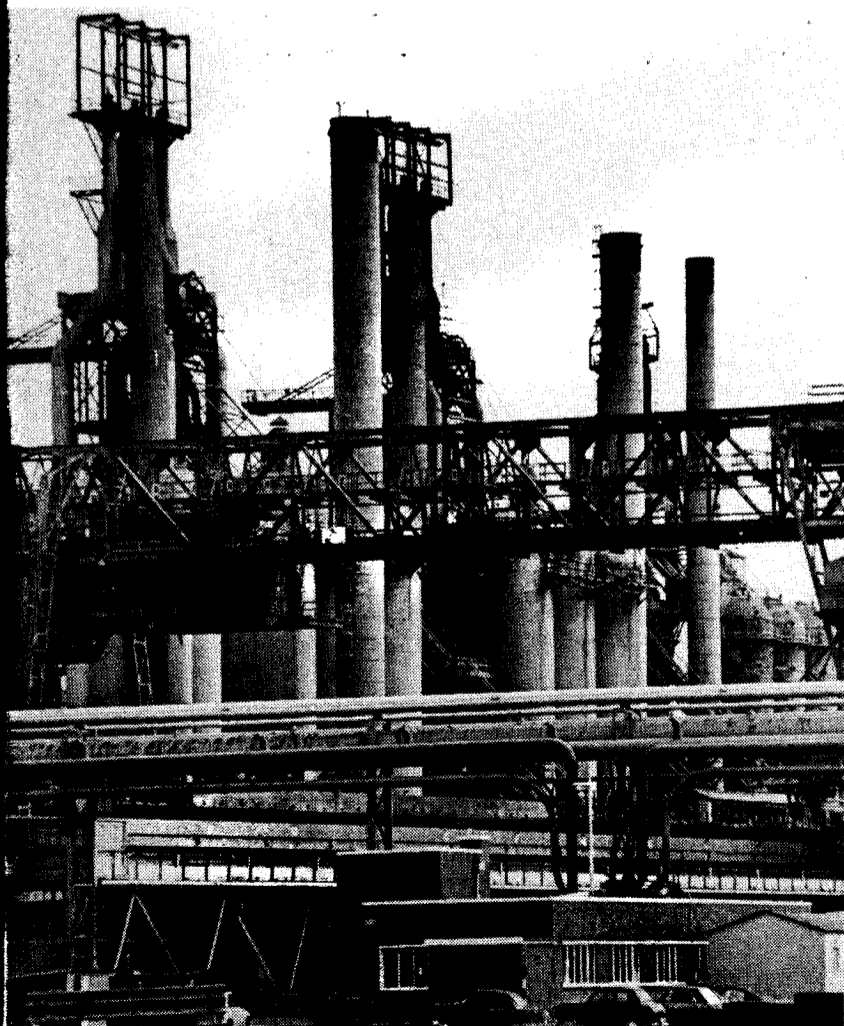


Photo: JOHN STURROCK

Still defending unilateralism

Speaking at CND's demonstration on 9 June Roger Spiller, CND vice chair, seemed to reflect a genuine disbelief in the size of the turnout. He continually referred to 'this difficult period for the peace movement', while 150,000 people piled into Trafalgar Square — three times the number predicted by CND organisers the previous day. It is not a difficult period for those tens of thousands of activists who are currently discussing how to step up campaigning against Trident, to get rid of cruise, for the withdrawal of US bases, and to scrap all nuclear weapons. However, it hopefully will be difficult for those in the leadership who want to change this campaigning orientation and dilute CND's programme for unilateral nuclear disarmament.

Since EP Thompson came out at the height of the July general election with his attacks on the 'fundamentalists' in the Labour Party who dogmatically hold to unilateralism, we have seen CND elder statespeople such as Bruce Kent and Mike Pentz explaining variously how unilateralism was both 'an albatross' and 'a disaster' for the peace movement.

After they failed to convince the CND membership, and last December's CND conference threw out the 'freeze', many in the leadership have begun to open up discussions inside the 'upper circles', for new proposals along the same lines. These all share a common framework: we need to win over the so called middle ground, that means searching out proposals that will appeal to both the SDP/Liberal Alliance and to 'anti-Thatcher Tories'. During the general election this approach was to win not an anti-nuclear parliament, but a Labour, SDP, Liberal anti-nuclear re-armament majority. Today it means campaigning on issues acceptable to everyone bar Thatcher and her ilk.

Cutback

April's CND National Council opened up a debate around 'steps to disarmament' and agreed to campaign for a 'nuclear cutback'. It also decided to establish what is known as a 'Forward Planning Working Group' to report back on these issues to the next National Council. James Hinton, organiser of CND's Projects Committee has written a document entitled 'a vision', a petition aimed at the next general election for no first use and for a nuclear freeze.

Paul Nicholl's paper on steps to disarmament urges the movement to be not just against the missiles but also for disarmament. This has been opened up a discussion on what stages of campaigning the movement should proceed through to 'aid disarmament negotiations'.

Such an approach originates inside the Labour Party. The Labour Party's pamphlet *No Cruise, No Trident, No Nuclear Weapons*, written by Mike Gapes, describes the proposals of 'unilateral steps and multilateral solutions' adopted by the Socialist International. Will Howard's paper on 'Nuclear Cutback' also seeks to reduce 'unilateralism' to meaning not simply refusing to get rid of all nuclear weapons but also refusing to take unilateral steps any where in that direction. Will doesn't propose anything concrete just that CND adopt the slogan 'nuclear cutback' which presumably can be used to mean anything to anyone!

Many in CND are as yet unaware of these discussions. Further, the right wing in CND are still discussing which option they go for. Nonetheless, a number of activists are becoming increasingly alarmed at these attacks on unilateralism.

The Labour CND Executive, composed both of a wide range of activists elected at the Labour CND



AT THE 1983 conference of CND delegates defeated attempts to introduce a policy in favour of campaigning for a nuclear freeze. But that hasn't stopped the CND leadership attempting to reintroduce it this year. Proposals are now being circulated calling for a 'nuclear cutback' and similar slogans.

DICK WITHECOMBE, an elected member of CND National Council writing in a personal capacity, argues for defending the simple position against all nuclear weapons in Britain. And for defending the slogans that have built CND as the largest campaign in Britain since the Second World War.

AGM and from the CND Regions have unanimously decided to submit the general basis of a paper in defence of CND's unilateralism prepared by Walter Wolfgang. Labour CND have also submitted a resolution to CND conference reaffirming CND's aims for unilateral nuclear disarmament and warning against diluting this in favour of false alliances with the SDP/Liberals.

It is no accident that Labour CND is taking a lead in this. It was Labour CND who last year played a major role in fighting against the 'freeze' and pointed out how this gave room to those in the Labour Party who wanted to water down the two thirds majority at Labour Party conference on unilateralism in favour of the fudge on Polaris that led to the debacle at the general election. Both the CND right wing and forces in the Labour Party then combined to get Labour CND shut down.

The 'freeze' had first been adopted at the April 1983 CND Council and then became a major campaigning priority for the CND leadership over the summer. It was one of the major slogans adopted for last year's national CND demonstration. However, CND conference, angered at the way in which the 'freeze' had been imposed on the movement, and its adoption just at the point of the arrival of the cruise missiles, threw out the 'freeze' position.

This decision was described in the conference report in January's *Sanity* in the following way: 'Amid what many viewed as "conservatism" and

ruled out a campaign emphasis against all new nuclear weapons'. The response in *Sanity's* letters page from CND activists was rapid. Jimmy Simpson wrote in the February issue, 'conference rejection of making freeze a campaigning priority was not a conservative step. The mood was clearly one that CND keeps up a vigorous campaign to win our full programme of unilateral nuclear disarmament!'

Freeze

However the discussion on this question isn't dead. John Cox wrote a major article in the February *Sanity* explaining that CND could still campaign on the freeze, even after CND conference. He attempted in this to explain the role that unilateralism plays. He wrote: 'CND members are overwhelmingly opposed to any dilution of CND's total rejection of all so-called defence policies based on nuclear weapons. So, for long term objectives, CND is fundamentalist. CND groups attract support through short term demands (such as No Cruise, No Trident) and do not consider that campaign on short term demands imply dilution of CND's long term objectives. So for short term demands, CND is "pragmatic".'

John Cox continues this explanation in his pamphlet produced by the Communist Party in April, *War and Peace the Nuclear Edition*. He explains that the freeze 'proposed en-

Kent explains that the middle ground means those people who don't accept our full programme.

However, such approaches may be dressed up in terms of reaffirming our unilateralist programme — but solely as a long term aim. Or unilateralism is presented simply as unilateral actions — that is nuclear cutback.

Middle ground

The essence of all these discussions however is a move to dilute 'fundamentalism' and to adapt it to the 'middle ground'.

This policy becomes clearest of all when we talk about national political formations. Jon Bloomfield of the Communist Party spelt it out in his article in *Marxism Today* in April 1983. 'Faced with a government dominated by the militarist right, eager to rearm and to seek peace through strength, the broadest spectrum is vital. Here the critical division is not between multilateralists and unilateralists but between rearmer and disarmers. In Britain today there does exist a potential common programme of agreement across the centre and the left of the political spectrum. Its essential theme is that the arms race must be halted and steps begun to reverse it.'

Bloomfield's advocacy of a kind of 'peace coalition' could even embrace the British political party established, at least in part, precisely to oppose unilateral nuclear disarmament — the SDP.

Nuclear freeze, nuclear halts, nuclear cutbacks, advocating this or that in the NATO council are not issues around which CND should campaign. CND's forward planning should be to achieve a unilateralist government and the abolition of all nuclear weapons, not to dilute our programme in favour of an 'anti-Thatcherite' coalition which leaves the bombs in place.

The result of the CND leadership's current thinking, however, is directly to weaken the base for unilateral nuclear disarmament that does exist; that is, the two-thirds majority inside the Labour Party and the massive support in the organised labour movement. This was most clearly spelled out at the Trade Union CND annual meeting this year by Dave Douglass — the delegate from Yorkshire area of the NUM.

Receiving the most applause of the whole conference, Dave urged delegates to fight like mad to defend unilateralism in the labour movement, and condemn as a crime the fact that the moves to water down this commitment started first inside the peace movement with the freeze.

In 1983 activists around the country organised to defend CND's programme against the freeze. That fight is not over yet. The movement should demand that this whole discussion is brought out into the open and not carried on behind closed doors.

Mike Pentz might say in private 'we're all agreed that we want to dump the word unilateralism'. Let him say it at CND conference!

Labour CND is submitting the following resolution to CND conference 1984:

This annual conference reaffirms that its central objective is unilateral nuclear disarmament by this country as a lever for nuclear disarmament world-wide. Conference also notes that the 1983 conference voted down proposals to campaign for a nuclear freeze.

CND must therefore campaign for: 1) Sending back cruise; 2) stopping Trident; 3) closing down all nuclear bases British and American on British soil and in British waters; 4) British refusal to participate in nuclear strategy; 5) British withdrawal from NATO.

Campaigns against new weapons systems and the issues of the day must be used to promote these central demands.

At the same time annual conference instructs the in-coming national council not to engage in campaigns which dilute these central demands.

I HAVE BEEN invited to reply to John Harrison's 'review' of my book *The Democratic Economy*.⁽¹⁾ John is an old friend of mine, but with friends like that...

Seriously, reading his piece, it is difficult to know where to start. None of the ideas are dissected or criticised with the analytical precision one would expect from John. Instead he launches off in a jokey style, pulling metaphors out of the hat here, quoting Hayek there, but never coming to terms with my arguments until a few elliptical lines not quite at the end.

Let me start with matters on the home ground of *Socialist Action*. In the issue dated 4 May 1984 John Ross wrote of socialism as 'the radical extension of democracy into every sphere of life... Such a society requires an economy which is socialised in the true sense — both democratically planned and with a market in many fields to ensure the distribution of its goods and the meeting of its people's many needs... an enormous extension of democracy.'

John Harrison accepts the need for markets 'under socialism' too. For him it requires no elaboration. My little attempt to move the argument forward on this question is regarded as a 'screaming banality' (dictionary definition — *banal*: commonplace, trite). Perhaps just a whisper would suffice: 'Markets, comrades, are now OK'.

Home ground

But is this really so non-controversial? Is it not the case that a large section of the socialist movement rejected the very existence of a market in all but the most transitional of post-capitalist societies. Marx eschewed the market under socialism, so did Trotsky, so does Tony Benn.

Even very recently, Ernest Mandel, the leading Marxist theoretician of the Fourth International, wrote of the inter-war Lange-Mises debate in the following terms. He asserted that the problem of economic calculation under socialism 'has in the meantime been taken care of by the computer... all participants in that debate seemed to miss Marx's main point, to wit, that resource distribution between different branches of output, and relations between resources and wants, need not be mediated through market mechanisms at all'.⁽²⁾

John Harrison accuses me of being evasive and indecisive. Methinks he protests too much. Is a little wool being pulled over our eyes? Or has everyone entirely accepted the arguments in Alec Nove's *The Future of Feasible Socialism* since it was published? Furthermore, if John uses the index of my book, which he describes as 'useless', he will find a whole section, with several subsections, under 'Markets'. One of the subsections is 'attitude of socialists to' referring to no less than 20 specific pages of the text. Not all of it replicates Nove. (And if I may be a little immodest, the typescript of *The Democratic Economy* was delivered to the publisher in January 1983, nearly two months before Nove's book was made available to me).

Critique

John half praises, half criticises my critique of the New Right. He quotes Hayek in my book without mentioning that there is a specific critique of his ideas and those of the 'Austrian School' to which he belongs in *The Democratic Economy*. Again, try the index. Under 'Austrian School' we find reference to no less than 21 pages of text. Another overlapping set of references is found under 'Hayek, F.A.' where still more page references can be found. Perhaps it is an omission, but there is no entry for 'Harrison, J.'.

To return to the New Right. John is quite wrong when he suggests that the New Right do not want sexual relations to be governed by the market. He must have heard of the neo-classical economist Gary Becker and

LCC strikes back Markets and socialism



Trotsky, Stalin, Benn — all reject markets?

Photo: GM COOKSON

By Geoff Hodgson

'the new home economics'. Also I suggest that he reads Ivy Papps' *For Love or Money?*, published by the Institute of Economic Affairs.

Admittedly, this literature does not distinguish between monetary exchange, barter, and non-market 'exchange'. But that is surely one of the

main points in critique of much right-wing economics: it does not have an adequate theory of (a) markets and (b) money. Turn to the index of *The Democratic Economy* again. Entry: 'New Right, view of markets' — 63 pages cited. Entry: 'Money, nature of' — 10 pages cited.

On one issue only does John summarise my view fairly and squarely. He writes: 'Geoff's mistake is to view democracy, and other working class gains, as having contradictory economic effects for capital, the net result of which is unpredictable.' This is a good brief summary of a view

which I hold, and I am not convinced it is an error. Yet John fails to answer a single argument in the book which is used to sustain my 'mistake'. I hesitate to use my index trick here — about half of the book is devoted to this issue.

John simply asserts that democracy and capitalism are 'increasingly incompatible'. What the hell does that mean? Either two things are incompatible or they are not. 'Increasingly antagonistic', perhaps. But this raises the question of the rate of increase, and the actual date of divorce. Is it close by, or decades away? Much hinges on this question. I actually discuss it in my book.

Class struggle

The trouble with John's economics (which I have followed over the years) is that he believes in a zero-sum conception of economic distribution and class struggle. This is expressed most clearly in *The British Economic Disaster*, which he wrote with Andrew Glyn. Every reform, every institution, is an unambiguous gain for one class and an equal loss for another. I was concerned to criticise this widespread conception in my book, but John does not try to reply to my arguments. He has had time to think; I have raised a few of them before.

I am not using this word as a term of abuse, but the zero-sum conception of distribution and class struggle is quintessentially Ricardian. Marx rejected it in his discussions of the labour process in *Capital*. Keynes overthrew it in a different way by introducing the ideas of variable employment and output. I have long been aware of John's inability to assimilate Keynes, but he might take another look at Marx. Some of the relevant passages are quoted with approval in my book.

1. *The Democratic Economy*, Geoff Hodgson, Penguin, 1984, 3.50.
2. *Marx: The First 100 Years*, ed David McLellan, Fontana, 1983, p.218.

LCC executive: a reply

TWO WEEKS AGO *Socialist Action* carried two letters of resignation from the Labour Co-ordinating Committee Executive, from Judy Sadler and Barry Winter (SA60, 1 June). Below, the LCC takes issue with points in Barry Winter's letter.

THE LCC executive received Barry Winter's resignation with considerable regret as he has made a valuable contribution to the LCC. However, while there is little value in a prolonged debate, he makes a number of inaccurate and contentious statements about the LCC's practice and politics which should be answered.

One of the most serious is Barry's conception of the LCC. It is significant that he regards himself as having 'represented the ILP' on the executive. The LCC is not an organisation on which different left groups are 'represented'.

Although the original conception of the LCC, in the '70s, owed something to this, the effect of successive democratic elections and annual meetings has been to move towards an organisation existing in its own right. Without exception, the remaining members of the executive regard themselves as elected as individuals, and accountable to the membership and the annual meeting of the LCC.

The greater political consensus that has emerged on the executive over the last two years needs to be seen in this context. While it may represent a 'narrowing', to a large extent this has reflected the desire of LCC members to see the LCC develop a clearer, more coherent strategy of its own.

The publication of *Labour and Mass Politics, After the Landslide*

and, most recently, *Reconstruction*, have all been part of that process. At each stage, this development has been endorsed by elections and annual meeting decisions. The current initiatives — the Labour and Unions Charter, and the attempt to stimulate debate on Labour's long term aims — arise also from democratic decisions.

Misguided

Barry's criticisms of Clause 4 are misguided because they suppose that executive members who also belong to Clause 4 meet, work, act (or in some other way receive directions?) as a group. This does not happen and, in fact, a cursory examination of their voting records would not suggest a coherent grouping.

Barry may disagree with the politics of these comrades, but the majority of the EC would reject this rather bizarre suggestion that people should bar themselves from office in a labour movement organisation because of the views they hold, or other organisations they belong to.

There are grounds for a broader concern about the EC's membership. It is largely composed of youngish, white, male, ex-students and, no doubt, this finds a reflection in its politics. But it is partly in an attempt to widen the LCC's base that the Labour and Unions Charter has been prioritised, and why the annual meeting adopted constitutional changes that will dramatically increase the representation of women on the Executive. Whether these responses are adequate, or not, they show a recognition of current weaknesses.

Barry repeats the much-peddled myth of the LCC's relationship with the party leadership. There is no special relationship. Two or three members did play an active role in Kinnock's election campaign and do, as individuals, enjoy some access to Kinnock or his advisors. The LCC as an organisation does not.

Of course, we have not sought a purist distance from the leadership. We want the leadership to succeed and will not indulge in the luxury of criticising the leader from afar, or simple opposition. As an independent pressure group we have sought to advise, by letter, in print, and by seeking meetings (unsuccessfully) on the direction that should be taken.

Criticism

Replying to Barry's more detailed criticism is made difficult by his invocation of an unnamed 'LCC Leadership' that, he implies, is not the elected officers, but who lie behind all the problems. Such a broad sweep of the brush is difficult to avoid! However, some factual points should be corrected.

The EC has supported LCC Youth — but on a strictly limited basis. As Barry knows full well, several members of the executive (including incidentally members who belong to Clause 4) have been insistent that a clear political basis for LCC Youth be developed before whole-hearted support can be given.

The annual meeting's failure to agree a policy on YTS is regrettable (but is hardly the executive's fault). YTS is but one part of youth politics and the absence of a policy on this

issue should not prevent LCC involvement in youth politics.

The EC has not adopted a 'permissive' approach to one-member one-vote. There is sometimes a distinction between ideas proposed on the executive and those actually adopted! For the record, a proposal that the EC support rule or constitutional changes to allow CLPs to choose from a variety of reselection procedures from this October was defeated.

Instead, it was argued that any further constitutional changes (beyond those to which LCC is already committed such as positive discrimination) should only take place after a much broader review of the democratic needs of a mass, campaigning party.

The executive has frequently reiterated its opposition to witchhunts, the most recent occasion being the EC prior to Barry's resignation. The only difference of opinion is over the time worth spending in reply to far-left attacks on the LCC (dangerously close to a full-time occupation).

Finally, the Appeal for Left Unity was passed only after a full discussion of the very issues Barry has raised, which does not suggest that minority views were treated as inconvenient.

Significantly, perhaps, the current LCC chairperson, whose election seems to be a symptom of the 'problems' supported Barry Winter on this issue.

We cannot reply to every point that Barry makes, and such a list of points makes a poor agenda for a constructive dialogue. It should be sufficient to say that Barry's picture of an organisation, dominated and guided by a hidden group, ignoring or overriding democratic decisions or minority views, is far from the truth.

There are genuine political debates which should be treated as such. Barry Winter was invited to comment on the draft of the most recent statement of LCC's politics — *Reconstruction*. Sadly, he declined to do so.

Liverpool fightback conference

An opportunity missed

OVER 1500 DELEGATES packed Liverpool's Philharmonic Hall last Saturday to discuss how to take forward the campaign to defend the city council. They were disappointed. A major opportunity was frittered away.

Despite a statement adopted by the conference, linking Liverpool's fight to that of the striking miners and calling for support for all councils in their common fight against the Tory attacks, the conference failed to discuss how Liverpool can link up with other councils prepared to fight.

No strategy emerged for a common fight to defend local democracy, jobs and services. Instead, the conference took on the air of another *Militant* rally, with carefully prepared — and predictable — contributions from the platform and the audience.

The big name speakers failed to materialise. Benn, Livingstone, Skinner, Scargill and Bickerstaffe were all absent, though Peter Heathfield did turn up for the NUM and Alastair McCrae, general secretary designate of NUPE, stood in for Bickerstaffe.

Discussion was even more limited by the cancellation of workshops after a false bomb scare disrupted the proceedings. And, at the end of the day, Liverpool's fightback remained as a glorious example, with no plans to link up with other sections of the working class prepared to take on the government.

The conference statement called on Labour's NEC and the TUC to declare their full support for Liverpool and back an autumn demonstration and industrial action to de-

Target Labour Government launched

A MEETING of eighty Labour Party activists at County Hall on Saturday 23 June took the first steps in launching the campaign 'Target Labour Government'.

The campaign decided to work towards drawing up a socialist manifesto and to work to increase the number of black and women candidates selected for Parliamentary candidates for the Labour Party in London.

A number of working groups on key areas of policy — including economic policy, international and defence policy, social policy, and the struggle against racism and sexism — were established. These were to draw up policy proposals for discussion in September.

Target Labour Government decided to adopt a position that on the basis of these policies a number of candidate elected in London should match the sexual and racial make up of the capital. That is that at least 52 per cent of Labour candidates should be women and 15 per cent black.

The campaign will be holding further meetings in July and September.

defend Liverpool. It demanded that such a campaign be linked to the objective of an early general election to ditch the Tories and (wait for it ...) return a Labour government committed to implementing a socialist programme.

Kinnock

With Neil Kinnock's history of condemning 'illegal' action and Len Murray's full-blooded sell out of every dispute that comes his way, such demands are hollow unless backed by a real campaign throughout the labour movement of all those prepared to fight.

Yet again *Militant* supporters have failed to try and build such a genuinely broad-based campaign. Like the Labour Steering Committee Against the Witch Hunt, and the Broad Left Organising Committee which have gone before, the Liverpool Fightback Conference has not understood that it is necessary to unite all sections of the labour movement around the goal of stopping the Tory axe.

That means opening up the campaign committee and opening up the conference to those who don't necessarily support the dots and commas of the 'bold socialist programme' advocated by the *Militant* newspaper. But of course *Militant* fears this would lose it political control.

First black woman stands for Labour NEC

THE LABOUR Women's Action Committee has decided to promote its own slate for the women's section of the national executive this year.

Women have been campaigning for the women's section of the executive to be elected by the women in the Party. At present it is elected by the whole Party conference, in which women are a decided minority.

Until that demand has been won WAC has decided to promote its own slate of women who support WAC's demands and will promote the interests of women in general in the labour movement.

WAC's slate is Joan Maynard MP, Margaret Beckett MP, Clare Short MP, Frances Morrell and Diane Abbott. The first



Liverpool councillors triumphantly greet the Democracy Day demonstration as it arrives at the town hall. Since then opportunities have been missed to build the broadest possible support in the labour movement.

The Merseyside Trade Union and Labour Movement Campaign Committee which organised the conference and is coordinating the campaign on Merseyside is too narrowly based. Major trade union bodies in Liverpool, like the docks shop stewards and the Ford-Halewood shop stewards are not represented.

Liverpool city council is approaching a decisive stage in its fight. The

Budget meeting on 11 July could mark a major step forward in the defence of local jobs and services. But as that date approaches the pressure on councillors to make a compromising concession to Tory demands will be immense. The stronger the labour movement campaign in their defence, the more likely they are to withstand such pressure.

Liverpool must be given the maximum possi-

ble support for its stand. Particularly important, the national executive must be forced to support Liverpool's 'illegal' budget.

Liverpool council is seen as the standard bearer for all those prepared to fight to the end to protect jobs and services and preserve local democracy. Liverpool continues to be the focus of a fightback against Thatcher's government.

Yardley enquiry

THE TWO people refused membership of Yardley Labour Party and the other two Labour Party members refused transfer into the constituency had their appeals heard by West Midlands Regional officers on behalf of the NEC on Friday 15 June. They understood that

a report of these appeals will go to the NEC organisation sub-committee and the full NEC in July for a final decision.

Meanwhile the fifth person of the Yardley five is still waiting to hear his appeal at the Yardley GMC over a year since his refusal of transfer.

By Jude Woodward

WAC was very clear from the outset that it was not prepared to support any woman who did not support the aims of WAC to give women more power in the Party. Judith Hart has made it clear time and time again that she does not, and will not, support WAC's aims. WAC therefore thinks that she is not the right person to be promoted to represent women on the NEC.

At the last two women's conferences an overwhelming majority of women voted for WAC's demands. This is what is wanted by women in the Party, and these are



the views that the women's sections of the NEC should represent.

Diane Abbott will be the first black woman to stand for election to the Labour Party national executive. She is a councillor in Westminster for the Paddington ward, and is on the steering committee of the black section of the Party as well as being a long standing WAC supporter. She explained why she was standing:

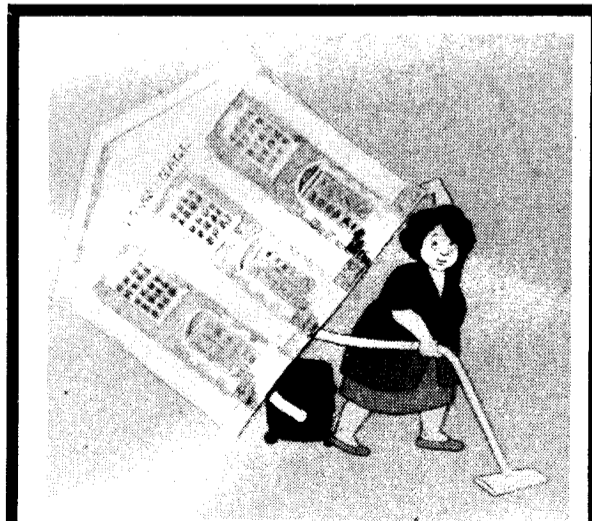
'I want to run and I'm to run because it is part of a wider move by black

people who are in the Labour Party and are loyal socialists to try and get the Party to face up to its own racism and sexism.

'The racism is shown not only by the Party's support in the past for racist immigration measures, but also by the bad deal people get from too many local Labour authorities when it comes to housing and social services.

'White men have to learn it's not enough to say, sorry, and that they are for black people. We want political power at all levels.'

Electing Diane to the National Executive would be a victory for women, and a victory for black people in the Party. It is hoped that the Campaign group will wake up in time and realise that, as usual, women have got it right. They should support the whole of WAC's slate and not put up candidates of their own.

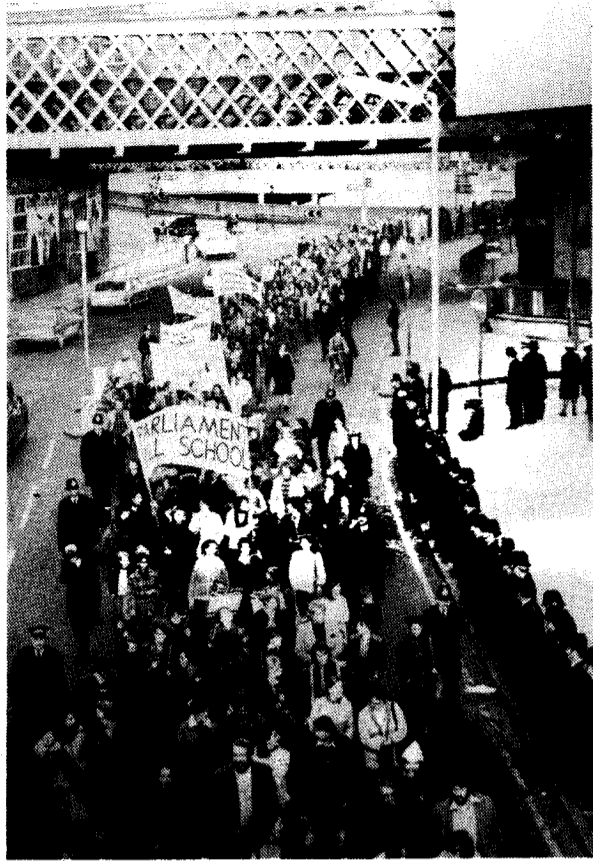


Council Matters

THATCHER'S ATTACK on local government is the subject of a new, 10-minute film produced by Leeds Animation Workshop, a women's film collective. *Council Matters* looks at the issue of rates and services through the eyes of Freda, a cleaner who presents witty insights about what the local council does, can do and ought to do if the reactionary legislation is fought off.

● Available on video, VHS, and 16mm from Local Government Campaign Unit, Mary Ward House, 217 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SS (phone 01-387 9893).

Photo: TIM RIGBY



NUT — escalate the action

THE NUT leadership's strategy for the teacher's pay claim has been limited strike action to win arbitration. The Socialist Teachers Alliance says this strategy is disastrous.

By Richard Hatcher, NUT

It is incapable of winning our claim. We need around 30 per cent to restore our real wages of 1975. The main task is to mobilise the maximum teacher action to win the claim, not rely on arbitration.

But is that all we need to say about arbitration? The Lambeth comrades (SA 62, 15 June) say yes.

The problem with that is that we may understand the role of arbitration as a 'mechanism of class collaboration', but the majority of teachers don't. They remember that ar-

bitration got us the biggest pay increase in our history, and they think the NUT leadership's strategy makes good sense — even if they might prefer more action to back it up.

Only escalating the action can win, not arbitration. But if you still believe the union leadership is right, that arbitration can deliver the goods, then test them. Demand they only consider arbitration when management has made a substantially increased starting offer.

Demand that, and the union leadership will say no. Why? Because they are bluffing. In practice, they will accept anything from arbitration. So now you can see why the STA says don't bank on arbitration, rely on your own strength.

The STA believes placing demands on arbitration in this present situation is a useful tactic for helping to break the confidence in arbitration that the majority of teachers have.

Islington council breaks promises

By Terry Conway, nursery workers strike committee (pers cap)

LAST WEEK a demonstration of 400 trade unionists, parents and Labour Party members marched to Islington Town Hall to lobby a council meeting in support of striking nursery workers.

Inside, councillors were heckled for their attitude towards these workers. The council's embarrassment will have long term implications within the local labour movement.

Since the strike began, the local Labour Parties have passed resolutions supporting the nursery workers. But the council — which prides itself on accountability — has failed to act on them.

Members of the party have been forced to publicly criticise the council, as they did at the Tuesday council meeting. The Labour council has reneged on its own manifesto by attacking this group of low-paid women workers.

The dispute is now at a crucial stage — NALGO is seeking national authorisation to bring out another 400 workers on indefinite strike. It's clear that, after 10 weeks, the council won't move without additional political and industrial pressure.

● *Donations are needed to help keep the 18 NUPE members out on strike. Speakers and more information from: 01-609 4622 (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday) or 01-837 2057 (answerphone).*

Civil servants

Reject low pay offer!

ALISTAIR GRAHAM, right-wing General Secretary of the CPSA, has been voted off the TUC General Council by the union executive. He is replaced by Ray Alderson, vice-president of the union and member of the Communist Party. *Militant* also put up a candidate, but he was defeated.

This is a muted and belated attempt by the executive to control the actions of Graham who has continually betrayed the membership.

At CPSA conference the Broad Left was split over a motion of no confidence in Graham. The Labour left capitulated to threats from Graham and didn't support the resolution.

Since the debacle over GCHQ, Graham is in poor standing among the membership and the conference would have been an ideal opportunity to launch a campaign to get rid of him.

This would have put the union in the best position to launch a vigorous campaign around its current wage claim.

For the fourth year running civil servants are being asked to accept a rise well below the rate of inflation. This would work out as an increase of five per cent for those on their maximum pay scales and a mere four per cent for the rest. As this obviously means yet another cut in our standard of living and hits the lowest paid

hardest, the offer is clearly unacceptable.

Even the *Sunday Times* in a recent edition was forced to comment on the plight of a DHSS clerk whom they found was barely taking home more than the claimants he was paying benefits to on the other side of the counter. As a result he became eligible for many benefits himself.

By Howard Fuller, CPSA

This situation cannot be allowed to continue. The government has for too long been able to hold the threat of unemployment over its staff's heads by arguing that its rates of pay are competitive.

However, equivalent jobs in local government and even the private sector attract higher rates of pay! The campaign is going to have to be built from the grass roots upwards. The recent debacle over

GCHQ has seriously disillusioned some civil servants, but strengthened others who will try to ensure such betrayals will not happen again.

Pay consultation meetings are now being held all over the country, and feelings are running high. Militancy, particularly in the CPSA is on the increase.

Civil service unions must use their strength and not approach action in a reticent manner as has been seen in the past. At the same time we must also make demands that are more in keeping with our needs.

Not only should the Council of Civil Service Unions (CCSU) have made a higher claim, it should have also demanded the abolition of incremental scales, which would have allowed every civil servant to get paid the full rate for the job.

Rank and file civil servants must force their leaders, particularly Alistair Graham of the CPSA, to get off their knees and take up the fight against low pay.

The time is right for us to link up with the miners in their fight for jobs in order to give Thatcher the thrashing she deserves.



Civil servants leaders Peter Jones and Gerry Gillman at the High Court for the GCHQ hearing

Harrassment's the word

GAY'S THE WORD is the London lesbian and gay community's bookshop, which doubles as a meeting place for many groups. In April, HM Customs and Excise raided it, seizing most of the imported stock, as well as mailing lists and minutes of meetings. Workers' homes were searched too, and personal belongings taken.

By Paul Canning, Lesbian/Gay LPYS

Since then we've learned the raid — code named 'Operation Tiger' — was planned well in advance. The shop has been under surveillance, its mail opened, and its phone tapped. Since Christmas, no new stock has been allowed into the country — £11,000-worth of which has been paid for.

On 6 June, the shop was informed that HMCE intended to burn 220 'dirty books'. Of the 22 titles involved, two are already published in Britain! Now *Gay's The Word* must appeal against the burning order.

If HMCE is successful, no radical material of any sort is safe. Lesbian feminist books arriving for the International Feminist Bookfair have already been stopped.

The assault on *Gay's The Word* goes hand in hand with a big increase in police harassment of gays. It is an attack on the

heart of our movement, on our freedom to publicise our ideas.

● *The campaign needs your support: money for the potentially-huge legal costs we face; messages of support for and condemnation of the HMCE action. For more information contact: Gay's The Word, 66 Marchmont Street, London WC1, or phone 01-278 7654.*

MOLES EYE VIEW



'Harsh but fair'

ENGLAND OUT of the European Championship and all those liberals slugging our police. Just what has happened to a once great nation? So this week *Moles Eye* leaves Upper Street and turns to Jimmy Hill and Bobby Charlton to find out what has happened to our sporting heroes.

Jimmy: 'It's been a great week for the game. OK, we didn't get to France — but that's because those bloody foreigners kept scoring. But we showed them at Orgreave.'

'Dead right Jimmy. Just look at those lovely tackles on Arthur Scargill. What about an action replay?' 'Sure thing, Bobby. There he goes. Straight in with the head. Just look at the way he butted that riot shield! In my days he would have been shown the red card.'

'That's what gives the game a bad name Jimmy. Then the sod won't accept the inspector's decision. By behaving like that he gets the spectators worked up so all those pickets started rioting. Now you see what causes crowd violence.'

'But look Jimmy there's worse to come.'

Just look at that NUM striker. All he is doing is smashing his head against that copper's truncheon. He's trying to con the ref into giving a foul. Just what do you do about provocations like that?'

Now see again we have a real example of spectator violence. There's this woman dashing on to the pitch interfering with the play. All she is trying to do is get the game stopped. Anyhow that Mountie knows the score. He isn't having any of that. He's gone in with a lovely tackle — harsh but fair!'

'It was a good game, eh Jimmy?' 'Sure. We can sign off from Santiago Stadium knowing law has beaten the hooligans.'

'Hold on, it's Orgreave, not Chile, Jimmy.' 'Yeah, but same difference. If our lads keep improving like this we'll have a team to match Pinochet's. Then all those NF members who followed our lads to Rio, Montevideo and Santiago can be really proud of "our team".'

Moles' Eye View is compiled by BOB PENNINGTON. Contributions should be sent to arrive not later than Thursday afternoon

Socialist ACTION

A miner's reply to MacGregor

Fund drive: £50,000

OUR FUND DRIVE had two huge boosts this week.

Firstly we received a reader's donation of £5000 — a tremendous step on the road to our £50,000 target.

Secondly we have made big steps in resolving the issue of our premises which will allow us to move in the very near future.

Moving to cheaper premises is vital to ensure that Socialist Action can be improved and expanded. Socialist Action is needed for building solidarity with struggles like the miners' strike, and other struggles in the future.

That's obviously what many of our readers think too. That's why one sent us £5000 this week. We also received 20 Deutsche Marks in the post, with the message: 'a small contribution to your efforts to build the necessary solidarity with the miners' battle.'

But moving to a new premises, while it will help us expand in the long run, is a very costly business. That's why this fund drive is so vital.

Moreover we have to start taking steps to move now, before our fund drive is completed. This means, much short term expense and disruption. But if we do not grab this opportunity to move while it is open to us, then it may be impossible to move in the future.

In this light we are having to take some drastic steps to secure the possibility of moving immediately. As an emergency measure, we are going to cut out some issues of the paper over the summer period. This both releases finances for the move and creates more time and energy to carry it through.

Our production schedule over July, August and September will therefore be as follows:

● JULY: next week's issue number 65 is appearing as normal but for two weeks, 11 and 18 July, there will be no paper; issue number 66 will come out on 25 July.

● AUGUST: Traditionally, the paper doesn't appear for two weeks in August. This year we intend to close down for a month. So number 67 will appear on 29 August, in time for the TUC annual congress.

● SEPTEMBER: The issue of the paper due on 5 September won't appear either. Issue number 68 will be out on 12 September. And from then on the paper will be back to normal, appearing weekly.

This emergency schedule represents 10 issues produced over 17 weeks, missing five more issues than usual.

We know this is a drastic step. Especially with the miners' strike on. And we looked seriously at every other option before we chose this one.

But it is only through these steps that we can be sure we will move to cheaper premises, and not only re-establish a regular weekly paper, but improve and expand it.

This is why our fund drive is not an optional extra. It needs to be at the centre of our readers' concerns in the weeks to come. And the faster we meet our £50,000 target the less disruption there will be. And perhaps we will be able to reinstate some of our missing issues over the summer.

Dear Mr MacGregor,

On receiving your begging letter last week, I began to read it. It was headlined 'Dear Colleague'.

Colleague — what an insult — I'm no colleague of yours. I'm not in the business of butchering the coal industry.

You say that you're taking the unusual step of writing to us to inform us of the disastrous consequences of this strike. You've been doing it since the start of the strike through your friends in the press and television.

You go on to say that the NUM have threatened the strike will go on to winter. Yes, we said it — after you'd been on TV saying you can stick the strike out indefinitely.

You say you could starve us back to work. Make no mistake, Mr MacGregor, we're going to keep going till we win.

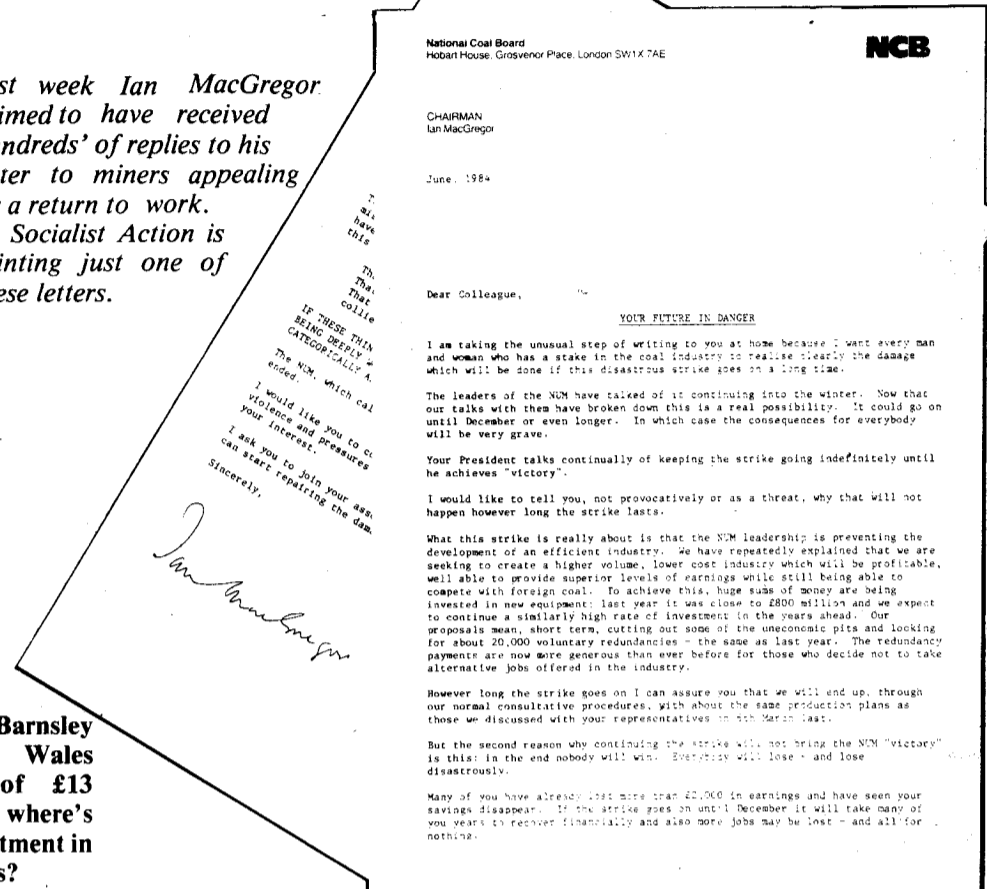
You say this strike is about the NUM leadership trying to destroy the industry. What a laugh. We in the NUM butchering our livelihood? No way!

You give us your view on the coal industry — low cost, high production to beat off foreign competition. Huge sums are being invested you say.

We know that the money is going to selective areas. Half of your £800 million went for the development of

Last week Ian MacGregor claimed to have received 'hundreds' of replies to his letter to miners appealing for a return to work.

Socialist Action is printing just one of these letters.



Selby and Barnsley Main. South Wales received all of £13 million. So where's your huge investment in peripheral areas?

You say that in the short term you want to close uneconomic pits and want 20,000 voluntary redundancies — the same as last year. What about next year — and the year after that. That's 80,000 jobs. If you call that short term I'd hate to see your long term plans.

Yes, we have lost about £1,300 each to date but your company will stand to lose a lot more when you fail to get Margaret Thatcher's way in this strike.

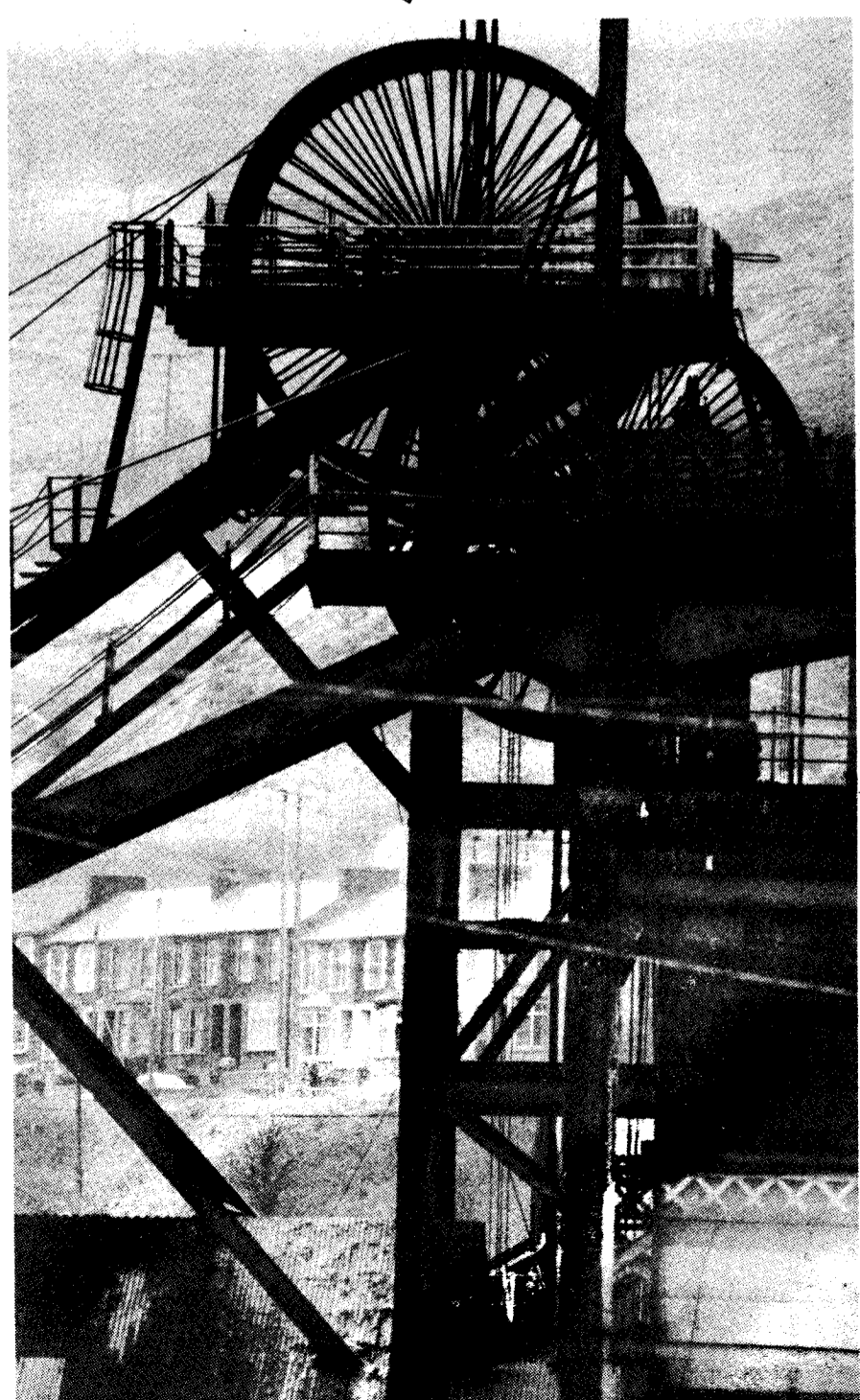
Sorry Mac but we won't be out to defend your job when you take the can for losing the strike.

You have been accused of butchering the industry and rightly so. We don't need our leaders to tell us this — we're capable of compiling the facts ourselves.

How can you solemnly state that we are lying — you have not got an honest bone in your body. You are nothing but hell bent on getting your own way like a spoiled child.

Go home MacGregor — go home to your £1,000,000 estate in America and leave the British mining communities alone.

Yours bitterly,
Mark Thomas
(Penrhivceiber NUM)



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