



Strike with the miners!

A strategy to win

Workers Hammer

One token 'day of action' follows another, from one dreary 'support' conference to the next, the talk of solidarity could fill a thousand books. But after nearly *one year* of the most far-reaching class war this island has ever seen, it is downright obscene that the best the labour fakery can offer up is hot air and half-hearted 'solidarity'. Every militant man and woman in the coalfields knows what's needed now, and what's been needed long before now -- strike action, not for one day but for victory, not by one union but by the whole labour movement. A Coventry miner's wife captured the sentiment at a Birmingham support conference: '*Get off your arses, help us now. It isn't money or talk we need now, it's action.*'

For Thatcher, the NUM is the thin end of the wedge. As the economic crisis deepens and *Private Eye's* joke about the pound tumbling towards parity with the penny becomes reality, Thatcher wants Scargill's head on a platter. The vicious sacking threats at Frances and Seaford collieries recall the criminality of the Highland clearances 200 years ago, this time used to lay low militants in the Fife lowlands who have dared defy the Iron Lady. If she gets the strongest, she'll have few problems with the weakest.

The time for talk is finished!

The vindictiveness of this bitch was laid bare in the wholesale murder of the Belgrano. And now she's going after Clive Ponting, the senior civil servant, for shedding some light on this unmitigated war crime. In Molesworth over 1700 police and army were used in a dead-of-night operation to clear out a pacifistic protest by 150 unarmed men, women and children against the siting of cruise missiles. War against the workers at home; war mobilisation to target the Soviet Union and deformed workers states for nuclear annihilation.

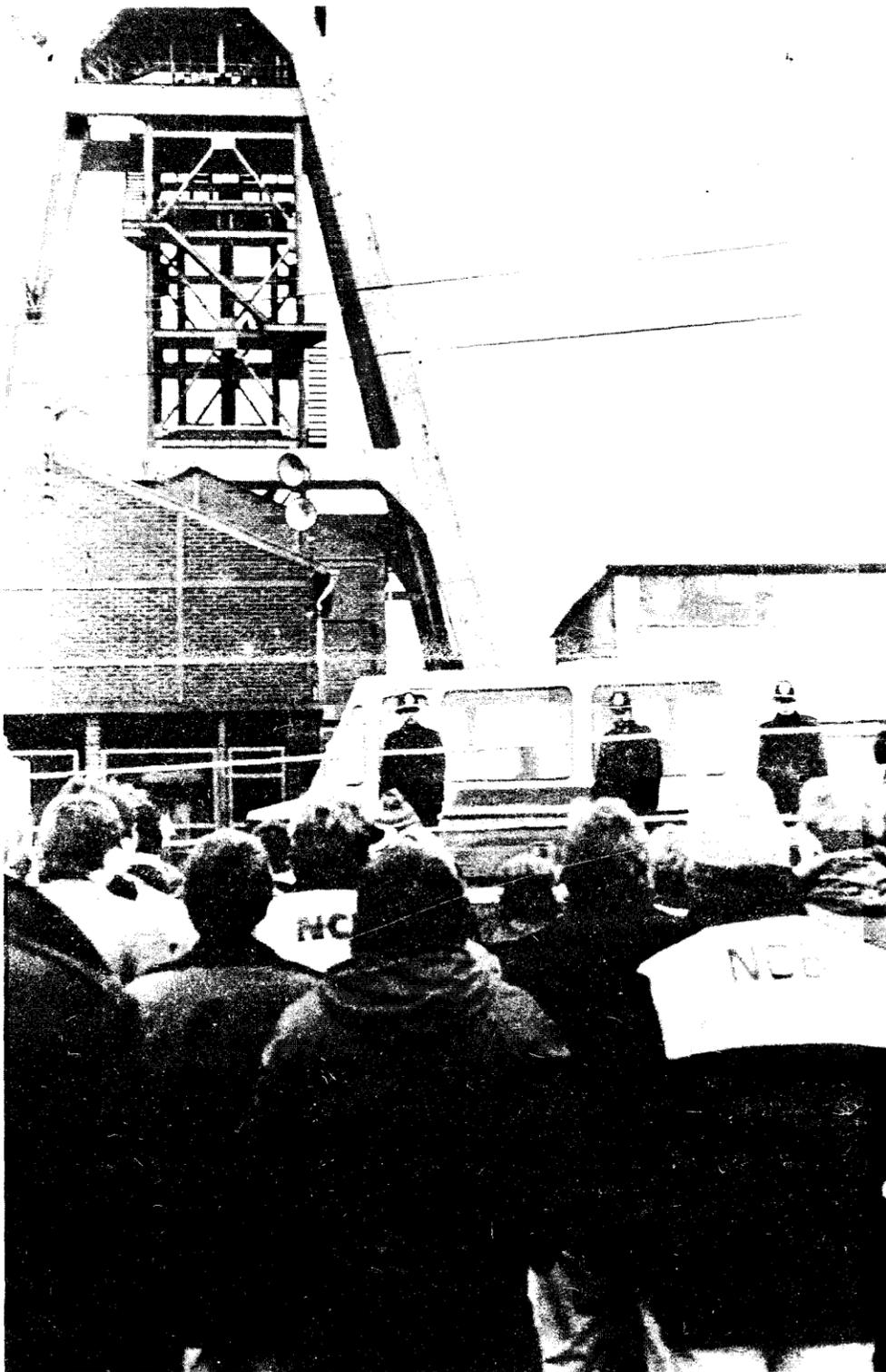
It is clear to everyone that while Scargill and the NUM leadership have so far refused to bow, they are unable to break out of their dead-end reformist strategy. While Mac stands poised with his knife, the NUM leaders have rightly rejected the call for a special TUC. What is to be gained from a recall of those who in the service of knightships yet to come have done everything in their power to demobilise the working class and ensure the NUM remains isolated? But now the NUM leadership is even playing with the possibility of a NACODS-style agreement -- a toothless 'independent' review board that will remain independent of everyone but the state. These are measures of desperation; what's needed is a road to victory. And the South Wales proposal, that the NUM return without a settlement, assumes that the strike is already lost.

But this is clearly not true. From Kent to Scotland the response to talk of a negotiated sellout was: 'No surrender!' At Cortonwood, Tilmanstone and elsewhere there have been mass pickets on a scale not seen in months. Our 29 January *Workers Hammer* special supplement -- 'Road, rail, docks: Strike with the miners! Turn the tide against Thatcher!' -- has been eagerly grabbed up in every coalfield. And not just there.

Forge a fighting Triple Alliance!

The working class at the base want action. But what do they get from their leadership? The so-called 'left' friends of the miners like Buckton and Knapp are now pleading with their members not to go on strike even for the *one day* of the Yorks and Humberside and Southeast Regional TUCs' proposed 11 February 'day of action'. Thousands of decent trade unionists in the NUR, ASLEF, TGWU stick their necks out because they know the miners are fighting for all of us, while the big-talking officials just sit on their hands. Nor can these 'lefts' even defend their own members in rail and transport who have taken action. *Knapp/Buckton/Todd: you are strangling the miners and setting your own members up for victimisation!*

What is needed is for those unions that have been taking action to come out on strike now. A fighting Triple Alliance of the NUM, TGWU, NUR, ASLEF and Seamen on immediate strike could shut down the country and provide a platform from which to organise other sectors in a general strike which could topple this hated Tory government. Elected joint strike committees -- consisting of all striking unions and bringing in the women's groups and the unemployed -- could organise and defend the strike. Workers defence squads must be built to protect against cop/scab terror! Strike demands must be broadened to intersect the interests of the whole class. Victory to the miners -- no victimisations -- smash the anti-union attacks! No more redundancies and no more denationalisations! For a 10 per cent across-the-board wage rise for all! Strike now with the miners to win! ■



Pickets confront police at Tilmanstone, Kent, 31 January.

Inside

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**Special strike supplement
Turn the tide against Thatcher!**

Reply to our critics:

Bamboozlers and ballot-mongers

The miners strike has sharply illuminated the political landscape in this country, concretely demonstrating the Labour/TUC leaders as enemies of the class struggle and cruelly exposing the 'revolutionary' pretensions of sundry fake Marxists. Whitewashing Kinnock, ballot-mongering or outright scabherding: from the Communist Party to the Socialist Workers Party and more, this has been the staple diet of the left.

Two papers which sometimes appear to stand apart from this lot have been the *Leninist* and *Workers Power*, with their calls for a general strike, councils of action, workers defence guards etc. These two outfits have widely divergent appetites: while the former postures as a 'pro-Soviet' opposition within the CP, the latter loves Polish Solidarnosc and plays around in the Labour left. But they share well-nigh identical lines on the present class battle, so much so that they organised a joint fringe meeting at the 9 February national miners support conference in Sheffield. And many months into the strike, both groups have recently ventured to polemicise against the Spartacist League.

The trouble with these two is that they are long on radical phrases and short on revolutionary strategy. They want a general strike to win victory for the miners but look to open enemies of the NUM to launch it. They say the strike has to be made solid and then call for a strikebreaking ballot. They even look to the toothless miners support committees to become soviets! In short, they have *no perspective for victory*. No wonder they sink into despair and defeatism. So the January *Leninist* runs the headline, 'From the jaws of defeat', while a month later they try to convince strike militants that their struggle is on 'the verge of collapse'.

Shut down the country!

The *Leninist* centres its polemics against us on the question of the general strike. A front-page article in the February issue claims we are part of 'an assorted mish mash of opportunists', also including the CP (their own party!), SWP, *Socialist Action* et al, who oppose a general strike. A paragraph later we have become 'the lying bamboozlers of the Spartacist League' because we claim the *Leninist* is 'waiting for the TUC' to call such a strike.

Against a general strike? Lying bamboozlers? What can one say? Take our first leaflet, five days into the strike: 'What's needed to turn back the bosses' offensive against workers' jobs, unions and livelihoods is a general strike'. Or take countless similar statements since. So why the blatant lie?

From the start, the central question has not been whether a general strike is necessary but *how to achieve it*. There are times when a

general strike call on the TUC, as the official leadership of the trade union movement, is appropriate and necessary. In 1974, for example, when the memory of the TUC being forced to call for a general strike in defence of the Pentonville Five was still fresh, we demanded the TUC call a general strike in support of the miners and against Heath's lock-out. At the same time we recognised that the TUC would seek to betray such a challenge to capitalist state power at the first available opportunity and posited the need for alternative bodies to organise it, in that instance the shop stewards committees.

Today's concrete conditions are very different. After Blackpool 1983, GCHQ and especially the blood line drawn during the NGA's *Stockport Messenger* dispute, the open, flaunted hostility of the TUC leadership to any form of militant class struggle is widely understood. The Cold War 'new realists' are direct agents of the bosses, with scarcely a figleaf for camouflage. The idea that these worthies could be pressurised into calling a general strike on the miners' behalf is not merely ludicrous but positively dangerous, for they would dearly love to get their hands on the strike in order to throttle it.

But if not the scabby Murray/Willises, who else in the labour movement has sufficient power and authority to launch a general strike? The answer is the leaders of the so-called 'left' unions, centrally the TGWU, railworkers and seamen, along with the NUM.

These are the unions which *claim* to be fighting for the miners, whose members have engaged in some form of industrial action (mainly blacking) in their support, and whose leaders have, most notably over the NGA, stood at least verbally opposed to the right-wing TUC hacks. Particularly since the first of the dock strikes, we have campaigned for a *fighting Triple Alliance* of these unions, whose co-ordinated strike action could shut down the country and *be* a general strike. We have raised a series of concrete, limited demands for such a general strike, including victory to the miners, an end to redundancies and privatisations, defeat of the anti-union laws and a decent wage rise with cost-of-living indexing. Such demands could rally the rest of the labour movement to the strike, against their scabherding misleaders if necessary.

Break the bureaucrats' stranglehold!

The January 1985 *Leninist* feebly claims we insist 'the likes of Ron Todd and Ray Buckton lead a substitute mini-general strike' and adds snidely, 'of course they wouldn't sell out the working class, would they?' Naturally we have no confidence that these bureaucrats will call such a strike without a sharp struggle, much less lead it to victory, particularly given its inherently revolutionary implications. Thus we have raised the call for *elected joint strike committees*, drawing in

continued on page 6



SL says 'Shut down the country!' during second dock strike last summer.

letters

CP calls for vote to scabs

8 February

Dear comrade editor,

Living in such a backward area as far as politics go, I was rather pleased to find out that last week we had two public meetings in Mansfield concerning the present NUM strike. The first one was a CP meeting held on Wednesday the 30th January. I was horrified, along with many other striking miners, to hear the chairperson Ida Hackett, a leading light in the CP, make the following declaration: 'As you all know, comrades, shortly the county council elections will be held. Unfortunately I will have to support Terry Butler' (a Notts scab in the Labour Party).

Having been asked whether this was her personal view, she said it was party policy to support any official Labour Party candidate -- irrespective of whether he was a scab or not. Could any of your readers tell me if this is in the British Road to Socialism or not?

(PS: All is not lost. A little bird tells me that the CP has started expelling its members who have been scabbing since day one!)

The second meeting was a little bit more adventurous, being concerned with the miners and Ireland. It was called by *Socialist Action*

on the 5th February, and unfortunately was poorly attended. Once again my illusions were shattered when I was informed that united Catholic/Protestant working-class struggle in Ireland was an abstract question, and more importantly that Sinn Fein was a socialist party. I wonder could any of your readers please tell me if Sinn Fein is the Irish section of Mandel's 'Fourth International', or is there a section of the USec, or has there been another international formed during the present dispute?

Yours in confusion,

Dick Hall
(Warsop Main NUM)

'Thanks for your support'

Rugeley, Staffs

27.1.85.

Spartacist League/Britain

Dear Comrades,

On behalf of miners and their families on strike at Lea Hall Colliery, may I take this opportunity of thanking you for your support and solidarity throughout 1984 during our struggle.

As the strike moves into 1985 it is crucial

to step up solidarity action and support in order that the British Miners are not left isolated and alone. Events over the past 44 weeks have proven that the N.U.M. is the target of this present Tory Government. The defeat of the miners will weaken the whole of the British Labour and Trade Union Movement.

Once again, many thanks for your support and I look forward to your continuing solidarity. Best wishes.

Yours fraternally,
Nigel Ashfield.

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WORKERS HAMMER

Monthly newspaper of the Spartacist League, British section of the international Spartacist tendency.
EDITORIAL BOARD: Len Michelson (editor), Caroline Carne (production manager), Jon Branche, Alec Gilchrist, Faye Koch, John Masters, Eibhlin McDonald, Ellen Rawlings
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Anna Ullman
Published monthly, except in January and August, by Spartacist Publications, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE.
Subscriptions: 10 issues for £2.00; overseas airmail £5.00.
Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.
Printed by Slough Newspaper Printers Ltd (TU).

Coventry women's group militant demands: 'No more talk - we need action!'

We reprint below excerpts from a speech given by Kath Chaplin of the Coventry Colliery and Homefire Women's Group to the 2 February West Midlands Miners Strike Support Conference in Birmingham. Her rousing call to action was greeted with a standing ovation by the conference participants. But for many of the assorted fake lefts and do-gooders present, her words seemed to go in one ear and out the other. By the end of the day, the most they had resolved to do was call for yet another insipid 'day of action' -- to coincide with the first anniversary (!) of the miners' heroic struggle. Kath Chaplin and one of her comrades joined a number of other strike militants at the Workers Hammer workshop on industrial action to spread the miners strike and the defence of victimised Rover car worker Patrick Sliney.

To start this union men died, children starved to death. And they're doing it now, and men have died. I've been real upset the last six, seven months of this strike because of the backing we're not receiving from other unions....

It was a really bad week [a fortnight ago], and I cried and felt sorry for myself. And I got *The Miner* handed to me the next day, and I read it on the train. I'll read you out this letter. It's from the parents of David Jones who was killed on a picket line, and it says:

'Sir -- May we wish everyone all the very best for 1985. It comes in on hardship and suffering, but may it soon become success and victory.

'The miners' kindness to us at Xmas and New Year was more overwhelming than we at first thought. The New Year was a particularly bad time as it seemed to be taking David further away from us. It now makes it last year which is harder somehow.

'During the evening of December 31st people kept phoning us and it went on like that until 2am on January 1st with a last call from Kent. All gave us comfort, helping us over this bad time.

'We have been overwhelmed by the kindness. The cards and telephone calls have been a great source of comfort and strength for us, and have been uppermost in helping us over this period.

'It was impossible for us to answer them all and to thank people individually.

'But may we through *The Miner* say a most sincere thank you to you all and pass on our most heartfelt wishes for the coming year. May the courage and fortitude you have shown in 1984 take you forward to victory in your just struggle to defend your jobs.

'Support your union. Be united. Remember David, remember Joe Green, remember the others who have died. They lost for you to gain. You must carry on and be strong.

'Man has no greater love than to lay down his life for others.

'Go forward to victory and get the justice you so richly deserve.

'God bless you all and thank you once again.

'Mark and Doreen Jones and Family (Parents of the late David Jones, killed on a Nottinghamshire picket line in defence of the right to work)'

And it made me ashamed. It made me ashamed that the trade unions in this country forget people like David Jones and Joe Green. It made me more ashamed of scabs that are crossing our picket lines at this present time. And I hope it makes people think, that we're not fighting for money. Like David's parents said, he died for the right to work....

You know after eleven months on strike, you're not just playing at it....

In Keresley at this present time last week we had four of our lads jailed. And what were they jailed for? The simple reason was, they defended themselves, they defended their homes. They were having a party at home. Everybody's entitled to a party. Not a party like you'd have, you know, with bottles. They had home-made wine because you know you can't afford to buy anything during the strike. There was a scab living next door who objected to them enjoying themselves and phoned the police. The police ran loose through the house.

And our lads really defended themselves. Wouldn't you defend yourself, if you were at

home and being used as a battering ram by a policeman? I would. Would you lads like to have to have your wife lie over your body to stop the police kicking you? Our lads did. And where are they now? Winson Green. Four of them. Boys. Men. There's men like this all over the country. And you call this justice?

You've got no rights in this country. I mean, these great British bobbies that have kicked our lads from pillar to post. I'll always remember Orgreave and Mansfield and places like that, and you've seen bits on telly. But you know: you should've been there with your banners supporting the miners. We're not just fighting for ourselves. The time for talk is finished. Get off your arses and fetch



Patrick Sliney, addressing the West Midlands Strike Support conference, Birmingham, 2 February. Seated to the right is Kath Chaplin from Coventry Colliery and Homefire Women's Group.

your banners and stand by the miners. Because my kids have gone without for such a long time. I'm saying to you: you go without, you fetch your banner and support the miners! My children have stood it long enough.

Now I don't want you to sit there and think, 'That stupid woman talking, pointing her finger.' I'm saying to you, I'm a trade unionist, and as one trade unionist to another, I demand the right that you come and stand side by side with us. Not behind the miners -- shoulder to shoulder. In Keresley the next three or four weeks we need action, not talk. We need action for our lads, and the other lads that have been sacked. I think I'm right in saying there's been twelve lads sacked at Coventry colliery at the moment, who've been sacked because they want a future for their children.

And I've learned a lot about the 1926 strike, from my father and my grandfather. I didn't get told bedtime stories. I was told about the lockouts and the Jarrow marches and the Tonypandys of this world, where the troops

opened fire on our lads. And Margaret Thatcher would do that now if she thought she could get away with it. I mean plastic bullets are what the policemen'll be shooting with next, to fight our lads with. After 1926, when the Jarrow marchers marched from Jarrow -- it took a lot, finding 200 men to walk there, because none of them were fit enough. In 1926 our lads were forced back to work, through starvation. And they crawled on their hands and knees back to work, to work longer hours and for less money. Our lads aren't going to do that any more. Our lads aren't going to be forced back to work, because I'm damned sure the women won't let them go. If my husband said to me tomorrow, 'I'm going back to work', I'd break his legs. He would not go back....

And are you as unionists in this country going to sit back and see our lads forced back to work like in 1926? Because if you cannot see it in this country, the trade unionists from other countries can see. And if you can't see that, I'll tell you something: you need dark glasses, white sticks and tin cans to go round this country because you're walking blind. I'm fed up with this 'I'm alright' attitude. Get off your arses, help us now. It isn't money or talk we need now, it's action.

When Margaret Thatcher thinks she's broken the union, it's too late for you to sit back and say, 'I wish I'd done it.' The time for action is now. The buck's got to stop sometime. And I read a piece in the paper the other day. Somebody showed me it; I don't buy newspapers cos they only tell lies. This was a cartoon, with Arthur Scargill, Mick McGahey and Peter Heathfield at a table in a restaurant. It was called 'Maggie's Pantry' and she's a waitress. And she told them what's on the menu: 'Humble pie and chips, humble pie and peas, and humble pie and fish.'

She wants our lads to eat humble pie, but they're not going to. Why should they? They're proud. I'm a proud miner's wife, I'm proud of my husband, I'm proud of all the lads....

All I can say to you now: we need victory for the miners. We desperately need victory for the miners. We need victory for every trade union in this country. Don't let Margaret Thatcher push us around any more. Don't let this police state beat the miners to the ground, like they did in 1926. Please, listen to me, what I'm saying to you. I'm telling you the truth. She's out to break you all. She sits there, dishing out her orders, with her immaculate hair style. So I'll tell you something now. If I'd ever come out of a bomb blast looking like she did, without a hair out of place, I would think, 'She's dead, Maggie is.'

They call her the Iron Maiden; she's not been a maiden for a long time. This Iron Lady -- when iron gets hot it just burns and blisters, and she's doing it a lot. But our men are cold, it's cold living in my place when the grate's not burning. And I'm really burning with anger. Anger that the unions in this country can sit back. Now the buck stops here, and I'm saying to you now: *Victory to the miners! Victory to the working class!*

Workers Hammer Dayschool

Sessions include:

Celebrating International Women's Day 1985:
Women and the class struggle

The miners strike and the crisis of working class leadership

Speakers include:

Kath Chaplin, Coventry Colliery and Homefire Women's Group
(in a personal capacity)

Len Michelson, Spartacist League Central Committee

Patrick Sliney, TGWU Rover Solihull, victimised by management for fighting to support the miners.

Birgit Wojak, Trotskistische Liga Deutschlands and leading militant in HDW-MAN Women's Group during the 1983 Hamburg shipyard strike

Saturday 16 March 11.00

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Sheffield S2

Plus evening social

Registration £1.00 (free to strikers and their families) at the door.

For more information contact the Spartacist League, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE, Birmingham (021)236 9774, London (01)278 2232, Sheffield (0742) 737067.



'Together with the men we will throw out the capitalists' — 1920s Russian poster.

Reverse SWP sellout – For union/minority/student mobilisation!

Drive Harrington off NLP!

After ten months of militant student protest, with dozens of students arrested and two imprisoned, leading National Front organiser Patrick Harrington was allowed to step onto North London Polytechnic unchallenged for the first time last month. Thanks to a sell-out 'settlement' at the start of term, involving the courts, newly-appointed NLP acting director John Beishon and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP)-dominated student union executive, the struggle against this fascist swine who openly advocates racist firebombings has been seriously demobilised.

'Patrick doesn't live here any more', boasted the SWP after sealing the deal. But the settlement merely transferred Harrington's lectures to a small house behind the Holloway Road site while giving him free access to library, canteen, toilet facilities, you-name-it. The heavily minority and working-class student body at NLP is very much aware that this fascist *remains* -- with the courts, cops and poly administration as his protectors. And they know what his continued presence means. The February issue of the NLP Ladbroke House student newspaper quotes leading NF thug Ian Stuart's vow to a recent NF annual general meeting: 'We've got to restrain ourselves at the moment, but when Patrick's finished his course we'll go down there and annihilate that filth.' The rising wave of East End racist firebombings underscores the threat. *Reverse the SWP sellout -- drive Harrington off NLP!*

In spite of the rotten deal, student opposition to Harrington remains strong. On 8 February, for the first time this term, militant student protesters drove him out of the Holloway Road canteen. And nobody is buying the SWP's bombastic arse-covering claim of a '90 per cent victory'. (Even some SWPers are up in arms; note a letter of protest to the 26 January *Socialist Worker* by Bolton Institute SWP students.) Although NLP students, faced with an executive which had simply abandoned the campaign, voted overwhelmingly at an 11 January emergency general meeting to accept the deal, there was widespread unease including charges of 'sellout'. But the only formal counterposition came in the form of a defeated Spartacist Society resolution.

Four days later sixteen students, including five SWPers, purged their 'contempt' before the High Court, effectively signing away their right to participate in anti-Harrington protests by pledging not to bar him from the poly. Having extolled the virtues of new director Beishon (whose credentials include witchhunting purges of leftists at South Bank Poly) as a 'negotiator', and feebly proposed to go back to court to get Harrington 'banned' from the Kentish Town site library, the SWP now seeks to shift the focus of struggle away from Harrington and on to Beishon. They plead with him to 'isolate Harrington properly' (their emphasis), and propose impotent canteen boycotts under the slogan 'Don't eat with a nazi'.



SWP derailed and sold out struggle of students to drive Harrington out. Spartacist League fights for worker/minority/student mobilisation!

So many students are angry and asking, 'What went wrong?' A 29 January 'Harrington Out' meeting turned into a full-scale shouting match, with the SWP on the defensive. Student exec member Steve Tasane won vigorous applause when he accused the SWP of demobilising the campaign and denounced them for having 'shit on me' after he'd spent two weeks in jail (along with SWPer John Leatham) last term for his part in the struggle. When SWP hack Pete Redman sought to alibi the deal, claiming it denied Harrington the opportunity to organise, angry students shouted back that the whole point of the campaign was to *drive Harrington out*. Redman's bottom-line argument was to try and 'prove' that such a perspective was really impossible: 'Maybe', he said, 'the Spartacists were right from the start -- it was a question for the whole labour movement.' But the labour movement, insisted this cynic, could not be mobilised. Evidence? The miners strike 'proved' that workers don't have the confidence to struggle!

SWP in retreat

Indeed, we Spartacists have been right from the start. We have fought throughout for a strategy of mass trade union/minority/student mobilisation to stop Harrington, counterposing this to the SWP's dead-end perspective of isolated student-only actions. Only in the SWP's utterly defeatist worldview is such a perspective impossible. For these charlatans, the most tenacious and far-reaching strike in the history of British labour is an expression of ... the workers' lack of confidence. SWP leader Tony Cliff's 'downturn' theory is not a matter of empirical speculation about demoralisation within the working class, but a defeatist programme. And a recent SWP National Committee report by Cliff sidekick Duncan Hallas (*Socialist Worker*, 2 February) crosses all i's and dots all t's by calling for a wholesale, across-the-board 'retreat' from struggle. The anti-Harrington campaign shows graphically that when the SWP has the opportunity to 'lead' a militant battle, its 'downturn' perspective is a recipe for derailment, betrayal and defeat.

To those activists who do not accept the fraud of '90 per cent victory', we say this: in order for the fight to be victorious it is necessary to understand what should have been done and what needs to

Fascist Patrick Harrington's 'programme' means murderous attacks on minorities, in this case a 30 October firebombing of Asian shop in East London.

be done now. Those students who really want to fight fascism had better understand what fascism is and how to fight it.

Thatcher is a pretty effective reactionary within the framework of bourgeois parliamentarism. But the capitalists recognise they may have to call on the fascists as a last measure of desperation, to completely exterminate all opposition to their class rule by crushing the organised labour movement and wiping out ethnic minorities, as in Germany in the 1930s. Today, in the midst of mobilisation for anti-Soviet war, they find the fascists useful around the fringes and supply their courts and cops to protect the 'democratic rights' of these racist terrorists.

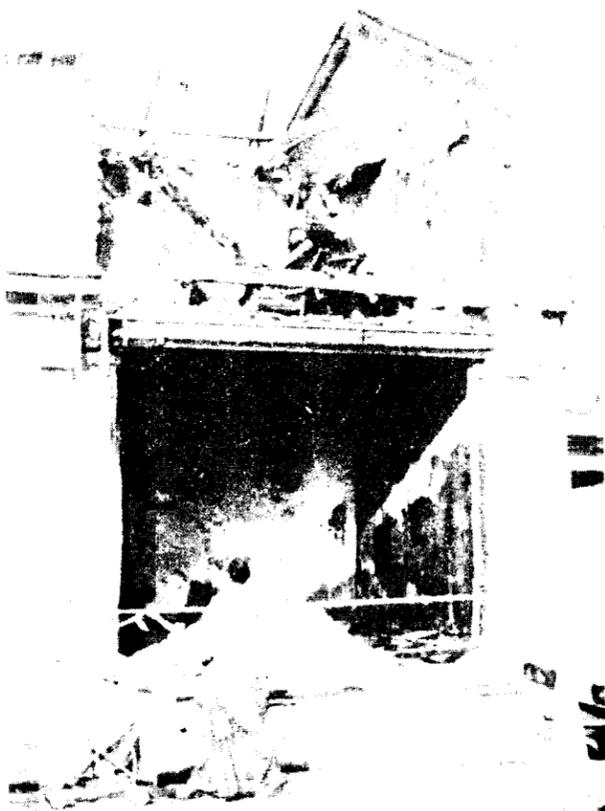
Especially given the massive intimidation from the courts and

police, it was -- and is -- crucial for the social muscle of the working class, particularly minority workers, to be brought to bear at NLP. Key to this in London is the heavily minority workforce in London Transport, a strategic powerhouse in this city. Spartacist supporters in London Transport NUR fought to mobilise workers to join the anti-Harrington protests and to get the unions' official backing for the campaign. The Cliffites voted and fought against our perspective of trade union/minority mobilisation. They claim to have 1000 members in London -- where did they mobilise? The SWP's 'downturn'/'retreat' musings are merely a 'left' version of the TUC right wing's strikebreaking 'new realism', and both stem from the same starting point -- rabid pro-imperialist anti-Sovietism.

The SWP prepared its own militants for their future Judas role at NLP with an August 1984 internal document that called for 'tactical retreat' in the fight against fascism, claiming that if militants 'organise specifically against the Nazis ... we'll build their organisation'. This scabby argument, that fighting the fascists helps the fascists, could have come from the mouth of the most right-wing National Union of Students bureaucrat. And now that they have sealed their betrayal, these reformist gentlefolk are openly pushing reliance on the racist bourgeois state and its agents like the poly administration to deal with Harrington.

This is not new for the SWP. In the late 1970s they called for state bans against NF marches at Lewisham and Ladywood, while their Anti Nazi League (ANL) popular front led one hundred thousand protestors away from a fascist march in the largely Asian Bethnal Green area in order to carouse under the sun at a rock concert in Brixton and listen to hot air speeches by Labour traitors, Liberals, lords and suchlike who graced the ANL's platform. Fascism is a tool of the bourgeoisie -- any reliance on the bourgeoisie to fight it is suicidal and state bans invariably lead to bans against anti-fascists.

Students cannot defeat the fascists on their own. The struggle against fascism is a component part of the broader class struggle and requires the mobilisation of the social power of the working class and oppressed minorities. But as the May 1968 general strike in France showed, student struggles can have an impact on broader social struggle. Under the impact of the miners strike, and faced with a reactionary onslaught by the Tory government on everything from abortion rights to student grants, the colleges are today polarised. Students are posed point-blank with the question, 'Which side are you on?' What is needed is a proletarian vanguard party, based on the programme of Lenin and Trotsky, that defends all the gains of workers and oppressed, from the picket line to the planned economy created out of the Russian Revolution. The many students at NLP who rightly want to drive the fascists out must take their side in the class war. To hell with appeals to Beishon and his bosses to 'ban' Harrington. Join the Spartacist League in fighting for a winning, working-class strategy to smash the fascist scum and their capitalist protectors. ■



FBI admits: Marxists are not terrorists

Court victory against new McCarthyism in US

In an important victory for democratic rights, our comrades of the Spartacist League of the United States and its youth section, the Spartacus Youth League, have successfully concluded a lawsuit against the Federal Bureau of Investigation and US Attorney General. This is the first legal victory against the 1983 Attorney General's Guidelines for Domestic Security/Terrorism Investigations.

In this period of anti-Soviet war build-up, the Reagan administration is attempting to mobilise mass anti-communist hysteria among the American population. As Spartacist League legal counsel Rachel Wolkenstein explained: 'Under Reagan and the 1983 FBI Guidelines the government has tried to equate political opposition with criminal conspiracy/terrorism, thus mandating the secret police to get you. But we have no illusion that the government's secret police have stopped or will stop their harassment, infiltration or disruption of Marxist political organisations and other perceived political opponents of the government. This settlement strikes a modest but genuine blow against that deadly equation.'

The legal victory has been publicly welcomed by numerous prominent individuals, among them noted civil rights lawyers Conrad J Lynn and Charles Garry and Jerry Berman, Legislative Director of the American Civil Liberties Union. As Bill Hampton, brother of murdered former Black Panther Party leader Fred Hampton, wrote: 'Congratulations to the Spartacist League for this victory. This is a victory for all those people who are fighting against apartheid, racism and oppression, and more struggles of this sort will have to be continued to be won.'

We reprint below a statement issued by the SL/US and SYL on the settlement. A special Workers Vanguard supplement with more detail on the case is available from Spartacist Publications at 15p inc p&p.

The Spartacist League (SL) and Spartacus Youth League (SYL) have successfully concluded a lawsuit against the Federal Bureau of Investigation in which we charged that the 1983 US Attorney General's Guidelines for Domestic Security/Terrorism Investigations falsely and dangerously target our organizations as 'criminal enterprises' and 'terrorist'. In the court-endorsed settlement, filed in the Federal District Court in New York on November 30, the FBI and the Attorney General have conceded the central aim of our legal challenge -- that Marxist advocacy cannot be equated with violence or criminal terrorism.

The FBI and Attorney General have agreed to change their former definition of the Spartacist League, which read in part that 'the SPL [FBI acronym for the Spartacist League] does not openly advocate the violent overthrow of the US Government at this time... [our emphasis]. The former definition maliciously attempted to attribute to us conspiratorial putschism (eg if not 'openly', then secretly) wholly at variance with our Marxist principles, aims and 20-year history of political activity in the US. The new definition describes the Spartacist League as what the SL is: a Marxist political organization. It concludes by stating that 'The SPL was once the subject of an FBI domestic security investigation. The investigation was closed in 1977, however, and it did not result in any criminal prosecution.'

The agreement we have obtained, the first successful legal challenge to the new FBI Guidelines, is a modest but genuine blow to the new McCarthyism. We do not pretend to know what importance or interpretation the FBI attaches to its agreement. We have no illusions that the government's secret police have stopped or will stop their harassment, infiltration and disruption of Marxist political organizations and other perceived political opponents of the government. We do know that the secret police have not changed since Karl Marx was harassed by secret agents of Prussia, that as

Under the banner, 'A workers party has right to organise!' SL/US has been in the forefront against the Cold War witchhunt. Our suit against the sinister FBI guidelines was part of our continuing battle to defend ourselves and all those targeted by the New McCarthyism.



DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC 20535

Ms. Jane Margolis
475 Alvarado Street, #3
San Francisco, California 94114

Re: Alleged False Arrest/Jane M. Margolis, Detroit, Michigan, July 16, 1983

Dear Ms. Margolis:

Please be advised that in response to your letter of July 16, 1983, the Secret Service Office of 1 to look into this claim to determine, if possible, what did in fact occur at the incident. Based upon this inquiry, it is Service that a misunderstanding between a Detroit police officer resulted from the convention floor.

The Secret Service, of course, is responsible for the protection of the President and sometimes conflicting interests. Secret Service cannot be absolute; standings will never occur. You do every effort will continue to be made. This nature are kept to a minimum.

Again, the Secret Service regrets the distress caused you.

Sincerely,
Chief, Office of Security

Secret Service apologises to phone militant Jane Margolis

State of California
Department of Justice
George Deukmejian
Attorney General

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, DC 20535

Subject: Correction of Department of Justice's Publication

Dear Sir or Madam:

This is to inform you that the inclusion of the Spartacus Youth League on page 10 of the Department of Justice's 'Annual Report on Terrorism, Part 3 Terrorism, 1983' was an error.

Very truly,
Chief, Office of Security

California attorney-general retracts 'terrorist' smear

Letters

The Labor-Black Mobilization march story

Editor's note: On Nov. 30, 1983, the Washington Times ran a story on the Labor-Black Mobilization march. The story was a distortion of the facts. The march was a peaceful demonstration in support of the Black Panther Party. The story was a distortion of the facts. The march was a peaceful demonstration in support of the Black Panther Party.

We no longer charge that the Spartacist League-Spartacus Youth League provoked the violence on that day.

The Washington Times

Moones retract libel that kills

long as the capitalists hold state power, their police agents will continue their dirty work against any real or perceived challenges to their class rule. Our suit certainly has not changed, nor could it, this fact of life in American capitalist society.

Nonetheless, the FBI's agreement to change its definition of our organizations implicitly but clearly spikes the government's deadly syllogism -- that all political opponents are terrorists, you are a political opponent, therefore the secret police is mandated to harass, spy, slander, prosecute, set up and get you with drawn guns. The government's intrusive surveillance/disruption would now be discretionary rather than mandatory, and victimization therefore a little harder.

Moreover, the change of definition undermines the FBI's premise that Marxist political organizations are equated with violence, which has been the pretext for over 60 years of surveillance, harassment and repression of the American left and workers movement. Nothing in fact is less conspiratorial than a Marxist working-class organization, whose success is entirely dependent on the most open and widest dissemination of its views. When in the course of defending their rights, labor and the oppressed -- eg strikers repulsing company/cop thuggery against striking workers -- necessarily run up against bourgeois legality, it won't be a secret to anyone. The FBI does not need informers to tell them what we do. When Ritchie Bradley tore down the Confederate flag in San Francisco, the SL mobilized the broadest publicity for his heroic and widely supported act, and Bradley sought a jury trial in order to politically indict Mayor Dianne Feinstein's administration for having displayed the hated banner of chattel slavery and racist terror.

For 60-plus years, the Communist Party has been subjected to intensive, continual government surveillance; the Socialist Workers Party for 40-plus years; and the SL for 20 years. There have never been any prosecutions of the CP, SWP or SL, or any members thereof, for

violent crime or terrorism -- a rather remarkable record considering the history of government provocations toward these organizations. The only successful prosecutions of these organizations have been for so-called 'thought crimes' -- 60-plus years and the only thing they can get us for is reading Lenin!

From the Espionage Act prosecution of Eugene Debs through the Smith Act prosecutions of the Trotskyists in the 1940s and the Communist Party in the 1950s, the drive for imperialist war has always required a war at home against all opposition. Every witchhunt has its own particular dimension, and today, Cold War II needs a new kind of McCarthyism -- one which incorporates the direct-hit military methods of the infamous COINTELPRO ('Counter-Intelligence Program') along with the ideological criteria of the last Cold War. Under the guise of combatting 'terrorism', the FBI guidelines, presidential directives, Supreme Court rulings and congressional measures have granted sweeping powers to military and secret police agencies for actual state-supported terrorism against the American people. Vital labor rights are targeted as strikes are declared 'criminal enterprises' and picket lines are called extortion. And as the shots that rang out over Greensboro demonstrated, this right-wing political climate feeds the growth of fascist terrorists, emboldened by official racism, anti-immigrants hysteria and the present anti-Soviet war drive.

In the campaign for regimentation of the populace through fear, lawful dissent is now presumably limited to college professors writing letters to the *New York Times* delicately questioning the latest US validation of El Salvador's human rights record. All other political opposition is smeared as 'terrorist', thus effectively outlawing it and making any protest, no matter how tame, open season for state repression. Ask Black Panther survivors of the FBI's COINTELPRO operation of frame-up and murder against their organization

continued on page 6

McCarthyism...

(Continued from page 5)

what it means to be labeled 'terrorist' by the state. Abroad 'terrorist' has become the official designation for Salvadoran peasants struggling against the death-squad regime, black South Africans fighting apartheid, and the women and children of Palestinian refugee camps.

In defense of our organizations, our supporters and the existing rights of the entire working-class movement, we have launched a number of impressive legal challenges to the Cold War II witchhunt. In June of 1980, a militant unionist and well-known supporter of the Spartacist League, Jane Margolis, received an apology and \$3500 from the Secret Service for stigmatizing her as a terrorist. In 1979, she had been dragged off the floor of the Communications Workers of America national convention to which she was an elected delegate, handcuffed and detained to prevent her from criticizing then-president Jimmy Carter. Soon thereafter, the Spartacist League sued then-attorney general of California George Deukmejian for including the SL in the 'Terrorism: Left-wing' section of the 1979 Report on Organized Crime. In settlement of that suit, Deukmejian's office issued a correction and sent a statement to law enforcement agencies throughout the country notifying them that the inclusion of the SL in the terrorist list was in error. Most recently, the *Washington Times* -- publication of sinister Sun Myung Moon's outfit -- falsely accused the SL/SYL of provoking violence against the police at the November 27, 1982 Labor/Black Mobilization initiated by the SL, which stopped the Ku Klux Klan from marching in Washington, DC. In response to a libel lawsuit, the *Washington Times* retracted its charges.

We have won these victories despite the unfavorable relation of our forces vis-a-vis our opponents in each case because: 1. Our heritage includes a Marxist understanding of the state which rejects both conspiratorial putschism and reformist legalism; 2. We are forthright in our political stands, not least in our intransigent defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism; 3. We are manifestly not terrorist, criminal or violent, as implicitly admitted by the FBI in its own claim to have forgone investigation after over a decade of 'surveillance' against us. We struggle to politically organize the American working class to bring workers to the under-

standing that they need their own class party, a workers party, to fight for their immediate and ultimate interests; 4. We are tenacious defenders of our legality and of those democratic rights which were won by the blood of two bourgeois-revolutionary wars in this country -- the War of Independence and the Civil War -- and encoded in its laws. In this regard, we seek to model ourselves on V I Lenin's conception of the party as 'tribune of the people'. Thus, when the right of the Democratic National Convention to assemble and select their presidential candidate in San Francisco was threatened with government violence, we offered -- despite our deep class hostility to the Democrats -- to provide a defense contingent of union supporters and called upon the labor movement to do the same. In contrast, the current bourgeois authorities in power openly attack established bourgeois-democratic legal norms -- such as the separation of church and state, the Fourth Amendment protection against unreasonable search and seizure, rights to free speech and assembly.

Still, this government claims that it is democratic, that the people are permitted such social and religious views as they see fit. So the FBI and its fellow secret police agencies are required to provide a modicum of 'legal' cover, a fig leaf, for their spying, penetration, set-ups, frame-ups and harassment and repression of the left. With this legal case, we have been able to punch a hole in their current cover, the false equation of Marxism with 'terrorism'. Given that a bourgeois government holds state power and especially in light of the right-wing political climate marked by Reagan's re-election, the stipulated agreement we have won is the most we could reasonably expect.

In the aftermath of every witchhunt, to be sure, the liberals denounce the 'excesses' (ie, their toes getting stepped on) and assure everyone this will never happen again. When the COINTELPRO disclosures revealed that FBI 'dirty tricks' had extended to 'respectable' citizens who had their mail opened, their phones tapped, their medical records and sex lives investigated, a hue and cry ensued resulting in guidelines supposedly meant to curb the FBI's abuse of 'legitimate authority'. Civil libertarian and reformist organizations wrongly believed they could exploit these 'reforms' to gain permanent injunctive relief from FBI spying and harassment, or in the case of the Socialist Workers Party's eight-year-old and still undecided suit, a court-enforced 'right to revolution'.

As Marxists revolutionists, we reject such

American workers back the miners

Despite a virtual news blackout on the miners strike in the capitalist press and active opposition from the Cold Warrior union bureaucrats of the AFL-CIO, American workers continue to join other trade unionists around the world in digging deep for the miners. A \$25,000 fund appeal to assist striking miners' families launched late last year by the Partisan Defence Committee (a class-struggle, anti-sectarian legal defence organisation in accord with the political views of the Spartacist League/US) had as of 22 January raised more than \$11,600. Donations have arrived from workplace collections, local unions and individual readers of *Workers Vanguard*, as well as a \$5000 donation from the PDC itself.

The 25 January *Workers Vanguard* reported on one indicative donation, by the Chicago ATU (local transport workers). A membership meeting voted \$300 to the PDC appeal despite opposition from the union executive. Kevin Quirk, an ATU member who fought for the donation, appealed to the workers: 'Fair words butter no parsnips! The miners need this money to win. It's our obligation as trade unionists to support these struggles, whether it be in Britain, South Africa, Phelps Dodge or our own struggles here in Chicago.'

notions of 'reform' of the capitalist state. The truth of our understanding is evident in the current legitimization of all supposedly previously discredited 'abuses' -- from the Smith Act to COINTELPRO. We will continue to use all the legal and political means at our disposal to fight the new McCarthyism. As we announced at the outset of our suit against the FBI:

'We do not intend to be blown away -- faceless, nameless victims in the dead of night. As the organization which embodies the continuity of revolutionary Marxism in the U.S. today, our task is too important: the liberation of the workers and oppressed from the chains of this decaying, racist system through victorious socialist revolution.' ■

Bamboozlers...

(Continued from page 2)

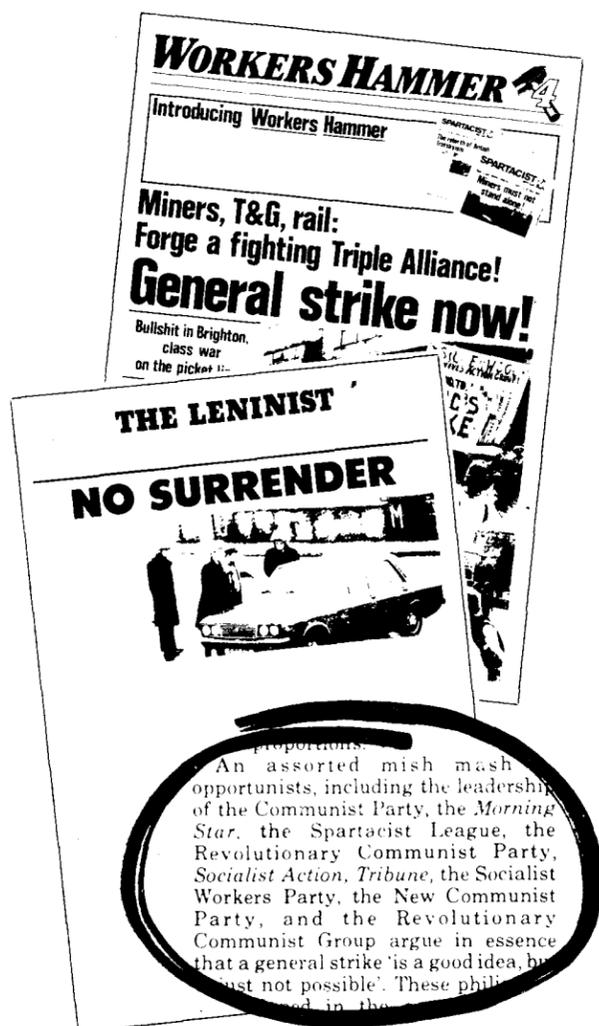
representatives from women's support groups, the unemployed and oppressed minorities, to guard against bureaucratic sellout, organise the struggle at the base and lay the basis for alternate centres of power to the capitalist state, ie soviets.

The real question is, what do our critics counterpose to such a perspective? *Leninist* claims we lie by accusing them of 'waiting for the TUC'. (The phrase is theirs, not ours, but so be it.) According to their June 1984 issue: 'There can be no doubt that at present the only body that can call such a strike is the General Council of the TUC... We must force the TUC to call a general strike.' *Workers Power* was no less emphatic. Its summer 1984 journal *Permanent Revolution* proudly opened with the words: 'Throughout the 1984 miners' strike, *Workers Power* has fought for the TUC to call a general strike.'

Such was their consistent line through at least six months of the strike. Now they are waffling: *Leninist* proclaims they are for a 'general strike with or without the TUC', while *Workers Power* (6 February) tells us to 'have no confidence that the TUC will either call or lead that [general] strike'. Of course WP simultaneously advocate 'a deafening call on the TUC to rally to the miners with an indefinite general strike'. Confused? So are they. As usual for opportunists, this partial and muddled line shift has never been honestly acknowledged. Their mish-mash of a position now attempts to add to calls for action from Lord-to-be Willis and his cohorts a cry to organise a general strike without them. How?

Through the miners support committees. This is downright metaphysical, not Marxist. While the various miners support groups around the country have sometimes organised useful fund-raising, anyone who looks to these powerless talking shops to organise strike action might as well try the Bishop of Durham.

No wonder the *Leninist* expresses defeatism! They recognise that a general strike is needed for victory, but see as the only options a TUC which is actively attempting to knife the strike and talkshops whose overriding prin-



Leninist trips on the truth. While *Leninist* whitewashes CP trade union bureaucrats or calls on TUC scabherders, SL fights for strategy to win the miners strike.

ciple is to do nothing but collect food and money. Stuck in this dead end, *Leninist* has begun scraping around for someone to blame for a defeat which would be inevitable given their non-perspective. Not surprisingly, they have retrospectively come up with the same rotten line that *Workers Power* advanced from the start, that Arthur Scargill should have called for a national ballot after all:

'... the lack of a ballot to call the overtime ban, the lack of a ballot over strike action ... showed that the NUM leadership trusted bureaucratic manoeuvre more than their arguments for solidarity, and this had its costs.' (*Leninist*, January 1985)

The default of the NUM leaders has certainly not been their refusal to bow to the scab 'ballot' furore, but their failure to put the 'left' union leaders squarely on the spot through an all-out campaign for co-ordinated national strike action.

From Thatcher/MacGregor to Kinnock/Murray/Willis to the right wing of the NUM executive, the call for a ballot was the favoured instrument of all those who sought to *break* the strike. The strikers voted with their feet and their picket lines. This line, that ballots and 'arguments for solidarity' are somehow more powerful instruments of working-class struggle than pickets, has a history with *Workers Power* at least. In a pamphlet ('The death agony of the Fourth International') published two years ago, they took us to task for 'elevating' the supposedly 'innocuous' and 'banal' slogan 'Picket lines mean don't cross' into a principle. No, no, they tutted, you shouldn't always attack workers who cross picket lines for scabbing; there might be exceptional circumstances etc etc. Try telling that to a militant miner today!

The *Leninist/Workers Power* musings are in practice a cover for failing to fight on the ground for strike action to spread the miners strike. Where are their reports on their supporters fighting for strike action in the trade unions? We know *Workers Power* had a supporter in BL Longbridge at a time when the

'Solidarity is the number one law of trade unionism'

We reprint below remarks by Don Hughes, South Wales NUM striker, to the Workers Hammer workshop at the 4 February West Midlands Strike Support conference:

First of all, of course, I convey to you fraternal greetings not only from my own lodge, Celyn South colliery, but also from the South Wales area of the NUM. After eleven months of strike action I came to this meeting today and I was handed a little pamphlet, *The Leninist*: 'The miners strike: from the jaws of defeat'. Well, that takes a bit of swallowing. Because after eleven months on strike I feel I should tell all you good people that as far as the South Wales miners are concerned, we are far from defeat. In fact we're convinced, in the South Wales coalfield, that we are going to win this battle.

And believe me, comrades, it is a battle. This is my third national strike. I struck in 1972, I was out again in '74, and here I am again, in '84/'85. I've also taken part in two South Wales area strikes during that time, in 1971 when we struck for three weeks over lack of investment in the South Wales coalfield, and again in 1983 over an issue which started

this current strike, the closure of the Lewis Merthyr colliery. Unfortunately at the time we could not get national support.

But it's different today. We've got national support. We've got support from every coalfield in Great Britain. All right, there are scab coalfields -- there is Nottingham, Leicester, South Derbyshire -- because their leadership, we are told, are moderates. Well you see, we have an old saying in South Wales: 'You show me a moderate trade unionist, and I'll show you a shit-house.' A moderate trade unionist is a man who will buy peace, he will buy peace at any time.

The most distressing thing so far for me has been the unfortunate news about our comrade here, Patrick. He was sacked by his employers at BL for simply showing what should be the number one law of the trade union movement. Solidarity. Solidarity, comrades, does not only extend to mineworkers. It extends to all trade unionists no matter what their union is, whether they be the tailors and cutters union, whether they be NUPE, the NUM, ASLEF or any other. All in the trade union movement are working people and the as-

sault today by this government is upon the livelihoods of working people.

Now what can we do about our comrade here? Well, first of all we must show solidarity. A little while ago, Patrick sent me a letter urging me to try to do something about the scab coal going into the Longbridge plant of British Leyland. Now I am just a rank-and-file mineworker, I'm not even on my lodge committee, I doubt if I'd get elected on my lodge committee. I am not exactly a moderate trade unionist. But the fact remains that once I received that letter, and other reported information that the letter also contained, I handed it straight over to my area and I demanded that my area take action, to try to put right that wrong.

That is what trade unionism is all about, comrades. Now the miners of South Wales have always had that thing about them. I haven't only been on miners picket lines. I've been on steelworkers picket lines, I've been on nurses picket lines. I know, as a trade unionist, that we've been on those picket lines means that I am showing solidarity with my fellow trade unionists... I shall remain solid to this strike, and I shall remain solid as far as Patrick Sliney is concerned and every other trade unionist outside the mining industry is concerned who's been sacked.

flow of scab coal into the plant was a major issue in the West Midlands labour movement. What did he do? He quit his job. As for the *Leninist*, these people are inside the Communist Party, which includes a sizeable chunk of the trade union officialdom actually in a position to launch solidarity strike action. Where is their concrete fight, where it counts? Of course there isn't any -- how can there be when *Leninist*'s line is to protect the integrity of this deeply-divided, utterly reformist party? According to their January issue, any split would be a 'serious blunder'. How much easier to deflect all your calls and your activities onto the TUC or into flaccid miners support conferences.

Polish coal and scab-lover Walesa

If the *Leninist* and *Workers Power* are generally at one over the miners strike, they do have a significant difference on the question of Polish coal and Solidarnosc. Indeed *Workers Power*'s 28 November polemic entitled 'Polish coal and the British left' lumps us together not only with the *Leninist* but with Kent miners leader Malcolm Pitt and even Arthur Scargill. We are, it seems, a 'motley crew' because we oppose Lech Walesa and his Polish Spencerite union. Well, we could think of worse company to be with -- like *Workers Power*'s pro-Solidarnosc bedfellows Frank Chapple, Denis Healey and Maggie Thatcher.

'True', mutters *Workers Power*. 'the *Workers Hammer* fulminates against Jaruzelski's scab coal but it does so from the camp of solidarity with him against Solidarnosc' (their emphasis). They seem to think opposing a counterrevolutionary movement whose aim is the restoration of capitalism to Poland is somehow inconsistent with denouncing the narrow nationalism and outright scabbing of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Not in the slightest. What is inconsistent, not to say counterrevolutionary, is *Workers Power*'s simultaneous formal analysis of Solidarnosc as pro-capitalist in its programme and all its leading wings, and *WP*'s programme of supporting it anyway (see 'Revolutionary, counterrevolutionary, who cares? *Workers Power* still cheers Solidarnosc', *Spartacist Britain* no 39, February 1982).

Any decent worker would want to defend the gains of a planned economy (for example, little if any unemployment), even one as deformed as Poland's, against a pro-capitalist outfit whose leader is so brazen as to praise the Notts scabs! But, as we have consistently pointed out, only proletarian political revolution based on defence of nationalised property can truly defend the gains of the deformed/degenerated workers states and put them at the service of the international working class. As for the 'Leninists', given their opposition to political revolution, all their whining about the Polish bureaucracy's scabbing amounts to so much window dressing, since they would necessarily oppose a proletarian mobilisation against it. But little matter to either of these opportunist groups that they stand on opposite sides of the barricades in Poland (literally!). Poland is hardly a side issue in this strike, yet the 'Leninists' and *Workers Power* are still prepared to share the same propaganda platform.

As classic products of the insular British



Ray Buckton and Jimmy Knapp, rail union leaders. Get off your arses: strike now with the miners!

left, both these groups deny the decisive impact of the Cold War on the split in the British labour movement -- a split shown most graphically in the witchhunt of Arthur Scargill at the 1983 Blackpool TUC conference which paved the way for the government's assault on the NUM. And this denial is inextricably linked to their continued, bankrupt strivings to force the scabby Cold War TUC chiefs to act on the miners' behalf. Whether pushing this line or playing around in the fringes with the miners support groups; whether trying to reinvigorate Her Majesty's floundering Communist Party or messing about on the margins of the Bennite Labour left, neither of these groups shows a way forward for the working class of Britain. ■

Land Rover ...

(Continued from page 8)

branch actually organised a picket of Longbridge to attempt to get that stopped. Brother Hughie [Clark, Birch Coppice NUM], people from Lea Hall, others around, every bloody pit in this area, attempted to get something done to get the scab coal stopped.

In my own plant I raised a petition to call for strike action alongside the miners if necessary to get this scab coal stopped. Over 60 other people in my area alone signed that petition. I'm not a steward, but I led other workers to two stewards meetings in my area to get the scab coal stopped. The leadership didn't do a thing about it, sat on their hands as indeed did the leadership in Longbridge. And for god's sake, it's the first rule of any trade unionist -- you do not handle scab goods. Full stop. In particular in a miners strike, but at any time you do not handle them.

Now the scab coal continued to roll into the plant. I continuously raised it. The next issue that came up where I thought I could effectively link up the miners strike and spread it in a real way was around our pay claim in Rover. It came up a week ago. I issued a statement to my fellow union brothers and sisters, signed as a member of the branch. A week after there was another union meeting, a mass meeting. I spoke at this mass meeting, linked up our pay claim with the miners and concretely tried to point out that what was

needed was to spread our own strike action and our own claim alongside the miners and come out, and at least be a spark in this area to other industries to follow suit. It didn't happen. Not because workers didn't want to do it, many of them would stand alongside the miners.

The next day, I should say Monday, management called me into their office. I was given a preventative suspension -- it began to sound like South Africa -- because I had the audacity to speak out in the union in support of the miners and for strike action in support of the miners. The management made it quite clear. I was brought up on an appeal on Thursday -- I was sacked on the spot. Even though the union said this has happened before, why are you doing this now? They said, we have to take harsh measures.

I want to make it clear what's happening. The Tories are not out to simply smash the miners. That they are doing to the best of their ability. But by smashing the miners first they are attempting to smash effective trade unionism in this country. And that needs to be resisted. And the only way that can be resisted is by actually spreading the strike.

Now since I've been sacked I've been up on the gate. I was up on the gate Friday, I was up on the gate [this morning], both shifts. I've spoken to people going in. And I want to say to the miners here -- and this is not a word of a lie -- there are many people going into that plant who not only think it's disgusting that I've been sacked for linking the miners strike with our own claim, but believe that the union leadership should be doing something about it. They're waiting, and many of them have told me they'd be prepared to strike over my own situation. And there's a meeting on Monday of my own section which hopefully will call for strike action. And may I say that it'd be the first strike action in this area which would have been called directly in relation to the miners strike.

Now, I'll finish by saying this. Any lorry drivers or anybody else who's scabbing on the miners in the T&G should be expelled from the union forthwith. The miners have stood eleven months against the state apparatus. I believe what the T&G should be doing, not only in my plant but nationally, should be calling out all their membership alongside the miners -- and not waiting for the TUC to continue to stab them in the back, or Neil Kinnock to stab them in the back, or to have nice fancy debates in Parliament. What is needed is for the T&G to come out alongside the miners, just like the NUR have done in many cases. But we need to have that in a real sense, on the picket lines.

And finally I'd like to say that anybody who is prepared to hand out this statement the brother read out earlier on, I would willingly accept their help at Rover on Monday, because my appeal is at 3 o'clock. I would like people to be up there to hand out the statement to as many workers as possible and to make a point. The reason why I was sacked was directly related to the miners strike, and the reason was because I sought to the best of my ability to actually spread that, and that's strike action alongside them. And I hope people will come forward to the *Workers Hammer* meeting afterwards in room 3 to actually coordinate that action with me. Thank you very much. ■

Reinstate Patrick Sliney! Strike with the miners!

Fight anti-union sacking at Land Rover!

Workers Hammer

On 31 January, Patrick Sliney, a TGWU militant and Spartacist League supporter, was sacked by his Land Rover bosses in a blatantly anti-union victimisation. From the first months of the miners strike, Sliney has been campaigning tirelessly to put a halt to the scandalous flow of scab coal into his own Rover Solihull plant and the nearby Longbridge complex. When he issued a statement to his co-workers last month calling for strike action around the Land Rover wage claim and in solidarity with the miners, the company sacked him, seizing as a pretext that he violated their rules against 'unauthorised distribution of literature'. Sliney and his supporters responded with a call for immediate strike action:

'The management says issuing this statement is a disciplinary offence; we say it's *trade union activity*. They want to silence the voice of this brother who has fought to defend the unions....

'*Brother Sliney must be reinstated*. It will take *all-out strike action* to stop this victimisation.'

The following Monday morning, with a kangaroo-court management 'appeal' hearing scheduled for the afternoon, militant miners and other trade unionists demonstrated their support for Sliney outside the plant gates. 'Support Patrick Sliney today, lads', they shouted, 'His job today, your job tomorrow!' Michael (Apartheid) Edwardes and his heirs have been in the forefront of the Tory/employer offensive against the trade unions which is today seeking to crush the miners. Beginning with the outrageous sacking of leading shop steward Derek Robinson in 1979 through to the victimisation of the Longbridge Eight, the recent sacking of Bob Cullen at Cowley and countless other militants, they have sought to smash any semblance of shop-floor organisation in the former BL empire. With this latest attack on Patrick Sliney these industrial tyrants want to underline their intent to make *all* trade union activity 'unauthorised', and particularly activity in support of the miners. They admitted as much when challenged by Rover convenor Joe Harris at the 'appeal' hearing, conceding that on any given day dozens of 'unauthorised' notices could be found around the plant. *They want to smash militant trade unionism.*

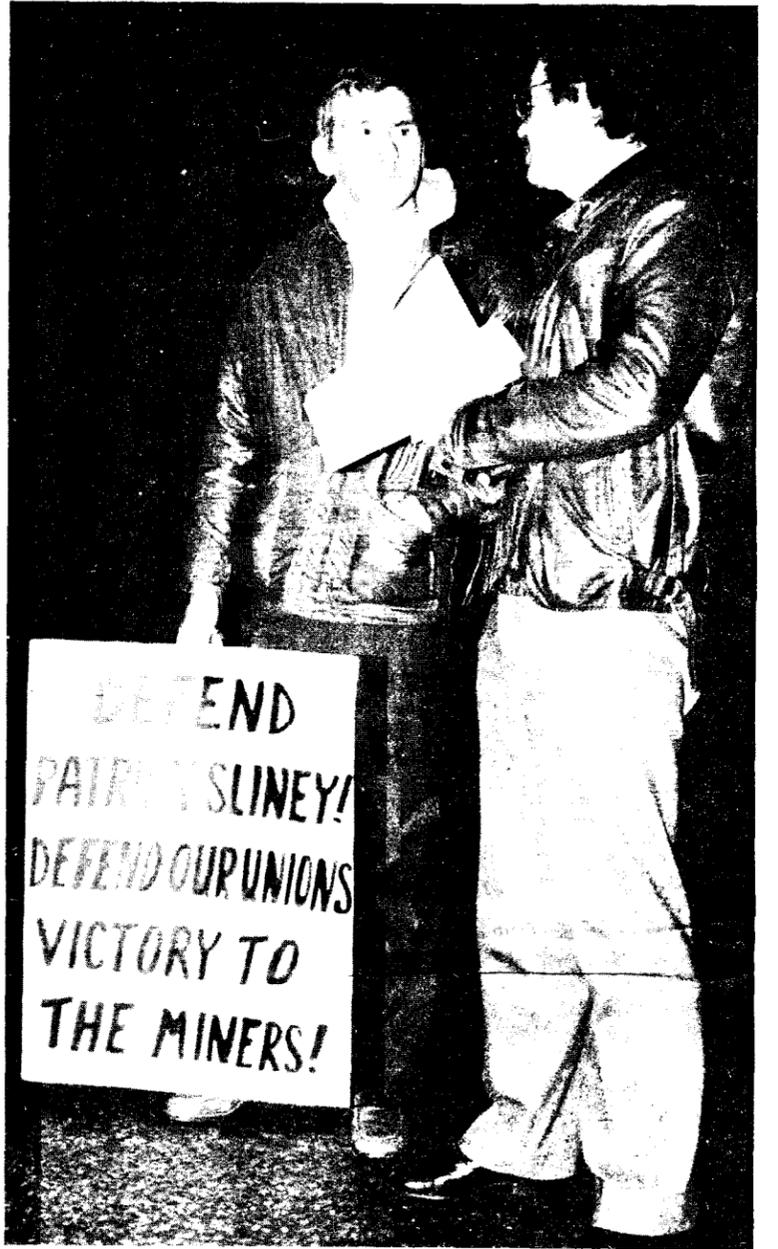
Support for Sliney has come from broad sectors of the labour movement, including Derek Robinson, Tony Benn and many other trade unionists and Labour Party members. At a West Midlands Miners Strike Support conference in Birmingham's Digbeth Civic Hall, Saturday, 2

February, Sliney was invited to speak from the platform following a report on his victimisation by former Rolls Royce convenor and chairman of the local County Association of Trades Councils, Phil Higgs. Higgs aptly compared Land Rover's victimisation of Sliney for his views with the fascist 'thought-police'. Sliney's speech (reprinted below) came after an impassioned appeal for trade union action in support of the miners by Coventry striking miner's wife Kath Chaplin and received vigorous applause. She subsequently joined a number of other strike militants and a Longbridge shop steward at a *Workers Hammer* workshop which discussed the fight for strike action alongside the miners and a campaign to defend Brother Sliney.

Around the country, striking miners in particular have rallied to the defence of this militant who has fought to link up with their struggle. Kent area NUM secretary Jack Collins, local officials in South Yorkshire, North Derbyshire and the Midlands, and leading strike activists from South Wales and elsewhere immediately registered their support and calls for effective strike action to demand Sliney's reinstatement. Lea Hall and Littleton strike committees sent delegations to the plant gate on Monday.

Sliney told *Workers Hammer* that many of the hundreds of co-workers he and his supporters spoke to recognised the need for strike action. But the plant leadership, notably Joe Harris and senior shop steward Stan Hill, are dead-set against a strike and thus defenceless in the face of this clear attack on the entire union. According to reports Sliney got from his fellow workers, management was allowed a free hand to intimidate and threaten militants on Monday morning before a shopfloor meeting was meant to take place in Sliney's section to discuss strike action over his sacking. Meanwhile Harris and Hill not only refused to mobilise the shopfloor for strike action, but saw to it that most workers did not even know of the 'meeting', effectively subverting it.

Throughout the plant, union militants who want to defend Sliney and stand with the miners feel, yet again, that their leaders have left them in the lurch. Even so the sentiment for action is clearly there. Despite the fact that *no* recommendation came forward from the top leadership, six stewards voted in favour of a motion for all-out strike action put by deputy senior steward Ian Schofield, a Militant supporter, at a 5 February meeting of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee, with ten votes opposed. Though battered by years of betrayal and company attacks, many Rover workers understand



Lea Hall miner with Patrick Sliney (right) outside Rover Solihull, 4 February, calling for strike action against company victimisation.

that if this victimisation goes unchallenged, it's open season on any trade union activist. They must begin now to mobilise to turn it around. An injury to one is an injury to all! Trade unionists are urged to send messages of support for Brother Sliney to Sam Robinson, Transport and General Workers Union, 211 Broad Street, Birmingham. *Reinstate Patrick Sliney! Strike with the miners now!*

Brothers and sisters, I work -- I have worked, I should say -- in the Rover. I'm a member of the 5/357 branch, as many here may know. Everybody knows that what Kath [Chaplin] said is true. The miners have been fighting for all of us. And they've stood alone for over eleven months while they've been fighting.

But that's not entirely true, because in Coalville many men are being victimised because they support the miners and want to spread the strike. Four hundred T&G lorry drivers have been sacked for not handling or moving scab coal throughout this strike, and there hasn't been a word said about it. And I'm being sacked for fighting inside my plant to spread the miners strike. And I'm sure there's many more like me throughout the country.

I want to give you a bit of history of how this came about. Last April there was scab coal rolling into my plant and it still is today, and rolling into Longbridge. And I attempted to raise that there to get it stopped. I raised it at the Saltley demonstration where the miners were. From that Saltley demonstration, Tom Shiels of the T&G lorry drivers

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Demonstration to protest sacking of Derek Robinson, 26 November 1979.