

# Militant

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15p

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workers say...

# NO REDUNDANCIES

The threat of parts of Britain becoming ghost areas is now a distinct reality. In the last few weeks some of the country's major firms have announced they are cutting jobs. The de-industrialisation of Britain continues apace as the bosses try to maintain profits.

In Tyneside, Vickers have announced redundancies. On Merseyside, Dunlops and Plessey have said jobs will have to go. Elsewhere GEC, Courtaulds, and British Steel, are amongst the firms threatening to sack workers. Never mind if the workers suffer, never mind if some areas lose all

major industries, profit is all that matters. You won't read much in the bosses' press about the capitalists not having a sense of responsibility to the community. Nor about the fight-back the workers are staging. 'Militant' this week covers the struggle for jobs in Britain.

## THE THREAT TO CORBY...

The people of Corby are angry. They are angry that with the stroke of a pen, the British Steel Corporation proposes to axe over 5,500 jobs at the steel-making plant in Corby.

To show their feelings, nearly 1,000 people attended a meeting to discuss the future of Corby.

With the loss of these jobs, Corby would become a ghost town. There is no other large industry.

Stewarts and Lloyds, the old owners of the steel works before nationalisation, saw to that. To keep a monopoly of labour and hold wages down, they resisted any attempts to introduce new industry in the town.

Many families living in Corby have already uprooted themselves once to move down from Scotland. The carrot was a guaranteed job and a future for their children.

They have no intention of becoming industrial nomads, moving from town to town in search of employment. Why should they have to move on again?

It's not their fault BSC is making a loss. Why should they have to pay for the mistakes made by the present management and the old owners?

By Heather Rawlings

The closure of the steel-making plant will push Corby's unemployment rate over 20%. It is estimated that, apart from the BSC jobs, another 2,000 jobs will be lost in associated activities.

Among those affected would certainly be workers at British Oxygen, Fisons Basic Slag, and Tarmac.

Why does BSC want to close down the steel works, anyway? They talk about the "problem of excess iron and steel-making capacity within the BSC".

But even in this country we are crying out for new hospitals, schools, houses, kidney machines and a whole host of other things made with steel.

The economically backward countries could

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# FORWARD TO SOCIALIST REVOLUTION!

By Jim Chrystie

This week the Iranian working class completely smashed the attempt at counter-revolution by the pro-Shah Imperial Guard. This attempt provoked an insurrection of the working class of Tehran.

In one blow the remnants of the old regime were swept aside. At the same time it is clear that the Iranian working class is looking to totally transform society.

Last Friday, elements in the Imperial Guard attacked the airforce base where technicians and civilian workers had declared their support for Khomeini's Islamic Revolutionary Council. The airmen fought back, distributed

arms to the people and soon the whole of SE Tehran, a working class district, was occupied.

The attempt to turn back the wheel of revolution, resulted instead, as in Portugal in 1974-5 in speeding it forward.

The much-lauded powerful Iranian army was fought to a standstill by the armed workers. Tanks were captured, the headquarters of SAVAK (secret police) seized and barricades criss-crossed the



WORKERS DEMOCRACY

Generals capitulated and ordered the armed forces back to barracks.

The government of Bakhtiari resigned and Khomeini immediately called on everyone to remain peaceful and not to attack buildings. He was ignored.

Armed with over 70,000 weapons including rifles, machine guns, anti-tank weapons and a number of tanks, the workers moved against all the symbols of the old order. The Shah's winter palace and the headquarters of the Imperial Guard were captured. The Chief of the General Staff was shot by his fellow officers.

capital's streets. Over the weekend the army began to split, so that on Sunday the

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# Militant

## FIGHT BACK AGAINST CAPITALIST OFFENSIVE

"What used to be called 'management of the economy' has passed to the City of London. It is the markets which now make policies not elected governments".

A telling passage from the pages of 'Militant'? No, this was the sober judgement on 9th February of the Guardian's political commentator, Peter Jenkins.

More than all those ringing phrases about "safeguarding the nation's interest" it explains the shameful attacks by Labour ministers on striking workers, on picketing etc.

Callaghan has thus given the green light to scabs with his infamous boast that he would not hesitate to cross picket lines. He disgusted council workers by comparing them to "vandals".

According to the 'Financial Times' [9 February] one of his right-wing acolytes, Labour MP Andrew Faulds, declared that: "the more powerful, self-sufficient trade unions, with their belief in free collective bargaining, perhaps should become affiliated to the Conservative Party." Callaghan's only rejoinder was that: "A lot of Tory trade unionists are now on strike."

This attempt to smear workers forced to go on strike for a living wage as virtual Tory stooges will further embitter them. This, and the overall stand of the cabinet could drive some, who are traditional Labour voters into abstaining in an election, while those politically backward workers who normally vote Tory could be confirmed in their opposition to Labour.

To cap it all, right-wing Cabinet minister Rodgers has called for a wage freeze to the obvious delight of the Tory press. Even Thatcher conceded that "in certain circumstances" she would also favour a wage freeze!

The policies of the right wing in the cabinet are an attempt to out-Tory the Tories. Jim Callaghan on TV confessed: "I've stumbled, I've misjudged it". But the Labour cabinet has more than "stumbled". It has completely abandoned the programme on which it was elected—of reforms, i.e. steady improvements in living standards.

Instead we have had counter-reforms, cuts in living standards, over the past four years. Just how far back the British workers have fallen was shown by Peter Jenkins.

Shattering in one blow his own vicious denunciations of strikers, and those of all the other hired scribblers of the capitalists, he wrote: "Wages in Britain are low, living standards are becoming inadequate. When the government last week raised its definition of low pay to a ceiling of £70 a week it turned out that a staggering seven million would qualify for the new minimum". [Guardian, 20 January].

But the Labour cabinet has set its face against the demands of the working

class, not because of malice or some personal quirk of Callaghan, but because it has chosen to remain within the framework of capitalism.

As Jenkins correctly says, it is capitalism—the "market"—which dictates to "elected governments" not vice versa. More precisely, it is the 200 monopolies which control 85% of the economy which compel the government, so long as it remains on a capitalist basis, to do its bidding.

And British capitalism is in the worst crisis in its history. It can no longer afford lasting reforms. On the contrary, it is attempting to take back from the working class what it gave in the past.

Without, perhaps, realising the consequences of what he is saying, Jenkins shows the real situation: "increasingly the country [that is, the capitalists-Ed] cannot afford to pay enough".

There we have the brutal truth! The capitalists "cannot afford" a decent living wage.

Neither can capitalism provide for all, as the 1½ million in the dole queues can testify. Nor can it house every family, as the decline in the number of houses built and the rise in the number of homeless, shows. And if, like the council workers, working people demand these basics, they will be pilloried by the gutter press in banner headlines such as the 'Evening Standard': "Plagued by NUPE's rats".

If capitalism cannot afford this, it should be swept away and replaced by a planned socialist economy. These are the bold conclusions which the leadership of the labour movement should be drawing from the present situation.

Instead, they have bowed to the frenzied campaign of the capitalists. Threats are made to cancel out wage increases through price rises. Already the Minimum Lending Rate has been increased to 14%—the highest for all advanced industrialised countries.

This is bound to increase the cost of mortgages—with housing prices already shooting through the roof—and will have the effect of deflating the economy by making loans dearer.

At the same time, the capitalists are urging the government to carry through further savage cuts in public spending in the Budget. These hypocrites have shed crocodile tears about the effects of the council workers' strike on hospital patients yet they calmly suggest the slashing of spending on health, which will have far more calamitous effects on the National Health Service than the present strike action.

But a campaign by the Labour Party and TUC to expose the intrigues and hypocrisy of the capitalists would stop them in their tracks.

Instead, the TUC is preparing to make concessions to the clamour of the capitalists.

An agreement between the TUC and the Labour Cabinet will probably be announced after we go to press. It is reported that a vague agreement to "aim" for "moderate" wage increases has been made. The right wing in the General Council document called "A Better Way", are pressing for another 'social contract' Mark 2. This is despite the disastrous experience of the social contract over the last four years.

But no matter what agreement is signed, it will eventually founder on the opposition of the working class. One of the signatories of the right wing document, for example, is Terry Duffy of the AUEW. Yet his own union is presently putting in for a 33% increase in the basic rate for engineers!

Nevertheless, the retreat of the Labour government and the TUC is grist to the mill of the capitalists and the Tories. According to the 'New Statesman' [February 9] the TUC are recommending that so-called 'secondary picketing' should be discouraged. This is despite the experiences of the lorry drivers, who demonstrated that it was essential for the success of the strike.

These concessions will not satisfy the capitalists. On the contrary, they will demand more. Thatcher hopes to build on any retreats of the General Council, to take measures against picketing and the closed shop, and to introduce compulsory postal ballots. Her right-hand-man Whitelaw, an alleged Tory 'dove', has promised the trade unions "confrontation".

The raving Tory leadership must not be given the chance to carry through their plans. But this can only be guaranteed if the present back-peddalling of the Labour cabinet and TUC is stopped now.

Labour Parties, union branches, and shop stewards' committees should demand that the labour and trade union leaders stop retreating.

Fight back against the capitalist offensive with socialist policies! Nationalise the monopolies under workers' control and management, with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need. Introduce a socialist plan of production drawn up and implemented by committees involving trade unions, shop stewards committees, housewives and small businessmen.

A socialist Britain could "afford" a minimum wage of £70 and much more. It would also result in the elimination of the low pay and unemployment and poverty which scars the lives of millions of British workers.

It would mean undreamed of plenty for all.

# OPINION POLLS

## distorted picture

"The MORI opinion poll, exclusive to the 'Daily Express', reveals an astonishing swing towards Tory policies and a desire to change laws affecting unions."

According to MORI (Market and Opinion Research International), over 91% of the trade unionists interviewed agreed that strikes should not be called until there had been a ballot. Over 80% agreed to the suggestion that 'secondary' picketing should be banned and the numbers of pickets limited.

The right-wing 'Express' felt quite justified in plastering its front page with the giant headline: "YES, GET TOUGH!" (against the unions, of course).

If the results of MORI's poll are an accurate reflection of feelings among millions of trade union members, there must indeed be massive discontent within the ranks.

One would expect to see a mass exodus of disgruntled and dissatisfied members from their union organisation.

Yet is this the case? No, reports from all over the country indicate a massive influx into the unions,

especially those involved in recent strike action, and especially the public sector unions now fighting low pay.

The recent rise in trade union membership, moreover, is entirely in line with the steady and quite dramatic increase over recent years. In fact, trade union membership has risen by almost a quarter in the last ten years.

The latest figures given by the Department of Employment Gazette (Vol 87, No 1) show that out of a workforce of just over 24 million over half (52.5%) i.e. 12.7 million, belong to a trade union.

There was notably a sharp increase in the number of women workers joining unions (up 5.4% in 1977 to 3.7 million). It hardly needs saying that women make up the big majority of low-paid workers, and are particularly well-represented among the public sector workers now fighting for a £60 minimum wage.

These facts alone cast serious doubt on the value of surveys carried out by MORI and other polling organisations.

The MORI survey used by the 'Express', for instance, was based on a sample of 1,030 people, who included 289 trade unionists. However conscientiously MORI conducted its survey you have to

### Express poll puts Maggie 19% up

From Page One

agree or disagree with a ban on secondary picketing?

	Agree	Disagree
Tory	94	4
Labour	85	10
Liberal	84	11
Trade unionist	86	9

Voting was also very high on the question: "Do you think the Government should or should not use force to..."

have an incredible faith in the accuracy of supposedly "scientific" statistical techniques to believe that such a survey gives any real indication of the thinking and intentions of millions of trade union members.

We will return to the question of Opinion Polls later.

In the meantime, we can be satisfied of one thing: that the basic industrial organisations of the working class, which already have enormous potential power, are continuing to increase their size and strength.

The reason? Because despite all the propaganda of the capitalist press, more and more workers every day are learning from their own experience that it is absolutely necessary to join a union to resist oppressive treatment and fight for decent pay and conditions.

By Lynn Walsh

PERCENTAGE OF TRADE UNIONISTS IN LABOUR FORCE, 1969-74

	Labour force Millions	Trade unionists Millions	% of unionists in labour force
1969	23.6	10.4	44.4
1970	23.4	11.1	47.7
1971	23.2	11.1	47.9
1972	23.3	11.3	49.4
1973	23.5	11.4	49.2
1974	23.6	11.7	50.4
1975	23.8	12.1	51.1
1976	24.0	12.3	51.5
1977	24.1	12.7	52.5

[Numbers rounded to nearest 0.1 million below actual figure]

## IRAN—REVOLUTION

[Continued from page 1]

The threat of civil war, which the capitalists talked of, vanished. The mass of the population supported the revolution, isolating the pro-Shah elements to a small minority.

All the forces of the capitalist state were now powerless before the armed workers. Power lay in the streets.

The capitalists and the bazaar merchants who back Khomeini are scared that the revolution will go the whole way. Now we see the appeals for order, return to work and most important return the arms.

The sheer speed of events in Iran has terrified Iranian and international capitalism. Bakhtiar's government was meant to provide a breathing-space after the departure of the Shah. It lasted precisely 38 days. Now western capitalism is hoping that Khomeini will put the break on the revolution.

But the workers have fought to put an end to a system which produced the Shah. They gave considerable but never total support to Khomeini in his uncompromising opposition to the 'King of Kings'. His Islamic Revol-



utionary Council government could lose that support if it tried to maintain the same system.

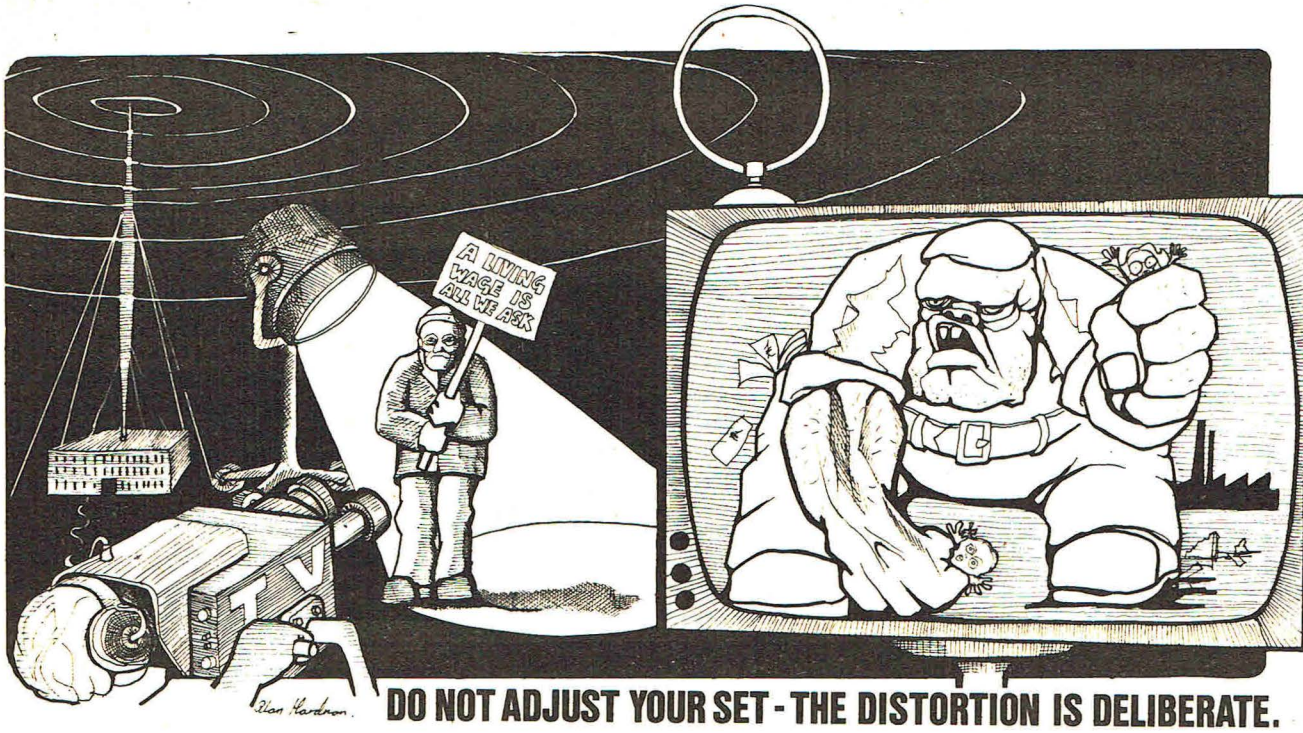
Bakhtiar consciously compared himself to the ill-fated Kerensky of the Russian revolution. That mantle could fall on Khomeini too in the coming period.

What is still lacking in Iran is a Marxist leadership with mass support. The danger of delay in the revolution is

clear. The army has been defeated not dismantled. 24 families still control much of Iranian business and multi-nationalists its economy.

Even now unless the Iranian revolution moves forward to take over the monopolies and establish workers' democracy it could give a reaction a long-term chance of recovery and revenge against the Iranian working class.





# WESTERN'S

## Picketing rights attacked

Eight pickets at Western Shiprepairers, Birkenhead, have been served with a High Court writ to appear at 10.30am on Friday 16th at the High Court in London. The legal action has been set in motion by Solatex Ltd and Western Shiprepairers Ltd.,

The employers accuse the men of a variety of threats to management and damage to property. They are seeking an injunction against what they call 'trespassing' in the yard which they closed and have left to rot; damaging plant machinery installations and threatening assaults or otherwise interfering with "servants of the plaintiffs".

This is a blatant attempt to scare the men away from the picket, which has now been maintained for over seven months in defiance of 625 jobs. Utilising the expensive machinery of the courts and legal profession, the Laird Group, who own Westerns, are now resorting to the courts to defeat the fight for jobs. They must not go unanswered by the trade union and Labour Party leadership.

If these allegations of damage to property and threats to bosses were true, and so serious that they merit High Court action, why didn't the employers raise them before?

Most of the charges date back to July-September of last year, yet no mention was ever made of these charges to the police, the pickets or anyone else. The bosses who give the details in the writ claim to know all sorts of things from six months ago.

Have these allegations been held in reserve until all else has failed to defeat the pickets

to get the yard re-opened?

Some of the allegations are totally absurd. One boss must be able to see through several brick walls, judging by his claim that he saw pickets heading for a distilled water tank (allegedly damaged), about half a mile from the office he was in, with several buildings and dock walls in between.

This is an attack on the right to picket. It is an attempt to use every dirty trick in the bosses' book to defeat a fight against unemployment. If they get away with it at Westerns, it will be used in every fight against redundancies or low wages throughout the country.

First it was a lorry driver, now it's Westerns. Every trade union body in the country must intervene. Resolutions should flood into local and national offices, especially G&MWU, T&G WU, EETPU and the Boiler-makers Society.

Demand that these men are not left in isolation. The bosses and their courts should be told exactly what trade unionists think of them.

**Bring your banners and a delegation to a picket of the High Court in the Strand, London, starting at 9.45am on Friday 16th. Send messages of support and copies of resolutions to the Western's Action Committee.**

**Money is urgently needed to publicise the case in the labour movement. All will be well used in fighting this latest attack on trade union rights.**

**Contact Western's Action Committee, c/o 29 Gaywood Close, Ford Estate, Birkenhead.**

**Richard Venton**

(Birkenhead CLP)

# TUC YOUTH CONFERENCE

## Youth must have voice

The sixth TUC Youth Conference takes place on 16th February at Congress House, London, and will probably have the most important agenda in all of its six years.

Key subjects for discussion are: "Youth Employment," "Trade Unions and Young People," and "Industrial Strategy." Of these, "trade unions and young people" will be the most debated and discussed subject at conference, because what happens in this debate will determine the future for TUC youth and young workers in the future.

At the 1978 conference (TUC), a motion was remitted by Congress for consideration by the General Council which

called "for more opportunity to youth within the TUC, thereby encouraging the younger generation to voice their point of view within the movement..."

(1) By extending the present youth conference to two days to allow fuller discussion on any subject; (2) the right to discuss motions at their conference; and (3) the formulation of a programme for a youth charter."

This was moved by Steve Glennon of the National Society of Metal Mechanics, and I feel that if the TUC youth conference is to become democratic, and if the working class youth is to have a voice in the labour movement, then it is essential that this resolution be taken up by the TUC.

With regard to a two-day conference, the TUC General

Council questions whether a two-day conference would be useful or necessary, and says that the present one-day conference can deal with the agenda. Nevertheless, it is clear that a two-day conference would boost the status of this conference, leading to greater participation by trade union youth.

A one-day a year meeting of trade union youth is not enough in the present industrial situation in Britain, and the extension of the conference would enable TUC youth to discuss in depth the main problems of youth and young workers instead of the present and usual three subjects set by the general council.

The right to discuss motions would enable the conference to formulate policies and become a force within the trade union move-

ment with a charter (as outlined in point three) based on the Labour Party Young Socialists' "Youth Charter". More young workers could be won to trade unions, the labour movement generally, and the ideas of socialism.

In many recent industrial disputes we have seen how active young workers are in the struggle, such as the bakery workers' dispute, the NUJ dispute, Garners Steak Houses and the Grunwick fight.

In all these battles youth has proved its willingness to fight in the trade unions—now it must have its own voice within the TUC.

**By Glyn James**

(NSMM, delegate to conference)

# LPYS CONFERENCE

## Rallying point for the year

This year's National Conference of the Labour Party Young Socialists promises to be the biggest and best ever. The LPYS National Committee has been aiming at 2,000 delegates and visitors, but early bookings suggest this target may well be exceeded.

The Conference will be held over Easter, April 13-16, in Blackpool. More than ever, as this is an election year, the Conference will be a rallying point for Labour's youth in preparation for the important work which lies ahead.

Last year, over 25 new LPYS branches were set up, indicating the new momentum of activity which took place around the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment and our school student and anti-fascist campaigns. All these new branches, we hope, will be sending delegates to the conference.

If they approach the local labour movement, LPYS branches will find a sympathetic response to appeals for financial aid to send visitors.

A document on South Africa is being put to the

**By Glenys Ingham**

(LPYS National Committee)

conference by the National Committee, together with a new edition of the **Charter for Young Workers**. The Charter, which has already won a great deal of respect in the trade union movement, deals with the fundamental problems facing working class youth and outlines a programme around which to organise in the factories, schools, and on the streets.



LPYS branches mobilised for the January 22nd lobby

LPYS branches can continue their excellent campaigning work in the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment and in helping workers involved in disputes by taking the **Charter** to the factories, union branches and picket lines, getting it discussed and encouraging local trade union organisations to sponsor young members to attend the conference.

Every young worker would get a tremendous boost from our conference. Already the General and Municipal Workers Union has agreed to sponsor visitors nationally and to circulate its branches. ASLEF, the train drivers' union will be sponsoring two and NUPE will be circulating its branches.

Locally, thousands of letters about the conference

have been distributed to union branches and shop stewards' committees.

Besides the political debate, a full programme of social activities has been arranged with discos, folk nights and club nights.

**Book now!**

Every area should by now have booked its accommo-

dation and transport, and made arrangements to raise funds to cover the cost of those who are at school, unemployed or in low-paid jobs.

Book your place now through your local LPYS branch. Alternatively, contact Andy Bevan, National Youth Officer, Labour Party, Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1.

photo: MILITANT

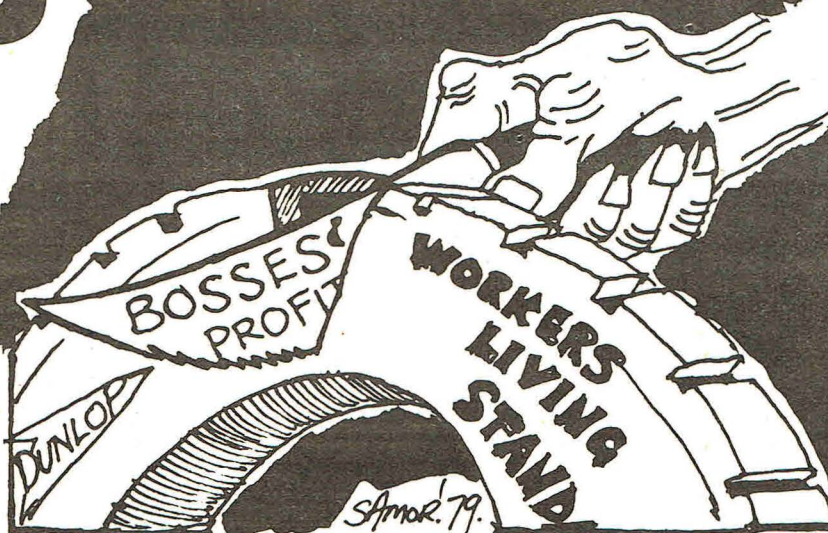
**COME TO THE 1979 L.P.Y.S. CONFERENCE**



# DUNLOP SPEKE:

# COLD-BLOODED CLOSURE

"Whatever action you take, I will support you!" In these words Eddie Loyden MP summed up the mood of the public meeting on Dunlop's, held by Garston CLP and attended by over 260 people.



The meeting was called to show the whole-hearted support of the Garston CLP and LPYS for the struggle of the Dunlop workers to save 2,333 jobs at Speke.

Among the speakers were representatives of the Dunlop workers, the Labour Party, the LPYS and the Liverpool Trades Council. All these gave the support of their organisations as did Graham Marshall, the engineers' convenor of Dunlop's Scot-

**Mick Hogan**  
(Garston LPYS)

fish plant who stated in no uncertain terms that his workers would accept no work taken off Speke.

It was Arthur Todd, chairman Dunlops Joint Shop Stewards' Committee, who graphically outlined the gross lack of investment, saying that only three times in the last ten years had the investment exceeded the depre-

ciation of the plant, and that was only when the roof was nearly caving in. Engineers had to cannibalise plant—taking apart one machine to build a "new" one.

Dot Kinrade, Chairman of Merseyside LPYS, pointed out that not one week had gone by without some Merseyside factory announcing a closure. The implications for youth were terrifying—whole generations faced a future without jobs.

Eddie Loyden described his meeting with Campbell-Frazer (Dunlop's chairman) who in his experience was one of the worst bosses he'd ever met. Campbell-Frazer was the man who cold-bloodedly in a London boardroom decided that 2,333 workers (some with 20, 30, even 40 years at Dunlop) should be thrown on to the scrapheap of the dole.

He pointed out the lunacy and anarchy of the rubber industry under cap-

italism and ended by saying "It ain't going to end here, this society cannot carry forward technology and provide social necessities!"

Richard Venton, Birkenhead CLP, drawing on the experiences at Western Shiprepairers, said that the one regret of the Action Committee there was that they did not occupy after the 90 days' notice.

In reply, Arthur Todd said that the Action Committee at Dunlop's

was prepared to do anything necessary to save the workers' jobs.

The basic question of who controls industry was raised innumerable times at the meeting as it was clear to all that capitalism had failed the workers and the only way forward was a socialist solution with a planned economy to inject a dose of sanity into the chaos of the rubber industry.

## LONDON LPYS CONFERENCE

# HOUSING PROBLEMS CAUSED BY CAPITALISM

Twelve homes specially built for the disabled are to be sold off by the Tory Greater London Council. This approach to the 'housing problem' was condemned by the London LPYS meeting at their Regional Conference last weekend.

The chronic problems of finding a home and a job were the main themes of the policy document "The Problems Facing London's Youth" presented to the Conference by the regional committee.

Linda Reid, moving the document, said that homelessness was not a declining problem in London but a growing one. Young people leaving home have very few choices when looking for somewhere to live.

Council house waiting lists are growing rapidly, and council homes are being sold off. Private rented accommodation is extortionate, at £25 a week for a room and up to £200 a week and more for a flat. And buying a house is out unless you have an income of £4-£5,000 a year.

The Tories in County Hall don't want the housing burden—they are trying to sell the better homes and dump the sub-standard housing on to the London boroughs.

Capitalism is based on competitiveness, and cannot plan. We have the situation of homelessness, yet thousands of bricks are stockpiled, the land is available—enough wasteland in the docklands area to build a town the size of Reading—and builders are on the dole. Yet private enterprise cannot provide this



Photo: MILITANT

basic necessity for working class people, because it is not 'profitable'.

Martin Craxton, in the housing debate, gave the example of Hillingdon, where council homes were offered to sitting tenants at 20% discount. There were 1,300 applications, but only six were taken up, showing that working class people can't afford a mortgage—even at 20% off. Yet at the same time 200,000 people have two

homes.

Conference called for an expansion in direct works departments, for an end to council house sales, and the nationalisation under workers' and tenants' control of banks, building societies, insurance companies and finance houses, privately rented property and construction and supply monopolies to solve the housing problems and to make housing a right not a luxury.

Conference also passed resolutions on the economy, Northern Ireland, transport, health, youth opportunities and racialism. Comrades were urged to go back to their Labour Parties, LPYS branches and trade unions to build the LPYS and to campaign for these ideas.

**Lorna Oliver**

(Hackney Central LPYS)

## SOUTHERN YS CONF

# Growing in confidence Growing in size

Over 100 delegates and visitors braved the ice and snow to attend the first ever two-day conference of the Southern Region of the Labour Party Young Socialists in Portsmouth on the weekend of 27th and 28th January. The LPYS has grown quite considerably in this region, with the number of branches now being 42 compared with 37 the previous year.

Andy Bevan, addressing the conference, said that the 1979 election would be the most important since the war. He pointed out that the era of the affluent society had come to an end, and that the capitalist were demanding cuts in the living standards of

working people. He went on to say that three million young people would be able to vote for the first time at the next general election. It was important that the LPYS were mobilised to win the youth vote, which could make the difference between a reactionary Tory government or a Labour government being elected.

The conference was very successful, and a collection of over £28 was raised for the 'Militant' fighting fund. Judging by this weekend, the YSs of the south can look forward to the future with confidence.

**Steve Hatherley**  
(LPYS Regional Committee)

## The weekly enquiry

Chris Edwards, COHSE whether they can afford to take a holiday or not that St. Nicholas Hospital action year. Young married workers committee, Newcastle, spoke conduct their own 'inquiries' at a rally against low pay as to whether they can afford organised by 'Militant' supporters in Newcastle. Chris, a nurse, made the point that 'an enquiry' had been floated as a possible way out of the dispute.

"...But the enquiries have already been made. Every week when workers in the health service get their pay check, they have to go through an enquiry. They ask themselves what they can afford that week. Every

There have been enquiries in the last year—they were the annual conferences of the health service unions, the LUC conference and the Labour Party conference! These were the workers enquiries and their conclusions are the conclusions that we are now fighting around—for the full £60!"



# LEFT & RIGHT

## Sewer men wanted— Bowler hat supplied

Hands are shaking, hearts are quivering and typewriters indignantly pounding the length and breadth of the stockbroker belt. A letter written to the 'Financial Times' has suggested that if all the bankers, financiers and stockbrokers were to drop dead tomorrow they wouldn't be missed anywhere near as much as public sector workers.

A sturdy defence of bankers has flooded into the FT offices. It seems there would be no shortage of volunteers from bankers for the dirty jobs in the public services, and, they say, they would be done better, with more 'grace' and with only half the workforce. Anyway, bankers were vital for the 'invisible exports' without which the country would crumble and fall.

Volunteers for the dirty jobs? Well, maybe, but not for long and certainly not for the wages they get or even the wages they're asking for. They might for a day or so "gracefully" clean out the sewers and collect the refuse, but after that they would probably be as invisible as their exports. 'Half the workforce'? Maybe, but far less than half the work done. This pampered section of society would be totally incapable of performing these difficult, dirty and skilful tasks properly.

On the other hand, if the workers were to take over the banks...

## Princely advice

Most delegates to the conference of the steel workers' union ISTC will be worried about their jobs in an industry the capitalist class want to condemn to death. One special guest will have few such worries. Prince Charles, no less, invited to address the conference in between his winter skiing and his summer travels.

But why has he been invited? In 1977 Sir Charles Villiers, boss of the British Steel Corporation, spoke to the same conference, but there has been no let-up in redundancies as a result. His Royal Highness is described as conservative-minded [and he certainly has a lot to conserve] so a 'royal pardon' for the steel industry just isn't on the cards. The union members will be asking for resolute class action to save steel jobs, not 'advice' from the heir to the royal millions.

## A few slight errors

When it comes to press distortions, the 'Daily Mail' has few rivals. The 'New Statesman' has recently exposed their blatantly biased reporting, in particular one story splashed on their front page. This alleged that a lorry driver had been beaten up by mobile pickets with wooden clubs shouting 'scab', who followed him home. The 'Mail' claimed he needed a 24-hour police guard on his home for protection. The story of 60 words had eight serious errors of fact in it, which the 'New Statesman' correctly says is a high density, even by Fleet Street standards. The most important 'error' was the claim that his assailants were pickets. Both the lorry driver and the police said there was no evidence that they were in any way connected with the lorry drivers' dispute, and the driver in fact disowned every statement the 'Mail' attributed to him.

Of course other Tory rags jumped on the story, trying to poison workers and the middle class against effective trade union action. The 'Mail' later carried a totally inadequate defence of the story which they wrote with their usual honesty under a pseudonym! But then honesty has to take a back seat when the bosses' press has a class war to fight.

# WINDSCALE

The nuclear industry likes to boast that its workers are safer than their brothers and sisters in most other industrial workplaces. Mr Justice Parker, at the Windscale Inquiry, certainly put across that view, and it is still widely believed that the nuclear industry has a good safety record.

Even Parker, however, was obliged to say: "many [incidents] were due to comparatively simple errors in design, operating instructions or information...I formed the distinct impression that more could have been done to ensure that procedures are sufficient for all eventualities, are strictly observed and continually rehearsed."

Tony Benn's decision to make public all accidents at Windscale, plus the payment by British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. (BNFL) to the widows of two former Windscale workers, have begun to raise doubts and questions about safety at Windscale and in the nuclear industry in general.

## Slip-shod

In August last year these doubts were confirmed by the revelation that twelve workers at Aldermaston have been poisoned with plutonium.

Most recently, at the end of last year, the industry's former popular image of scrupulous safety standards received a further blow. John Simmons, a former nuclear engineer, described "crumbling buildings, chronic leaks, and an overworked and demoralised workforce" in articles published in 'Engineering Today' and 'Undercurrents'.

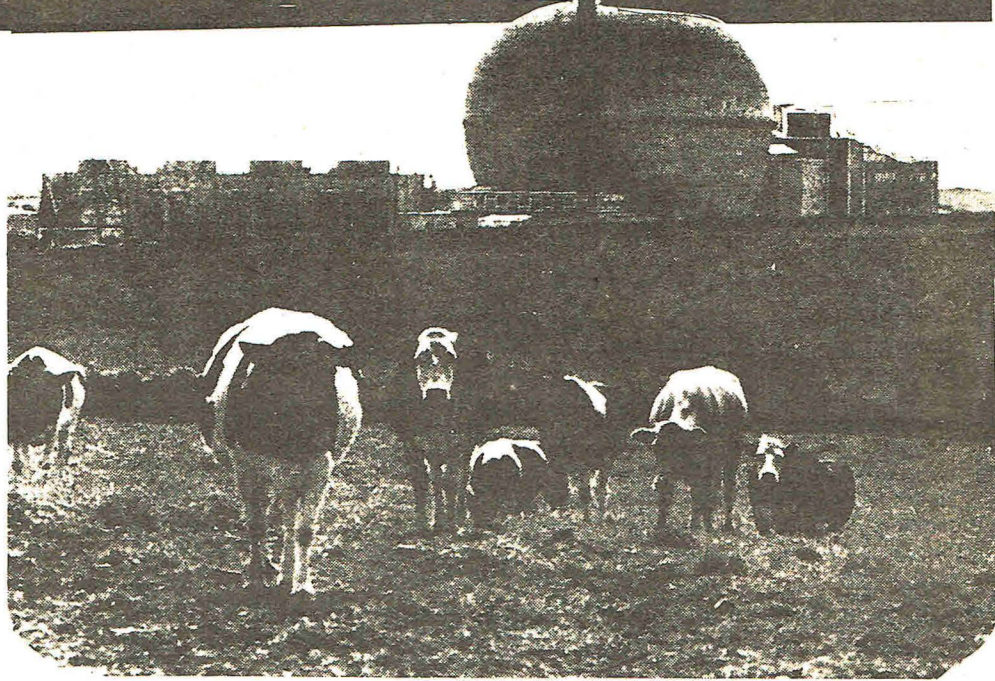
Simmons had been employed by the sub-contracting firm Taylor Woodrow to work on mechanical handling and other systems at Windscale. He gave a whole series of examples of hazards to be found at the nuclear fuel plant which can be traced back to bad management and slip-shod attitudes to design.

Top management are "interested in cosmetic public-relations work rather than analysing the problems in depth." The result is a risk of river pollution, fuel handling failures, fire hazard, inadequacy of fuel element handling arrangements, leaking of low-activity fissile (radioactive) material to the Irish Sea, and other bad practices.

After years of experience in engineering, Simmons says: "I cannot recall seeing a facility as apparently lacking in the application of any sort of ordered control. I was appalled by the standard of housekeeping." He worked on filter systems used for removing radioactive particles from the air exhausted from the cells where the spent fuel is handled.

He gives an example of "BNFL's general incompetence": on one BNFL-approved drawing, "the spark arrester, which is needed to protect the paper filter from fire, was only indicated on the side of the filter not exposed to fire."

It is common practice to design structures on sites of



## Safety doubts grow

all kinds to withstand winds of up to 150 km/hr. Windscale, which is on the coast, has particularly strong winds. The Windscale skip-handler in which hot fuel elements are moved, is a vital part of the plant and needs to be permanently on call: but it cannot operate in winds above 80 km/hr.

The "active area" is the part of the site where fissile material is handled. That is one place where everything that happens should be rigorously controlled. But the area is not even roofed off, and rain falling on it can soak away, contaminated, to the water table.

Says Simmons: "BNFL's

own engineers seem demoralised; apparently at one management meeting they simply fell about at the suggestion of planned maintenance of pond 5 equipment. I have heard one say 'we must try and do the right thing', knowing that his efforts to do so would be thwarted by his superiors. One non-BNFL engineer told me that 'BNFL are just not interested in reason'."

BNFL are, in fact, having difficulty finding engineers to work at Windscale because its reputation as a workplace has

become so bad."

The labour movement has every reason to share Simmons' "great anxiety about nuclear engineering in all its aspects."

We must demand our own inquiry into the nuclear industry and the closure of all plants and sites until such time as it can be demonstrated to our full satisfaction that (a) we need them, and (b) these installations, already formally under public ownership, can be run safely under workers' control and management.

By Vivien Seal

(Lambeth Central CLP)

# Sleepless nights... Tired days ONE OF THE LUCKY ONES?

By Paul Crane  
(Blackpool South LPYS)

I am a student at the local tech college. Like most students here, the grant I receive is very low [approximately £6.50 per week to live on].

I'm one of the lucky ones, most of the students at my college receive £40 or less a year. This forces working class students to find part-time work in order to continue their studies and live properly.

That is made even harder by the fact that during the winter months (after the leeches of big business have sucked what they can from the town and its work force, during the summer, and left with their pockets full) the town has an unemployment figure well above the national average.

I work at a local night club on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings from 8pm till 2pm. After clearing up

you are lucky if you get home before 3.30 in the morning. After a busy night you are so tensed up that it is impossible to sleep when you get home and it takes a few hours for you to 'unwind' and go to sleep.

For this I get paid 72p an hour. Again I am 'lucky' as the usual rate is 30-40p for students. That does not include the 1½ hours spent clearing up or the time spent travelling home.

You can imagine what you are like the next day, especially after Thursday when I have to be at Tech for 9 in the morning. It is impossible to stay in bed late because of the family getting up and making a noise. So you get up and spend the daytime walking around like a zombie or flaked out on the settee trying to catch up on lost sleep.

Homework is totally forgotten. I am usually too tired

at the weekend so I have to try to catch up during the week. It is impossible to study properly.

During the summer, because I did not want to lose the winter job, I worked full-time for the firm. In the pub during the week and in the night club at weekends.

Pub hours were 10.30-3, 6-11. This meant that after the morning/afternoon shift, plus clearing up, again not paid for, you were lucky to get home for 4 o'clock, which left you with just enough time for a wash, getting changed, have some tea and leave to get the bus back to work. Your whole day is taken up and it is impossible to have any social life.

In the summer, when management were making a fortune, even a day off was a rarity. They expected you there all the time. All this for 72p an hour!



# PUBLIC SERVICE WORKERS - Out till the claim is met

## NOTTINGHAM

### Picket arrested

John McGuigan [NUPE Asst Divisional Organiser] spoke to Bill Esmonds [Nottingham East LPYS] after his arrest on Monday afternoon.

"Caretakers at Bingham Toothill School gave 24-hours notice of strike action to find the school had installed gas heaters instead.

Some of these were in a dangerous condition.

Instead of testing the heaters they opened the school as normal the next day. The result was that 26 school children reported sick: cases of headaches, sickness and vomiting were reported.

Pickets were out to put their case to parents, staff and students and to encourage them to complain to the Education Authority about the heaters. No attempt was made to stop anybody going in—we were quite happy that the heaters were costing the local authority £3-4,000!

Despite press publicity we had a good-humoured picket.

But we did have one driver who tried to speed through the picket...only to find he slipped back on the ice. He was jeered by the people around the gate and his daughter started crying.

The first thing we got out of this was a story in the notorious 'Nottingham Evening Post' about "Pickets make children cry." We had four pickets out the next morning...and seven carloads of police! The police confiscated all our picketing materials and told us we should all go home or we would be arrested. I was charged with breach of the peace.

The pickets will be entering a formal complaint, particularly about the plain-clothes police inspector who attempted to run down two of the pickets in his private vehicle. As a direct result these caretakers will remain on strike for the duration of the dispute."



Photos by JMcKittrick [Militant]

## PRESTON

### Disgusting conditions

A group of Preston Young Socialists recently visited a picket line outside the local cleansing department. The 160 dustmen who work here are 100% behind the claim.

One man told us that he takes home £33 for a 40-hour

week but when he is on the sick he gets £39. They work in almost Victorian working conditions.

Gerry Thompson, TGWU 217 branch secretary, showed us some of the disgusting conditions his members have to suffer. What was loosely described as the canteen was very dirty and its tables were very old with their surfaces peeling off—obviously a breeding ground for bacteria.

There are hardly any

washing and cooking facilities. The men have to have showers daily, yet in the shower room there is not even a bench to sit on, there is no heating and only three shower points. There is not even anywhere to dry wet clothing. It is only recently that a sink has been put in the toilets but there is still no towel rail.

Complaints and reports about the conditions have been made every six weeks for the past two years but still nothing has been done. Ultimately, responsibility for this lies with the Tory council who refuse to spend even a minimum amount of money.

Robert Madeley  
(Preston LPYS)

## BRIGHTON

### Cuts the real danger

Our relative position has always deteriorated during incomes policies, over the last four years the gap between the average wage and the wage of local authority and health service workers has widened from £12 to £24 per week.

Those very people who accuse us of endangering lives, themselves have scant regard for human life. While the press was screaming for more and more cuts in public expenditure, our members were campaigning against them, pointing out what the cuts would mean for our children, our sick and our elderly.

We will continue our campaigning for a decent, well-staffed health and public service, and step up our fight for a decent wage for those who provide that service, and we deserve the support of the whole of the labour movement in our struggle.

Eddie Blake (Brighton & Crawley district officer G&MWU) spoke to Ray Apps

## BRISTOL

The men at the Avon Health Authority Stores in Bristol have been out since Monday 29th—and are determined to remain out until their full claim is met.

As the stores serve the whole area, the effects of this selective strike are beginning to bite. But, contrary to the wild reporting in the local press, essential services are being maintained with vital medical supplies, baby food etc. being provided from the picket lines.

The spirit is high. The strike is solid, involving both NUPE and COHSE workers—and T&GWU lorry drivers are respecting the picket line to a man.

But there is a general feeling of bitterness and anger at the Labour government against whom they are fighting. One picket commented, "We'll challenge Callaghan to cross our picket line!"—and another added, "Morecambe and Wise could have written his script."

Pickets at Avon Health Authority Stores spoke to Bob Sulatycki (Bristol West LPYS)

## TEESIDE

The mood of anger of the low paid was clearly shown when about 100 demonstrated as the Prime Minister visited Thornaby. The bitterness at the betrayal by the Labour government of the people it is supposed to help was clear in the comments of the pickets. Callaghan's remarks on crossing picket lines and the government's paltry pay offer were rejected as more suiting to the Tories.

The continual attacks from

the press and media annoyed them as the £60 was a very reasonable claim. The press had made sympathetic comment on low pay, yet attacked them when they tried to change things. The low paid have had sympathy for years, but sympathy can't be eaten.

By Bill Hopwood

## GLOUCESTER

### Solidarity with strikers

Nurses from Horton Road and Coney Hill psychiatric hospitals in Gloucester, members of COHSE, came out in support of ancillary workers who are members of NUPE and T&GWU, in a demonstration of solidarity outside Horton Road Hospital.

So far in Gloucester there have been lightning strikes by ancillary workers and maximum disruption has built up in the hospital laundry at Coney Hill Hospital providing clean linen for all 22 hospitals all over Gloucester. These are among the lowest paid ancillary workers for what is one of

the most unpleasant jobs handling foul and infected linen. Electricians and plumbers, members of the AUEW and EETPU are in sympathy with the ancillary workers' action and are refusing to mend machines when they go wrong. Porters are refusing to take dirty linen and refuse off the premises and will remove only completely infected, contaminated material. Telephonists will only deal with emergency calls and the only mail to be sorted out will be that for the patients.

By Stuart Russell  
(Gloucester COHSE)

## MANCHESTER

Pickets at the Platt Lane depot of Manchester's cleansing department are getting used to the abusive comments of passers-by. The men had read in the papers about bin men earning £80 to £100 per week—they said they'd like to meet them!

One picket said that the depot is not well organised. He said management played off one union against the other and pointed out the need for all local authority workers to be in one union.

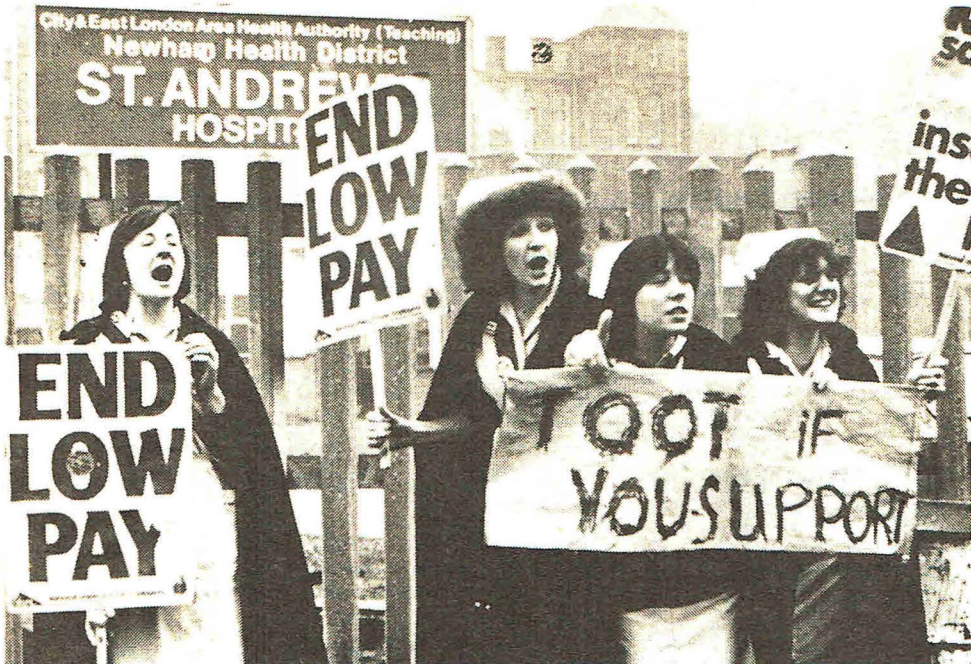
He said they need regular meetings of members at the depot (which they don't have) to explain the issues. He also stressed the need for union officials and stewards to be close to the members—not succumb to the cult of personality.

Moss Side LPYS and CLP

both passed resolutions in support of the claim and call on the council to implement it.

By Margaret Manning  
(Moss Side CLP)

## ST. ANDREWS BOW



### Nurses back low pay claim

The ancillary staff at St Andrew's, Bow, were the first to decide on a week-long strike as the next step following the one-day strike on 22nd January. They have since extended the strike for a second week, with even more support.

Steve Seeger, secretary of the West Newham hospitals NUPE branch, said that he and his members were really pleased with the way this action had been taken up by other hospitals. A new tactic of bringing the nurses [also NUPE members] out in support on two 4-hour strikes had been immensely successful:

"The attitude of the public, seeing nurses on the picket line, has completely changed, with most passing cars blowing their horns to show

support, and no verbal from passers-by.

"I think they realise that we are not putting people at risk needlessly when they see the nurses support us. If used responsibly this tactic could be used more widely."

Mrs Kellaher, NUPE steward and other ancillary workers:

"Volunteers have been creeping in other gates. If the meeting tomorrow votes for another week's strike we'll get a lot harder". "And we can get hard—we've been down too long in the East End."

One nurse told of how a volunteer had asked her to pick up a patient's false teeth, saying "I couldn't possibly touch those". Another picket chipped in "Wait till she has to clean up a burst colostomy bag."

The majority of nurses at

St. Andrews are fully in support of the ancillary workers and many have helped on the picket. Daniel Iles, a charge nurse, showed why he was on the picket by talking about his own experience:

"In 1974 we were forced to take strike action. I remember it very clearly because I had just qualified and also married. I had to pay £65 for a month's rent out of a month's wage of £74. I had to do agency work, giving up my rest days to live. We were really starved into it."

Another nurse added "I nearly starve now for the last two weeks of the month. I can't afford meat—have to manage on bread and not a lot else."

By Ian Ilett



# BLOOD ON THE STREETS

"The victim tried to escape but was hit on the head with an iron bar and then slit across the nose with a knife. The Asian was then beaten over the head until unconscious."

'Blood on the Streets', published by Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades Council, centres on the Tower Hamlets area of East London.

and on the Bengali population in particular. It gives an account of the racial abuse and intimidation they receive daily—in simply walking the streets, in employment, housing, education, and in their contact with the police. It also comments on the effects of the media, the role of the National Front, and the tasks for the trade union movement.

The Bengali population are afflicted with a continual barrage of racist attacks. The police have done nothing to protect them, turning a blind eye, or even harassing the victims. "We heard of numerous cases where Asians who had been attacked on the street were themselves arrested... The charge against them was of threatening behaviour or of carrying offensive weapons..." Many victims are told to find the assailants themselves.

For safety, Bengali parents send their children to secondary schools which have a high percentage of Bengalis. These schools are generally the most run-down and lacking in facilities.

The vast majority of Bengalis working in Tower Hamlets are employed in the rag trade. They work long hours for low pay. "Men are taken on as 'outworkers',

working long hours in the honeycomb of sweat-shops covering Aldgate and Whitechapel... preparing and finishing bulk quantities of materials which are delivered to the workshop by larger manufacturers.

"The going rate for a homemaker is anywhere between 15p and 50p per article, the subsequent retail value of which may be £15-£35."

London's E.1. area is notorious for its slum housing, and most Bengalis live in the older blocks and estates.

Certain estates are well-known for verbal insults, assaults, arson attempts and window smashing. Bengalis rehoused in other areas are forced to return to E.1., because of harassment. Afraid to go out, children live in cramped conditions behind boarded-up windows.

The book exposes racialism in Britain, as something ruthlessly promoted by the ruling class to divide workers. Class interests, however, are recognised by most workers at times of struggle against a common enemy. The authors call on the trade union movement to translate the resolutions against racialism passed at conferences, into action at the workplace and on the shop floor.

## Response

Bethnal Green has been a breeding ground for fascists for decades, due to the generally diseased state of the area. The book quotes attack after attack by fascists on blacks and on labour movement activists and premises.

The events in the Brick

Lane area during the summer are described. The attacks on the estates; the "Kristallnacht" rampage by 150 thugs on June 11th; the NF paper sales; NF sellers shouting racist slogans while standing behind lines of police; the indifference of the police.

What has been the response? Over the last 8 or 9 years various organisations involving Bengali workers, the Trades Council and political groups, have sprung up, only to later fade out. Most important of all has been the formation of organisations of the Bengali youth themselves.

The youth have come into contact with the labour movement in their search for allies. A new attitude of aggressiveness is taking over from the gentler approach of their elders. Sit-downs on the NF paper-selling patch took place in July, a local strike against racism by 8,000 workers on July 17th, and a march of 5,000 through Hoxton in August.

Some criticisms can be made of the book. No clear reason is given for the immigration from Bangla-imperialism. While it graphically describes the bias of the police, it still talks in terms of the police having an "incorrect analysis of the factors at play," and being "out of their depths" when it comes to racist incitement.

Also, racist attacks are not the only reason for Bengalis being forced to live, work and go to school in bad conditions—immigrants moved into run-down areas because they were the only places they could afford to go when they came to Britain.

The system as a whole is

responsible for the position of immigrants. The key to bringing the "significant shift in the political climate" against racism that the authors talk of, lies in the labour movement actively mobilising the local population on all the questions—racism, housing, employment and education, and linking that to a fight for the socialist transformation of society.

However, 'Blood on the Streets' is an extremely good account of the lives of the

Bengali workers in Tower Hamlets, the oppression they are facing, and the struggle being waged against it.

**A Review  
by Kevin  
Fernandes**

'Blood on the Streets' price £1. Order now from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Please add 15p postage.



## International Year of the Child - EVERY THIRD CHILD LIVES IN POVERTY

This is the International Year of the Child, held in 1979 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Charter.

Children in Britain, however, have little to celebrate, and far more is needed than a grand title for 1979. The fact is, about four million—nearly a third of all children in this country—are living in poverty.

The Child Poverty Action Group recently produced figures to draw attention to the scandalous deterioration of the position of working-class children in the last few years.

"In 1974 there were 260,000 children living in families with incomes below the official state poverty line. Two years later these numbers had almost doubled, to a total of 500,000..."

"The numbers of children living in families on supplementary benefit rose from 740,000 to 960,000 over the same period of time..."

"The numbers of children living on the margin of poverty, those in households with incomes up to 40% above the state poverty line, increased from 1,250,000 to 2,440,000 in the two years

following 1974..."

"The numbers of poor children in Britain rose from a total of 1 million in 1974 to one of 1,460,000 in 1976; a 40% increase. If we include the numbers living on the margins of poverty, the total is swelled from 2,250,000 to 3,900,000 or a 42% increase over this two-year period."

The CPAG has rightly protested at the government's decision to give a grant of £100,000 to the UK Association for the International Year of the Child.

Apart from the fact that this is a useless organisation which will spend most of the money just keeping itself in existence, the Association—as the CPAG has pointed out—even refuses to adopt the United Nation's Children's Charter as the basis for its "educational work".

The first principle of the charter is concerned with the right children have to enjoy special protection and to be given opportunities and facilities by law and by other means to enable them to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially.

The second lays down the child's right to enjoy the benefits of social security. It



also emphasises the child's right to have adequate nutrition, housing, recreation and those other aspects of what most of us would regard as a basic civilised existence.

These UN principles, it seems, are too radical for the Association! To accept them and campaign for their realisation would clearly involve an attack on the very foundations of a society which, in the last quarter of the 20th century, condemns its children to worsening conditions.

The CPAG points out that "the extent of (state) financial support to families is now better than at any time during the last 15 years." Yet children are in a worse position!

Could there be a greater condemnation of the big business system which through poverty wages, mass unemployment, and callous indifference to the sick and disabled, condemns millions of workers and their children to live in humiliating poverty?

## SPYING AT WORK

In Northern Ireland, military powers, repression and 'surveillance' are being tested and sharpened. In the name of the 'fight against terrorism', these powers are being turned more and more blatantly against organised workers.

The imposing of a 'State of Emergency' against the tanker drivers' strike is the most glaring recent example. But this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Social work staff in Omagh, County Tyrone, have discovered that they have been spied on. A hidden video-camera was found in their general office in the town's Health Centre, with a recorder hidden in the waiting room beside it.

Much of the work of the general office is confidential, involving reports on social work cases.

The equipment was placed by the Royal Ulster Constabulary, with the knowledge and consent of management. Staff were not told about it.

The camera was brought in, it is claimed, because of alleged thefts. But in the area under surveillance, only one theft has been confirmed. There is no evidence that the other personal belongings were not stolen outside the building altogether.

Staff, who were never consulted about the thefts through their union, suspected that something was going on, and discovered the device. They were understandably very angry, and ready for an immediate walk-out. One had to be restrained from smashing up the equipment.

The workers immediately called in their union—the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance. At first the union leadership actively took up the case, but now members are concerned that they are backsliding.

### By John Sinclair

There is, in practice, a closed shop among the staff. Union organisation in the building is militant and active.

Members are demanding that the union hold a full enquiry into the circumstances of the 'surveillance'; the actions of the Western Health and Social Services Board—the employers; the destruction of any films, tapes and photographs and a guarantee that this will never happen again.

For it seems that this is not an isolated case. The RUC claim that three previous methods of surveillance were used before they brought in the video equipment. Man-

agement have not denied that a bugging device had been used in the past.

How many other devices have gone unfound? How much of the information on confidential files is being examined in the name of 'security'?

These activities were apparently carried out under the Northern Ireland Emergency Provisions Act, on the authority of local police officers. Methods supposedly for use against 'terrorism' are now being used against alleged petty theft.

The 'public accountability' of the security forces is not preventing them from using their powers to intervene in the everyday life of working people.

The trade union movement in Ireland and in Britain must take this as a warning. If the state forces can get away with this in Northern Ireland, will they hesitate to use similar methods in Britain against trade unionists involved in strikes and other workers they see as a threat?

The Omagh social workers are asking for backing from other NIPSA members, members of other Civil Service trade unions and the trade union and labour movement generally. Send messages of support c/o Militant, L&T-UG, 16-18 Donegall Street, Belfast.



# WHAT FUTURE FOR THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION

Last week saw the fall of the Bakhtiar government. In the country's two largest cities, Tehran and Isfahan, power passed on to the streets. The armed forces had to be withdrawn to barracks as they threatened to disintegrate under the impact of the revolution. The following article, written before the downfall of Bakhtiar, predicted its demise and analyses what course the developing Iranian Revolution could take.

The flight of the Shah marks the end of the first phase of the revolution. It's a reactionary dream on the part of the Shah that he can make a quick come-back despite Bakhtiar's manoeuvres.

The monarchy in Iran has been finally thrown out as a result of the excesses, the corruption, the cruelty, the torture of the last quarter century. It will never again be rammed down the throats of the people of Iran while they possess even the minimum of rights.

The decisive feature of the Iranian revolution as in all revolutions was the role which the army has played. It is clear that the Shah has virtually abdicated power, because it would have been impossible to maintain control of the army for any further length of time. The army cracked in many parts. Here, we see again the complete falsity of the position of reformism which declares that revolution is impossible under modern conditions because of the role that is played by the army.

The modern army is more susceptible to the movements on the part of the people, on the part of the working class than any army in history. It is no longer a question of the PBI, the poor bloody infantry, footsloggers, without any real training, without any real understanding. On the contrary, the army has to be highly specialised and highly mechanical. They do tasks like other workers and think as workers.

In this way, it makes the army very prone to respond to the workers' movements. The army is composed of the sons, brothers and relatives of the workers, peasants and middle class. We see in every revolution in history, particularly in the Russian revolution of 1917, and in the German revolution of 1918

how the masses of the armed forces came over to the side of the people, when they saw the possibility of a complete break with the old regime.

## ECONOMY

**Growth:**  
1972—\$17,300m GNP  
1978—\$54,600m (est.)  
**Structure:**  
**Manufacturing. 16%**  
**Gross Domestic Product.**  
**Service. 39% GDP**  
**Oil:**  
**77% government revenue**  
**87% foreign earnings**  
**38% GNP**  
**Investment:**  
**60% industrial investment by the State [1975]**

In Iran there were incidents such as when a soldier shot two of his officers when the command to open fire on the demonstrators was issued, and then committed suicide.

On the other hand, there was the movement of the masses, but no clear call to the army to come over to the side of the people. As a consequence, the soldiers still felt themselves under the heavy hand of military discipline and the threat of court martial for mutiny.

There were many incidents when soldiers joined the demonstrators or allowed demonstrators to climb on the tops of tanks. Other incidents show the opposite features. Officers shot five army cadets for trying to leave the barracks to join the demonstrators.

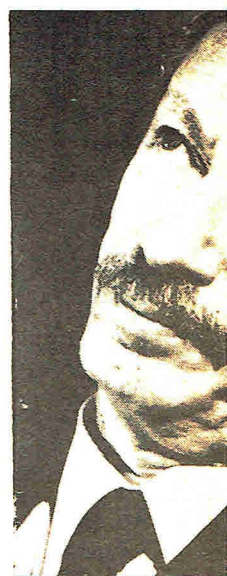
In many cases in the main towns of Iran there were similar instances of refusal to fire on the part of the troops, of fraternisation on the part of the troops and of action on the part of the army, against their officers. Many of the junior officers also, have sympathy with the movement of the masses.



Sanjabi



Khomeini



## ONLY A MARXIST PARTY IS LACK

The reason why the army did not come over to the side of the working class, to the side of the people as in Russia in 1917 and in Germany 1918, is that there was no organisation capable of giving a lead.

Had a socialist alternative been offered to the workers and the soldiers, undoubtedly the whole situation in Iran would have been changed. Millions of leaflets could have been issued to the soldiers. Even with an organisation of a few hundred or a thousand members, millions of leaflets could have been issued to the workers and the soldiers. They could have explained the issues that are facing Iran at the present time, and under these circumstances, it is almost inevitable that the army would have come over to the side of the people.

The revolution, like the Spanish revolution of 1931-37 will have many ups and downs. The masses, may be beaten back after a period of struggle. Reaction might be enabled to establish itself.

But it will not be possible in the immediate future for the army to establish a military dictatorship, as the imperialist West would have liked. Any attempt at military dictatorship would be answered with an even more furious movement on the part of the masses and would result in a split in the army.

The ripeness of the situation in Iran for the socialist revolution is indicated by the fact that the liberals, Iran's so-called National Front, actually have had to adopt a 'socialist' or semi-socialist programme. It would be as if the Cadets (the liberals in Russia before 1917) were united in a single party with the Social Revolutionaries, (the party of radical agrarian reform) and claimed to be a

socialist party.

But like the liberals in Russia, the leaders of the National Front, such as Sanjabi, coming from the upper layers of the middle class, (or even from within the capitalist class) manifest an enormous fear of the masses. Bakhtiar, who has nominally been expelled from the National Front, has nevertheless formed a government with the aid and assistance of the Shah, and the army.

Sanjabi, as well as Bakhtiar would like to retain the monarchy. They see the monarchy tamed to a limited extent, so that a constitutional monarchy could act as a bulwark against the revolution, against the working class. They have preserved the classical role of the liberals in revolution. Their main endeavours are to try and dampen down the revolution and get a change of regime without altering the basic structures of present-day society.

### DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

—Top 45 families control 85% of firms with annual turnover of more than £74,000  
—28% of Iranians have less than the minimum calories in daily food.

We see what Trotsky referred to as the law of combined development manifesting itself in Iran. All the elements for the socialist revolution are there. The liberals can never satisfy the aims and needs of the working people or even of the peasants. In the last analysis they are representatives of the capitalist class and of finance capital.

In an interview, Sanjabi, the leader of the National

Front, declared:

"We in the National Front want to maintain the army, we want a strong army and we don't want to do anything to discourage the army...We have never called for desertions or tried to create indiscipline. But inevitably it is happening and if it continues it could be dangerous."

Imperialism and of course the Shah himself have been against the attempt to set up a military dictatorship because under present conditions it would be completely incapable of maintaining itself in the face of the resistance of the masses.

The Bakhtiar government by its very nature can only be a stop-gap and transitional regime. Even the imperialists see that the Bakhtiar regime will not be able to maintain itself for very long, and therefore are making overtures to the Ayatollah Khomeini.

Khomeini has declared that he does not wish to establish a reactionary military dictatorship or to establish a semi-feudal dictatorship. It is this element in their programme where the Mullahs have claimed to stand for freedom and democracy, which has been a powerful source of attraction to the mass of the middle class, and of course to sections of the workers as well.

But the utopian programme of Khomeini can in no way solve the problems that face the Iranian people at the present time.

Khomeini has made it clear that he will accept nothing less than the abolition of the monarchy. The Regency Council which has been set up by the Bakhtiar government will not be able to maintain control, or to keep the seat

"The Tudeh [Communist] a declaration giving Ayatollah Khomeini's merit of Islamic revolution throughout the country

The Tudeh Party's political programme [and particularly the points in speeches and interviews weeks] in accordance with itself adopted.

The declaration listed of the Ayatollah—describing setting up a "free and republic" that will be ruled—and said the Tudeh any government embarked realise these objectives. 'Morning Star'

warm for the Shah. Even the abdication of the Shah would no longer be sufficient. Now it is a question of the abolition of the monarchy.

In the situation which exists in Iran, an organisation of even a thousand Marxists, a thousand revolutionaries could make a decisive difference. It is possible that such an organisation could come from the forces which will be gathering around the National Front.

The National Front itself, once it starts getting a mass basis, will inevitably split. The so-called Communist Party (the Tudeh) is dragging behind the Ayatollahs, especially the Ayatollah Khomeini. They have no perspective, no programme, no policy, other than to support the bourgeois revolution at this particular stage.

Without an alternative organisation it is possible, even probable that there will be a swift growth of the Tudeh Party. Such a growth



# OR EVOLUTION ?

Part 2 of an  
article by Ted  
Grant



Bakhtiar

# ST ING

Party has published  
its full support to  
all for the establish-  
ment of revolutionary councils

id it had found the  
Ayatollah Khomeini  
position adopted by him  
during the past few  
years the position it had

eight recent statements  
with his aim of  
independent Islamic  
neutral and non-align-  
ment Party would support  
on a programme to

7 January 1979

under modern conditions  
would result in a split within  
the Communist Party. It will  
develop contradictions between  
the members and the  
leaders. Splits will develop as  
the worker members come in  
conflict with the middle class  
leadership. They wish to  
support the theocratic mes-  
sianism of the Ayatollah  
without criticism or a differ-  
ent policy or perspective.

But the nakedness of the  
liberals and the mullahs will  
speedily be reflected during  
the course of the revolution  
itself.

Revolution by its very  
nature is not one act. The  
Iranian revolution will extend  
over a number of years. The  
masses will learn in the school  
of hard experience. The army  
will become radicalised, as  
the soldiers get used to the  
fact that it was the movement  
of the masses which forced  
the abdication of the Shah.  
The army will be affected by  
the mood of the masses, and  
it will not be possible for the



Fraternalisation of the people with the army spelt the doom of the old order

old generals of the Shah to  
restore discipline, in spite of  
all the efforts of Khomeini, or  
the liberals.

It is probable that Khomeini  
will come to power. All the  
pleas of Bakhtiar that the state  
cannot allow the Church to play  
a direct and commanding role  
in politics will be in vain.

But once having come to  
power the futility of the  
reactionary and medieval ideas  
of abolishing interest while not  
altering the economic basis of  
society will be shown to result  
in chaos. Maintaining intact  
commercial and industrial capital  
while abolishing interest or usury  
is entirely utopian. Even in  
medieval times, when the doctrine  
of both the Christian and Muslim  
church, was against usury, never-  
theless it continued to exist in  
many forms. It would have  
disastrous consequences while  
capitalism remained, on the  
economy of Iran, and inevitably  
would have to be abandoned.

**WORKING CLASS**  
Population—34 million.  
16 million in urban  
areas. 18 million in rural  
areas. 53% under 20  
years old.

Total employed—10.4 m  
2.5 m in manufacturing,  
1 m in construction

Support for Khomeini will  
melt away after he forms a  
government. The failure of  
his programme of a Muslim  
theocratic republic to solve  
the problems of the Iranian  
people will become apparent.

The masses of the people  
have their aspirations not only  
for democratic rights but for

higher standards of living.  
The trade unions in Iran will  
have an explosive growth.  
Already they are mushrooming  
as workers feel the elementary  
need for organisation. They  
will attain a mighty scope in  
the period that lies ahead. Just  
as in Portugal, where 82% of  
the working class is now organ-  
ised in trade unions, so similar  
results will be achieved in Iran  
in the coming months and years.  
Possibly the majority and even  
the bulk of the working class in  
Iran will become organised.

Capitalist democracy under  
modern conditions with the  
crisis of capitalism on a world  
scale cannot establish itself for  
any length of time in Iran. The  
workers have already learned  
and will learn even more in  
the course of the developing  
struggle. If the masses are  
defeated and a capitalist  
Bonapartist military dictatorship  
is established it would not be  
stable, as we have seen with  
the Latin American capitalist  
military-police dictatorships,  
and the dictatorship in Pakistan.

Even in the worst resort,  
reaction would prepare the way  
for revenge on the part of the  
masses, at a not too distant  
date. It would be 1905 in  
Russia over again.

But such a denouement is  
not at all necessary. If the  
forces of Marxism succeed in  
gaining support in Iran, then  
it could result in a brilliant  
victory on the lines of the  
revolution in Russia of 1917.

A healthy development of  
the revolution would be an  
absolute disaster for the  
Moscow bureaucracy. There  
is a large Asiatic population  
that is nominally Muslim, or  
sections of which are Muslim,

in the Asiatic part of Russia  
in the Caucasus. In addition  
to that, if a healthy workers  
state was established in Iran  
on the borders of the Soviet  
Union, it would have an  
instant effect on the workers  
in all the main centres of the  
Soviet Union—Moscow, Len-  
ingrad, Karkov, Odessa,  
Novosibirsk etc.

**ARMY**  
Under the Shah Defence  
was 31% of Budget.  
Armed Forces—300,000  
[3% of employed popu-  
lation]. SAVAK—Shah's  
secret police

But that could only come  
with the development of a  
Marxist tendency which had  
assimilated the lessons of the  
last 50 years, particularly the  
lessons of the rise of Stalinism  
in Russia. The Moscow  
bureaucracy did not desire  
and did not want the develop-  
ments that have taken place  
in Iran.

But if there was a possibil-  
ity of the development of  
proletarian Bonapartism in  
Iran, a totalitarian deformed  
one party state as in China or  
Russia they would accept  
such a gift gratefully despite  
complications with the USA.

This is also one of the  
factors in the situation as Iran  
is only a semi-industrial  
country, and still remains a  
semi-colonial country. Given  
the lack of a mass revolution-  
ary tradition of a Marxist  
character in Iran, such a  
development among the lower  
officers and among a section  
of the elite, leaning on the  
support of the workers and  
peasants is possible.

Moscow did not desire the  
Iranian revolution, but would

not refuse to accept the fruit  
of a revolution which would  
strengthen their power enor-  
mously in the Mediterranean,  
the Middle East and the  
Persian Gulf. They would  
have to explain to their  
imperialist rivals of the EEC,  
Japan and United States that  
this would be a lesser evil than  
the development of a pro-  
letarian democracy in Iran.

Any Marxist Socialist Party  
would begin with the demand  
for the freedom to organise,  
freedom of speech, freedom  
of elections, freedom of press  
and all the democratic rights  
which have been won by the  
workers of the West over  
generations of struggle.

They would demand the  
8-hour day, 5-day week, and  
a sliding scale of wages linked  
to prices. These would be  
linked with the demand for  
a revolutionary constituent  
assembly, at the same time  
putting a programme of  
revolutionary demands for the  
expropriation of the corrupt  
gang which has controlled  
Iran for so long.

The expropriation of the  
wealth of the Shah, the  
expropriation of the absentee  
landlords who invested the  
money that they were given  
by the state after generations  
of neglect and exploitation of  
the agricultural population:  
the nationalisation of industry  
without compensation, or  
compensation on the basis of  
need only, and a workers'  
government: for workers' control  
of industry and workers'  
management of industry and  
the state.

In order to gain these  
things it would be necessary  
to form committees of action  
in the working class, suggest-  
ing that these be extended

also to the armed forces and  
small shopkeepers, small  
business people, linking them  
up in a way in which the  
Soviets were linked in Ger-  
many and Russia in the  
revolution of 1917 and 1918.  
Unfortunately there is no  
organisation in Iran at the  
present time putting forward  
the policies of Marxism.

The labour movement in  
Britain should have as one of  
its foremost democratic de-  
mands, no interference with  
the politics of Iran, let the  
Iranian people decide. The  
advanced workers on the  
other hand, should assist in  
the development of a Marxist  
Socialist Party in Iran, which  
could lead to success.

## WHO'S WHO

- National Front**  
—coalition of liberals.  
Leader; Sanjabi  
**Tudeh**  
—[illegal] Communist  
Party. Total uncritical  
support for Khomeini  
**Islamic Revolutionary  
Council**  
—established by Khomeini  
to rule Iran  
**Khomeini**  
—main religious oppon-  
ent of Shah. Advocates  
'return' to Islamic rule  
**Bazargan**  
—liberal named by Khomeini  
to be Prime Minister  
**Bakhtiar**  
—Prime Minister appointed  
by Shah. Expelled  
from National Front





# BHUTTO VERDICT- IMPASSE FOR REGIME

After ten months of deliberations, the Pakistan Supreme Court has confirmed the death sentence on Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Rotting in his cramped cell, chilled by the screams of his supporters undergoing floggings in the same prison, the former Prime Minister has had ample opportunity to reflect bitterly on his fate.

Through the brutal dictatorship of General Zia ul-Haque, the Pakistani ruling class is punishing the playboy rabble-rouser Bhutto for having played with fire and dabbled dangerously in the masses' revolutionary aspirations during the era of his rule.

He came to power in the ruins of the Bangladesh war and the collapse of the Yahya Khan dictatorship, the reactionary theocratic state of Pakistan having been dismembered by the secession of its eastern half. Bhutto unscrupulously deceived the masses with mock feints to the left.

He ranted against the 22 families who owned 66% of Pakistan's industry, 70% of insurance and 80% of banking, and even placed them temporarily under arrest. Token measures of nationalisation were made. These clever manoeuvres succeeded in stabilising the system.

The self-proclaimed "Peoples' Leader" was himself a member of this oligarchy, who owned 32,000 acres in the Sind and amassed £25 million worth of property! Bhutto enriched himself in the process of shoring up landlordism and capitalism.

His bogus land reform programme left 30% of the cultivable land in the hands of the aristocracy. Between 1973 and 1977, out of a total import bill of \$24 billion, luxury items accounted for a colossal \$780 million. The rule of the rich was maintained...but the unstable and ambitious demagogue consumed a disproportionate share of the pickings.

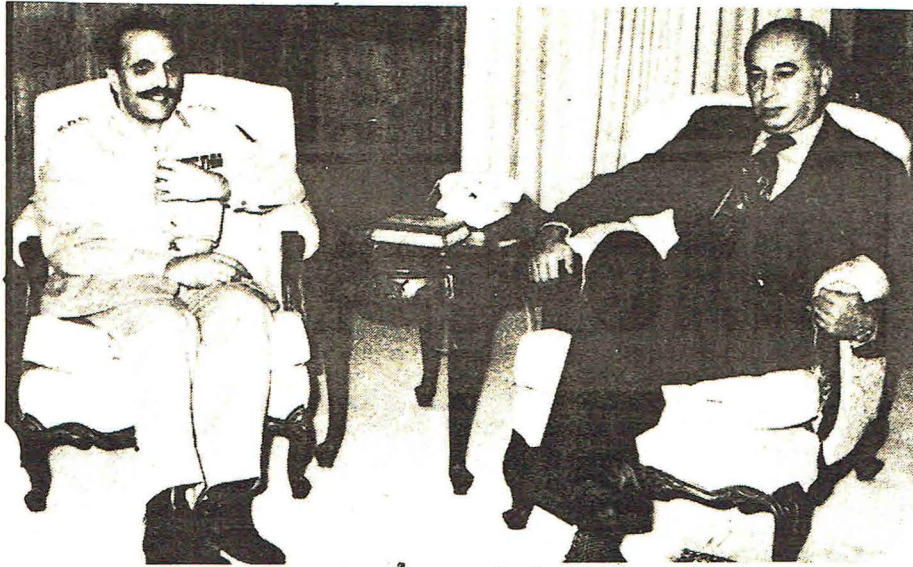
Hundreds of workers and oppositionists, including secessionist fighters from the Baluchi and Pashto oppressed nationalities, were murdered, and there were as many as 50,000 political prisoners by the end. The blatantly rigged elections of March 1977 aroused furious opposition. Ballot boxes were stuffed with fake votes, results were declared before votes were counted, opposition candidates were imprisoned, voters were intimidated by the presence of police armed with machine guns. In the ensuing riots against Bhutto's government, \$750 million worth of property was destroyed, 241 civilians were killed and 1,195 injured.

By Roger Silverman

In July 1977, Bhutto's favoured protégé General Zia seized power with the promise of "new elections by October"! Again and again Zia has postponed the election date, meanwhile consolidating a barbaric regime of terror based on medieval 'Islamic law'. Journalists on hunger strike in protest against censorship; May day marchers; trade unionists; People's Party activists; have all been flogged and in many cases permanently crippled, along with common criminals. PP youth, courageously shouting "Long Live Bhutto" from the whipping block have been duly gagged before their torture continued.

Thieves have had their hands amputated and rapists publicly hanged. Theological disputes have begun, certain authorities arguing that, since the hands are used in prayer, maybe only the fingers of thieves should be amputated. Officers have anxiously explained to the Press that the amputations are naturally most humane: "You don't chop it—you unpick it very carefully, all the nerves and things."

General Zia's utterances make the thoughts of Colonel Blimp look highly progressive. He has threatened to "hang left-wing journalists upside down", and considers 65 political parties (the latest count before the coup) as "far too many for a poor country." And yet let nobody imagine that the horrors of Pakistan are a relic of an obscure and remote religious tradition. General Zia with his baton and his waxed RAF moustache is a typical product of the Sandhurst tradition. He called his coup "Operation Fairplay" and said "we can consider ourselves damned lucky" if the election could be held during 1978. The CIA



Top: Police attack demonstrators in Karachi  
Bottom: General Zia ul-Haque and Bhutto

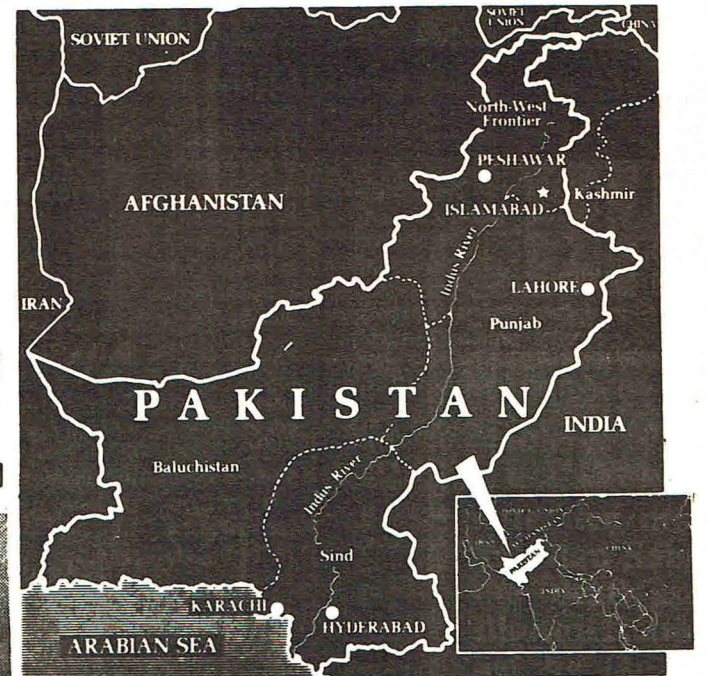
supported his coup and he has begun a process of denationalising the banks, writing in constitutional guarantees against future nationalisation, and doubling Pakistan's repayments of foreign debts to \$632 million last year.

Pakistan, along with every underdeveloped capitalist country,—and not unlike many developed capitalist countries including Britain—is languishing under the dictatorship of the International Monetary Fund. Foreign loans amount to \$14 billion, and interest repayments to \$300 million. Debts amount to half of total exports. Last year's trade deficit was \$1.5 billion and the budget deficit was \$226 million. The world's bankers have squeezed the vice ever tighter, and their puppet Zia has draconically raised prices in successive budgets, to force the burden on to the people of a country where per capita income at £50 is already one of the lowest in the world.

The simple programme of

hangings, floggings and mutilations, is testimony to the people's powers of resistance. Troops have many times had to deal with food riots against the hoarders and black marketers. As a sign of despair, terrible communal riots between the Sunni and Shia religious groups have raged on the streets. At every opportunity, demonstrations have erupted against the Zia regime—at cricket and hockey matches, by students after a bus accident, and most significantly of all, by thousands of women after the massacre of striking textile workers in Multan. As with many similar incidents in India, where the government had officially admitted to killing "15-18" of the strikers, 55 of them were never seen again.

For all the apparent ruthlessness of the regime, Zia's government has reacted ner-



favour of the workers and poor peasants] will sweep to power. The PNA, the reactionary alliance which brought Bhutto down, has fallen to pieces.

Yet another military dictatorship will crumble, in the wake of Ayub Khan and Yahya Khan, and a new, short-lived, feverish and fragile 'democracy' will follow. The cycle will continue until capitalism and landlordism are overthrown. From the immediate point of view of the frightened men of the Zia regime, better risk making Bhutto a martyr than ensure their own destruction at his hands. But vengeance is coming anyway!

One way out of the dilemma that they had toyed with, was to banish Bhutto to enjoy the hospitality of the Shah of Iran, on condition that he would never be permitted to return. History has firmly ruled out that option. But if the mighty Shah could not maintain his rule, then where could a stable haven be found?

As we go to press, it seems that even the vacillating Zia will find it hard to go back on his repeated refusal to grant clemency. He has already rejected 300 mercy petitions from lesser enemies than Bhutto. But Zia could still recoil from such a step.

The world is surprised that the dictatorship has even survived the court judgement! Two of the judges had to be removed, and 20,000 members of the People's Party arrested, to get this far. If Bhutto is martyred, he will achieve a sainthood he does not deserve. His execution would reap a whirlwind.

The further disintegration of the abortive Pakistani state would be accelerated. It is significant that the three non-Punjabi judges voted to uphold Bhutto's appeal. In Bhutto's homeland—the Sind—as well as the North-West Frontier and Baluchistan, pressures will mount to follow Bangladesh's footsteps to a nominal independence. Among the workers and poor peasants of the Punjab, hatred of the ruling clique will grow.

Surrounded on all sides by turmoil, by the unfolding revolution in Iran, the creation of a deformed workers' state in Afghanistan, and a protracted period of pre-revolutionary ferment in India, it will take more than the myopic and blundering brass-hats, precariously perched at the top in Pakistan today, to withstand the coming angry explosion of the masses.

ously whenever faced with a challenge. Compensation was grudgingly conceded to the widows of Multan. Zia has so frequently gone back on previous statements, for instance regarding elections, that he is held in universal ridicule. Instead of the official title 'Chief Martial Law Administrator', so the current CMLA stand for "Contrary to My Last Announcement"! And nowhere has the paralysis and indecision of the regime been more clearly manifested than in its dealings with Bhutto. A "senior military source" admitted to 'The Guardian': "Hanging Bhutto will be a danger. Not hanging Bhutto will be a disaster". The ironic truth is that Zia's sole—and miraculous—achievement has been to restore Bhutto's popularity.

Once this boneheaded and ridiculed regime collapses—and its days are obviously drawing to a close—then the People's Party, [for want of any alternative which can really settle accounts in



# REFERENDUM IN WALES

## VOTE 'YES'

In a Wales plagued by mass unemployment, poor wages, slums and ill health, disillusionment with the established parties has led to a growth of nationalism. This reflects the impasse of society on a capitalist basis.

The Welsh working class has always made a valuable contribution to the British labour movement. The growth of heavy industry produced a class-conscious working class which placed its stamp on Welsh society.

The ideas of socialism found fertile ground in the towns and valleys, driving Toryism and Liberalism to near extinction.

### Decline

National sentiment became subordinated to class solidarity. The Labour Party became the mass party not only of the working class but also of Wales itself.

However, with the failure of successive Labour governments to implement any radical socialist change came the inevitable bitter disillusionment.

The crisis facing British capitalism severely aggravated the social and economic problems facing the Welsh working class. After 16 years of Labour Government since the war, many of the problems have either not been solved or have reappeared anew.

Between 1964-70, 48 pits were closed resulting in 37,000 jobs being axed. Between 1971 and 1974, 13,500 jobs were brought to Wales by massive handouts and bribes to big business. Yet in this period there were 45,268 redundancies. Steel, which is the biggest employer, will have shrunk from 75,000 to 45,000 by 1980.

In the field of housing, of the twenty worst housing districts in Britain lacking amenities, 9 of these are situated in South Wales valleys. In the Rhondda, half of the houses are without inside toilets and 30% are without hot water.

Incidentally, there are more working days lost in the Rhondda through sickness than anywhere in Europe! Male deaths from bronchitis in S. Wales are 81% higher than the UK as a whole.

These few facts graphically illustrate the position of working people in Wales.

Labour—regarded as their party by many workers—has maintained a crushing domination at all levels. Labour

By  
Rob Sewell

has controlled many councils for over 50 years. Complacency and even corruption has replaced the sacrifice and struggle of the pioneer socialists. In the post-war period, many middle class careerists found a safe parliamentary seat in some labour areas.

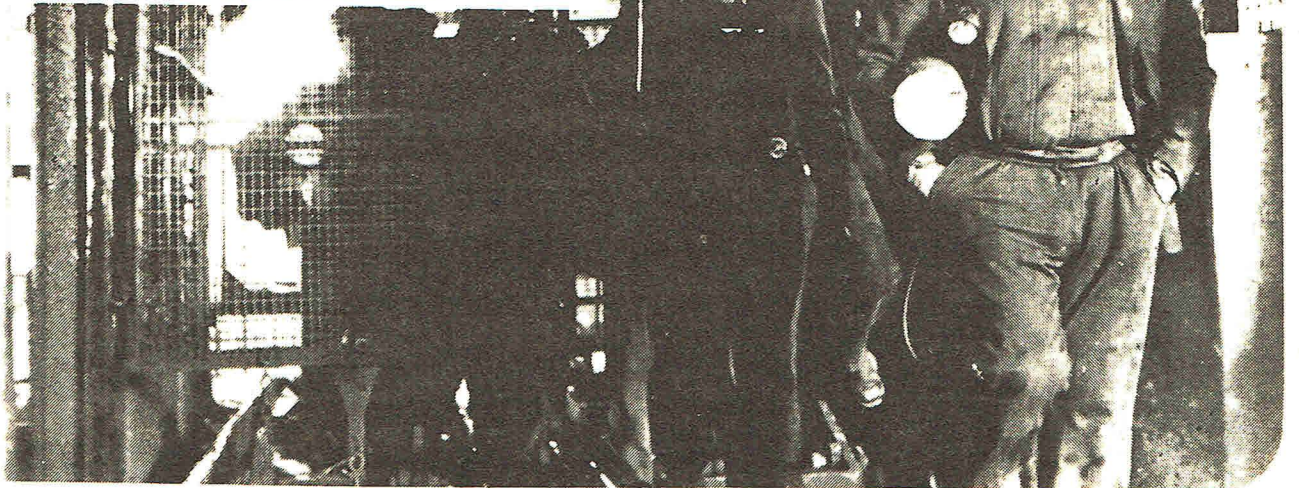
The economic crisis, and the disease of British capitalism, has further aggravated the problems faced by working people and with Labour's failure to tackle them, this has caused a revulsion against the Labour establishment.

It was the failure of the Labour leaders to implement socialist measures to end the suffering of unemployment and degradation, that has resulted in the revival of nationalism.

The demagogues of the Plaid Cymru paint themselves in 'socialist' colours to gain acceptability. This is due to the strength of socialist feeling in the workers, and among many of the middle class.

Plaid has now three MPs. It has managed to gain control of Merthyr Council and is the biggest party on Rhymney Council. Whereas in England the disillusionment with the Tories led to the great Liberal 'revival', in Wales support for Plaid grew.

The propaganda of the nationalists plays a reactionary role in pitting worker against worker on national lines: the Welsh against their English brothers. All ills are reduced to the bad 'English rule'. It is only in such periods of crisis, and because of the lack of a clear alternative that such ideas can find an echo.



## FIGHT FOR SOCIALIST POLICIES!

It is particularly in the rural areas, moreover, that nationalist sentiments have been revived.

### Tories against

Welsh independence by itself would be no solution, but in fact would lead to further unemployment and decline. The Welsh economy is completely woven into the British, dominated by British big business, and there can be no separate solution for the Welsh working class.

As a means of satisfying national feelings in words, the Labour Government has attempted to introduce measures of devolution. Unfortunately, however, the proposed Welsh Assembly will have very limited powers for action. In fact it will be a caricature of the Scottish Assembly, with no legislative role. It will simply receive a bloc grant from Westminster.

In the referendum, the Tories and the CBI, for their own class reasons, have lined up behind a 'No' vote. The

capitalists are even afraid of granting this watered-down Assembly. In no way can we side up with these characters.

Together with the Wales' TUC, Labour Party and Cooperative movement, socialists must stand for a 'Yes' vote, but point out its limitations and link it with the need for socialist policies.

There are those in the movement, including some Tribunes, who argue against an Assembly as an irrelevance and nothing to do with socialism. For some of them this represents a healthy reaction against the poison of nationalism. However, socialists have to deal with the concrete situation.

### Full powers

The responsibility for the revival of national feeling has come about due to the failure of the reformist leadership of our movement and its attempt to make capitalism work. Labour has to take up the cause of an Assembly with full powers but link it to the need

to change society.

There are others who are against the Assembly as it threatens their little 'empires' in the district and county councils. On the other hand, there are some in favour simply in order to provide a platform for their future careers.

At the moment, unlike in Scotland, there is no mass pressure in Wales for an Assembly. The same was true in Scotland before 1974. This is partly due to the weakness of national feeling and the caricature of an Assembly being proposed.

With the provision in the referendum of 40% of the electorate being in favour before the acceptance of devolution, and the lack of any active enthusiasm amongst the working class, it is quite possible that it will not get the necessary majority.

Nevertheless, the subject will not be removed from the agenda.

A victory in the referendum for a Welsh Assembly would in no way be the end of the

matter. Although a step forward, the Assembly on the present lines would be hamstrung by the limitations of a Westminster bloc grant.

Socialists must demand a genuine autonomy. Labour would inevitably win a majority, but policies must be changed to turn the Assembly not into a glorified talking-shop, but a body fighting in the interests of the working class.

### Programme

Labour's programme in the Welsh Assembly must include policies to begin to solve the economic and social problems:

(1) Nationalisation of Welsh operations of the giant monopolies that dominate the economy, compensation on the basis of proven need.

(2) Control and management of these industries by boards with a majority democratically elected from the trade unions.

(3) A crash programme of useful public works to mop up unemployment. A huge extension of home and hospital building and the social services.

(4) Use the new resources to implement a £70 minimum wage and a 35-hour week.

This programme would win the whole-hearted support of the working class of Wales and provide an enormous attraction to workers in the rest of Britain.

Socialists stand for the right nations to self-determination. But at the same time we recognise it is only through the ending of capitalism and the planning of the economy of the interests of the majority, that our problems can be solved.

## SCOTLAND: LPYS PLANS CAMPAIGN

**Jim Newlands, Labour Party Young Socialists National Committee member for Scotland, calls for a bold Young Socialist intervention in the Scottish referendum campaign.**

The Assembly referendum will take place against the background of an increase in industrial activity and in real terms an absolute worsening as far as the living standards of working people are concerned.

In this situation, the SNP's nationalist demagogy has much less appeal. The decline of support for the SNP is reflected by internal bickering within the Party.

To its credit, the Labour Party in Scotland has decided to take part in a 'Labour Movement says Yes' cam-

paigned involving the STUC, and the Co-op. A fighting campaign on a clear programme could ensure a 'Yes' vote that would both pass the 40% rule and at the same time eclipse the SNP, who will claim a large 'Yes' vote is a vote for separation.

Both the Labour Party Young Socialists Regional Committee and the Scottish Executive of the Labour Party see clearly the need for the LPYS to be involved fully in the movement's campaign to attract the youth vote that the SNP has influenced.

To this end, the LPYS representatives on the Scot-

tish Executive have pressed for the full involvement of the youth section.

A leaflet outlining the policies of the LPYS is already at the printers. There is also agreement on a LPYS press conference with the Scottish TUC Youth Advisory Committee and the Scottish Organisation of Labour Students and an LPYS radio broadcast.

### Youth broadcast

These are undoubtedly major steps forward for the LPYS and a recognition of the Young Socialists in Scotland.

It has also been agreed to consider the possibility of youth participation in a party political broadcast on TV during the campaign. The Scottish Executive Committee will write to CLPs advising them to make use of YS members on all campaign platforms.

Young Socialists in every constituency should act immediately on the SEC's recommendation, to build the LPYS into a fighting machine prepared for a general election and to play its part effectively in the campaign for an Assembly 'Yes' vote.



LETTERS TO: The Editor, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

# Soviet History rewritten

LETTERS

## Callaghan and picketing

Dear Comrades

The following resolution was passed at the February meeting of ASTMS Liverpool shipping and freight branch No. 618.

*"This branch condemns the comments of James Callaghan in the House of Commons when he stated that he would cross a union picket line and encouraged scab workers to do the same."*

*"We realise that the labour movement was built on the solidarity of one worker with another and statements like this can only serve to discredit the Labour Party in the eyes of trade unionists."*

*"We therefore call on the Labour Party NEC to publicly dissociate the Labour Party from this anti-working class remark of the Prime Minister."*

Yours fraternally  
DR Clark

## Bristol N LPYS thanks

Dear Comrades

Bristol North Labour Party Young Socialists has finally been reinstated! After a five month struggle we have held our first branch meeting since suspension in July.

The LPYS expressed its thanks for all those YS branches, CLPs and the PPC who sent messages of support and resolutions to Bristol NE CLP.

The LPYS has always maintained that there were no grounds for suspension. We hope that this branch will now be encouraged by the Party in its efforts to build the LPYS, the Party, and mobilise the youth vote to defeat the Tories. And that internal political debate can take place in a comradely manner.

Steve Poole  
Secretary, Bristol North LPYS

Dear Comrades

I have recently returned from a visit to the Soviet Union and I thought 'Militant' readers might be interested in my experiences.

In museums and libraries there is still massive censorship and falsification of the history of the revolution. At the same time I was fantastically impressed by the economic achievement of the USSR and I found, as far as was possible on a brief visit, that ordinary Russian people are proud of the advances that have been made since the revolution.

Moscow and Leningrad are dotted with museums devoted to the history of the revolution and the life of Lenin. I was shocked to discover that nowhere is the true story of the revolution depicted.

Of the tens of thousands of photographs and exhibits of the revolutionary period on display, not once were Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin, Tomsky etc, referred to. Of the leading Bolsheviks of the time, only Lenin, Stalin, Dzerzhinsky and Sverdlov were mentioned, the last two having died of natural causes before the Stalin era.

Why is it that the author-



Members of the Bolshevik Central Committee in 1917. By 1938, only Stalin remained.

ities resort to this monumental deception? 60 years after the revolution, why are they afraid of the truth?

I even saw blatant falsification of a photograph supposedly of Lenin and leading party members at a congress. A child could have seen that Lenin's head had been superimposed on another man's body.

In Soviet libraries I found that none of the works of the

Bolsheviks I mentioned were available, except of course for Lenin. Here, however, there was a striking contradiction.

Back issues of Pravda are available which have extensive material by Trotsky and other party leaders published before 1926. I also found that the Encyclopedia Britannica is freely available, with details of the lives of these men.

I was lucky: I was able to discuss these points with a

member of the Soviet Communist Party. This comrade told me he was a young member (probably 30-35) and had not travelled outside Russia.

As we discussed the works of Lenin I discovered that he was unaware of key passages, particularly concerning Lenin's position on internationalism and the consequences of the isolation of the Soviet Union after the revolution. It

seems that Lenin's works are censored even for Party members!

On the question of the falsification of history and the position of the bureaucracy he could make no serious defence. I tried to put forward a Marxist position and by the end of our discussion I think I had given him something to think about.

Yours fraternally  
A 'Militant' supporter

## Bonus scheme—more miners killed

Dear Comrades

The latest figures issued by the Mines and Quarries Inspectorate on accidents confirm what many miners dreaded after the bonus schemes were forced upon them.

The figures show that between Jan 1 and August 31 1978 there was a 41.4% increase in the number of deaths over the same period of 1977. Deaths on or in the immediate vicinity of the coalface increased by 100% over the same period in 1977.

In many pits modern machinery is unobtainable through lack of finance and there are not enough men being trained to use these machines. Conditions underground are deplorable and the myths of modern, 'age of technology' mining ought to be smashed now.

These are the old clichés that will come spewing out of the gutter press, along with 'fabulous' wages we're earning, when the not so far off miners' strike gets underway.

The time has come for the miners to demand a bold union leadership and fight for true workers' democracy within the industry.

It is only in this way that the massive problems of the coal industry could be solved, when the miners themselves have total control of their livelihoods in a socialist planned economy for the whole benefit of working people.

Yours comradely  
Paul Ware  
[Aberpergwm NUM]

## A PUZZLE FOR THE BOSSES

Dear Comrades

The following conversation took place between a picket and a newspaper boss in the recent NUJ dispute. The boss pulled up at the picket line and started arguing with the picket about the strike. At the end of the 'discussion' he said to the picket, "And anyway, you aren't helping the fight against inflation."

"How's that?" asked the picket.

"Well," said the boss, "wage rises cause inflation."

The picket looked a bit bewildered; scratched his head and said to the boss, "Well, you take home more money than I do, don't you?"

"Yes," said the boss.

"Well, then," said the picket, "you must be causing inflation more than me!"

It was reported later that the boss was seen intently studying his 'Financial Times' looking for an answer to this little puzzle.

Yours fraternally  
Bob Wade  
Group FOC, NUJ

## Rates

Dear Comrades

On the Isle of Wight, a rates rebellion is being threatened by some of the more vociferous 'ratepayers', egged on, of course, by the local press, as a reaction to the public sector workers' dispute.

Readers and sellers here would find it very useful if 'Militant' carried an article or series of articles on local government financing, the way the rating system works etc.

All the best from IOW readers.

Fraternally  
Cathy Wilson PPC  
Isle of Wight CLP

## Iran's fairweather 'friends'

Dear Comrades

It was literally only a matter of weeks ago that the world rulers were extending the hand of friendship to the Shah of Iran. Portrayed as a sad old man, trying against all opposition to install democracy in Iran, the Shah was the subject of support from Callaghan, Owen, Brezhnev, Hua and, of course, President Carter.

Carter was at one time even on the point of sending a war-ship to the shores of Iran to help the Shah in his bid to 'maintain law and order'. (Who said the days of gun-boat diplomacy are over?)

However, the capitalist

Dear Comrades

As an active member of both the LPYS and the NUSS I was interested and dismayed to read the article in issue 439 on the question of grants for all students over school-leaving age.

As most comrades involved in this work will know, the grants campaign will be one of the central issues the Labour Party Young Socialists will pursue amongst school students. Every year many thousands of school students leave school—they are too poor to stay on, because there isn't a living grant.

As we have always campaigned for a living grant for college and university students, why should sixth-form school students only get £20?

Can someone feed, clothe and house themselves on this? I think not.

It seems to me that this is drawing a line between college and school students in who should get a living grant and who should not. School students are not just kiddies, lacking responsibility or desire for independence, still tied to their mothers' apron strings and too young for politics.

We will only gain the respect of sixth-formers if we treat them with respect, as equals in the fight for socialism.

Comradely  
Dale Ackroyd  
Secretary, Bradford North LPYS, Fairfax School NUSS

class and its lackeys are not ones to extend the hand of friendship for too long if there isn't a profit to be made. The workers of Iran, with support from workers all over the world, have shown that the Shah's rule will no longer be accepted and they have strangled the oil industry.

If the Shah expected more support, he was sadly mistaken. No profits—no friendship, is the capitalist motto, and now the world media self-righteously exposes and condemns the dictatorial regime and its vicious SAVAK organisation. And Carter, once again standing on his head, has closed the doors of American hospitality on the

Shah!

It is worth mentioning that the British arms industry is wringing its hands and smarting over Iran's cancellation of arms supplies from Britain. The government wants us to believe that it is relieved at this decision because, as it said, it was concerned about supplying arms to what might be a 'radical' government.

It is only a pity that the British government didn't have such qualms about supplying the Iranian ruling class with tear-gas bombs to use against the Iranian workers.

Yours fraternally  
Rob Morton  
Brighton Labour Party







# PLESSEY THREATEN MORE JOBS IN

**Coming just two weeks after Dunlop announced they are to close their tyre plant causing 2,300 redundancies, yet another 800 redundancies have been dealt to Merseyside.**

With unemployment already twice the national average 800 workers at the Edge Lane site in Liverpool are threatened with the dole

queue in 90 day's time.

The Plessey management state that losses forecast for the year 1978-79 at Edge Lane will be £7 million, and that this situation cannot be tolerated. But the trade unions have consistently pointed out over the years that there would be this decline as the outdated Strowger equipment is phased out, unless new products are introduced. Instead Plessey continued to rely on the vast profits of Strowger, allowing all other equipment, such as transmitters, traffic signals etc to go.

Plessey's have told the

## MERSEYSIDE

trade unions that in return for them maintaining a workforce of 3,400 the unions must accept a package of 800 redundancies; new work methods; high production figures; and reasonable pay settlements within the government's guidelines.

Clearly these 800 aren't the last. Only last March, Plessey announced that the 600 jobs to go then would be the last—this has been repeated

several times over the past years.

It is a planned and calculated run-down by Plessey, each time demoralising the workforce such that they think there will be no fight when the total shut-down comes.

Plessey have said that if the above package is not accepted, they will close the site now. This threat must be strongly challenged by the

unions. Even if these 800 were allowed to be sacked, all the indications are that the place will remain open for only two more years.

**The fight to save the whole site must begin now. All stewards must be united in a joint body, and the fight carried forward on a unified basis. We must oppose these and all redundancies.**

Private enterprise has clearly shown it cannot handle the telecommunications industry. The cartel of firms that monopolise the industry squeeze vast profits out of the publicly-owned Post Office—

£100 million was paid for the advanced digital switching 'System X'. At the same time they are trying to throw us out on the stones.

We must demand that the whole of the telecomms industry is taken into public ownership under workers' control and management so that the industry can be run for the good of the whole community. Only on this basis can we look forward to a secure future.

**By Mike Smith**

(ASTMS Plessey)

# VICKERS CLOSURES WOULD COST £2 MILLION

The decision of Vickers' management to close down the Scotswood works was taken after two years' bad trading figures, showing a loss of £1½ million.

The economist working with the campaign committee has questioned the whole basis of the company's accounts, describing the reasoning as "highly questionable" and one-sided.

But even by Vickers' own accounting methods, the cost of closing the works will be far greater. A special report has been issued locally, showing the combined social effects of closure.

On Tyneside in the past 12 months alone there have been over 8,000 redundancies, 3,200 in engineering. The chances of future employment are grim beside the other 14,000 on the dole in Newcastle. Scotswood, in the West End, where the factory

**By John Pickard**

is sited, has an unemployment rate of 17%.

The workforce has a very high proportion of skilled workers and some of them would find it almost impossible to ever find work again. In the area there are 324 platers and 571 welders registered as unemployed, and not one vacancy for either.

### No vacancies

**When the report examines the loss of tax to the government, the loss of National Insurance payments, the cost of Supplementary Benefit, rent and rate rebates and so on, the total cost to the government of closure would be £2 million in the first year alone.**

The 'Save Scotswood' cam-

paign committee has been actively fighting the closure for over a month. Supported by Vickers workers in other plants in the area—Elswick, Mitchell Bearings and Crabtree, they organised a massive demonstration and rally in Newcastle recently.

After the rally, the committee was absolutely staggered at the press boycott. As one of the stewards said, "We had a march of 4,000 workers, the biggest in Newcastle for about seven years. Then we had a rally addressed by shop stewards, Members of Parliament, including a junior minister, the leader of the County Council, and all we got in the Newcastle Journal was—three lines."

On the local BBC TV news the lead story was a family digging their own mother's grave because of the local authority workers' strike. They didn't even see fit to send a reporter to the rally.

Conscious of the press bias,

the campaign committee are now producing their own bulletin, which is being distributed in thousands throughout the labour movement. The support for the Vickers' workers is strong within the labour movement.

**Nevertheless, as 'Militant' has pointed out in the past, the workers may have to face the fact that an occupation may be necessary to keep the plant open.**

The date planned for the beginning of redundancies is

looming closer. An occupation cannot be organised at the drop of a hat. So it is now that the workers should begin discussing the possibility and the plans.



## GEC REDUNDANCIES - LETS SEE THE BOOKS

More redundancies are threatened at GEC Stafford, in the power engineering group.

GEC High Voltage Switchgear Ltd. propose to sack 285 workers—over a quarter—over the next financial year. They say this is necessary because of falling orders and increased overhead costs. Their aim is to put everything under one roof at Trafford Park, Manchester.

This is on top of over 100 jobs lost at Dormans Deisels Ltd of the GEC Industrial Group and some 180 redundancies since December in GEC Power Transformers Ltd. [see Militant issue 435].

A mass meeting of shop floor workers on 12 January, called in protest at the

redundancies, called for a complete ban on overtime in Switchgear.

Now management are refusing to honour the 1969 GEC Woolwich Agreement as implemented in the Transformer Division which meant improved redundancy terms and up to 14 weeks' pay in lieu of notice. They want the workers to deliver the goods on time while they chop their jobs!

The staff unions [ASTMS, APEX, AUEW-TASS] held a mass meeting on 30 January and voted by an overwhelming majority for an immediate work-to-rule to be backed up by a levy of the membership across all Stafford divisions of the GEC Power Engineering Group.

GEC is one of Europe's biggest companies. In the year ending March 1978 they declared net profits of over £90 million. Yet they say that we aren't lining their pockets enough!

**We say—No redundancies!**

—A 35-hour week with no loss of pay and a £70 minimum wage now!

—Open the books of the GEC Power Engineering group to trade union inspection;

If they've squandered the profits we've created, nationalise GEC!

**By Dave Mole**

(Assistant Secretary, ASTMS 886 branch, GEC Stafford)

## working in the union



This week **Gerry Lerner** [AUEW-TASS] begins his account of his first trade union experience, as an apprentice. If you want to comment on points raised here, or on your own trade union work, past or present, write to 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

"Apprentices don't need a union. You have your own Apprentices Association which looks after you until you've served your time". This was what we were told by the firm's Education Department when we started work and it seemed to make sense.

Our training programme meant that we were not in any department for longer than a few months and the shop stewards only represented the people in their particular department. The Apprentice Association committee was elected from the apprentices and had regular meetings with the Education Manager present. The Company handbook for new starters told us that any problem we had could be taken up with the AA.

But it did not take long to realise that the AA was a toothless wonder—very good at organising social trips, sports events and the like—but totally useless on things such as wages, hiring and firing; in fact anything the management did not agree with. The constitution and terms of reference of the AA were drawn up by the management.

But knowing the AA to be powerless and seeing the need to be in a union were two completely different things. The closed shop operated in the factory so we knew we would have to join when our apprenticeships were finished.

The commonest point of view was that the

union would do nothing for us, and indeed did not want apprentices as members at least until the last year of our apprenticeship when we had some idea which department we would be working in when our training was over.

Two incidents changed that outlook drastically. One day the manager in charge of technical apprentices was doing his tour of inspection through the Apprentice Training School. Coming through the drawing office where our section was being trained, he noticed that one lad had grown a moustache and another was attempting a beard! In the arrogant tones of one who is used to authority he informed us all that "those hairs will be removed by next Monday!"

We were stunned. School days were now behind us and yet here was the 'overlord' treating us like kids. All were against this type of dictatorship, but what to do? We had to show him we weren't sheep.

The following week he came round again to see how things were going. The moustache and beard were still there, accompanied by growths or attempted growths on the face of every lad in the section. The manager didn't mention it again.

A victory had been achieved and although the majority probably didn't know it, the first beginnings of trade union consciousness had developed.

**At Alcan, Birmingham, 130 fitters, welders, carpenters, pipe-fitters, and some machinists have been forced to strike for the last seven weeks because of management's refusal to negotiate their annual wage claim.**

Management refused to negotiate the claim by AUEW and Heating and Domestic Engineers' members until the unions concerned signed a "totally unrelated document on investment." This would not be an 'agreement' but a "snatch, because it is all about loss of jobs and change of jobs", as the union leaflet describes it.

These workers have not

only faced bitter winds for the last seven weeks, but also the spectacle of T&GWU production workers, stewards, commissioners, and management personnel encouraging drivers to cross the picket line. And this in spite of the fact that the unions concerned have made the strike official.

Alcan, one of the top 20 companies in the world, with 23 plants in Britain, has had disputes at nearly all its major sites, aimed at breaking the strength of the unions. At the plant at Kitts Green they want to take away all the agreements made over the years, which would give them free reign to further exploit

the workforce.

They want to expand the plant by 50% through a £30m investment programme and create redundancies in all departments.

The other unions (T&G, ACTS, ASTMS, ETU) are allowing management to do the work of plant maintenance. As the AUEW/H&DE leaflet states 'anyone who goes to bed with a tiger will wake up clawed.' It's a case of who's next brothers.

**All trade unionists should support these workers in their call for national blacking of all Alcan Plate products.**

**By Brian Debus**  
(Erdington Labour Party)



# BRITISH LEYLAND: Defend pay and jobs with national action



By Bob Ashworth

Senior Steward, Rover  
Solihull  
(personal capacity)

Once again, the British Leyland workers have been pushed into strike action by the BL management led by Michael Edwardes.

Management's moves, as always, have been accompanied by a barrage of lying propaganda on television and in the press trying to blame the workforce for the new crisis. But the strike by Longbridge and some other BL workers was well and truly provoked by Edwardes' arbitrary decision to withhold the first stage of parity payments and increased shift allowances which were agreed last year.

This has been done on the pretext that certain production targets have not been met. Yet these targets, which have now cut off workers' cash, were never mentioned during the negotiations.

No wonder Longbridge workers struck! No wonder trade unionists throughout BL are bitterly angry at this latest management move!

The productivity deal was a snare. Our warnings in 'Militant' early last year have turned out to be all too true.

The split decision, moreover, between the different BL plants con-

firms the need for national organisation and national action on the basis of a common claim.

Unfortunately, BL management has again been able to exploit differences between the plants to get itself off the hook. In this respect, the lessons of the successful Ford strike, with a unifying common claim and solid national action, have yet to be taken on board by all BL convenors and stewards.

Leyland workers last December voted by 2:1 for the productivity package negotiated by the convenors and union officials who sit on the Leyland Cars Joint Negotiating Committee (LCJNC). British Leyland workers believed that the package would bring substantial benefits without the need for a real fight.

Five per cent increases of about £3.50 have been paid. But what about the rest? About 500 BL grades were to be reduced to 5, with parity of earnings being introduced in three stages; February, March and November of this year. Consolidation of supplements under the incomes' policy was also agreed.

This was part of the agreement negotiated for the whole engineering industry. Leyland is the only major company in the industry that has not stood by this agreement.

Leyland overtime rates are still calculated on a flat rate excluding supplements (giving something like time-and-a-quarter instead of time-and-a-half).

Workers at factories like Longbridge, Cowley and Canley, where there is regular night work, are consequently losing around £8 a week.

Management tied consolidation and parity to increases in productivity, demanding 7,000 redundancies as the price.

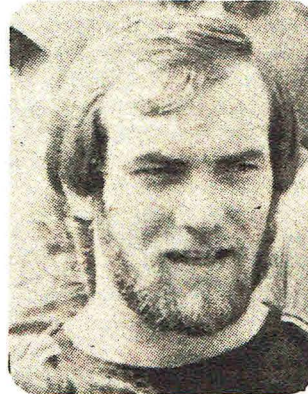
This was paid.

Now, like a geni from a bottle, specific productivity targets of 6.1 cars per worker per month mysteriously appeared. Surprise, surprise—management have conjured up a target that has not been met!

In the whole of 1978 this 6.1 target was met only three times. So much for realism! If the company had already decided on these figures at the time of the negotiations then it knew full well that they

were impossible!

BL management are now cracking the productivity-deal whip with a vengeance. The convenors have tried to retrieve the situation by fighting to make the company pay up. Angry as they are, however, at BL's cynical manoeuvrings, the majority of BL workers have voted not to fight for the moment.



Bob Ashworth

In the higher-paid plants of the Rover Triumph Jaguar group, the workers opposed the strike call because a majority undoubtedly felt there was not enough at stake to justify strike action now.

At the BL Oxford plants, workers do have much to gain from parity. But confusion

arising from a call from both left and right-wing stewards for a revival of plant bargaining, with their own 30% claim counter-posed to the presently disputed parity payments, mean that there was no clear decision in favour of national strike action.

More and more workers at BL are drawing the conclusion that the only effective programme in Leyland has been that advocated by 'Militant'.

In April 1978 we said: "A Leyland Cars Combine Committee must be formed immediately, to give a lead in totally rejecting any incentive schemes. They must draw up a wage claim to unite all Leyland workers in a fight to restore the wages lost over the period of the social contract."

"This is what the Rover shop stewards are demanding: it has been our position since these schemes were first discussed... If a Leyland Combine Committee adopted this policy, Leyland workers would rally to the fight for a just wage for all, with no strings attached."

This position was eventually adopted by the Leyland Cars shop stewards in 1978 and, following a resolution for

a common struggle from 'Militant' supporter Bob Ashworth, the Leyland stewards drew up a claim for a £15.80 rise for the highest production worker, full parity with no strings from November 1978, a 35-hour week, full sick pay, and elimination of the penalty clauses from the lay-off agreements.

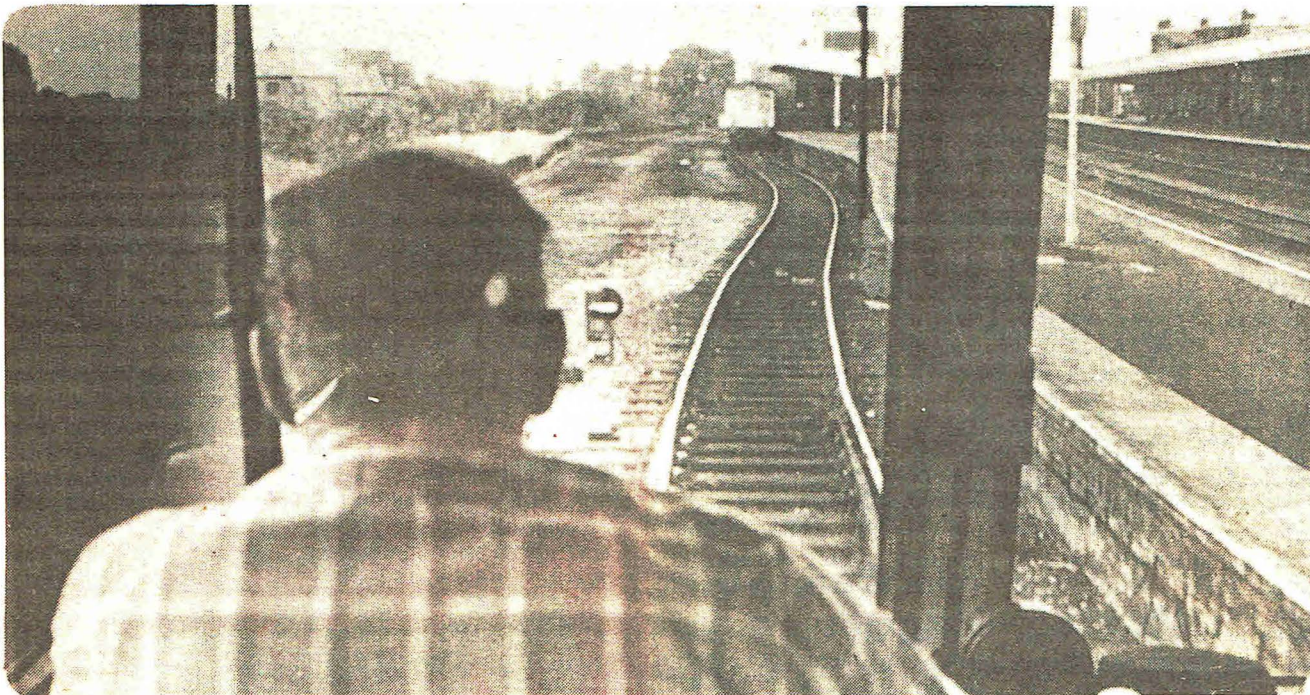
Every factory was to submit their demands simultaneously after mass meetings, with the combine stewards' committee co-ordinating any necessary industrial action.

## Not an inch

This is the approach that should have been acted on last year. Edwardes and his gang will certainly be drawing their own conclusions from the current mis-firing of strike action, preparing for new attacks on the BL workforce.

Leyland workers must not give an inch. The union organisation, particularly the stewards' committees and the BL Cars Combine Committee must be prepared for national action on a common claim to defend our living standards and trade union organisation.

## RAILWORKERS BUILD UNITY ON CLAIM



Despite the decision by ASLEF's Executive Committee to suspend strike action while the claim for an increase in the basic rate of pay for all British Rail locomen goes to a second Railway Staff Tribunal, the mood remains determined.

A number of branches have already made it clear to our leadership that we want a quick answer from the tribunal and that the union must continue to pursue the full claim for 10% without conceding any cuts in hard-won manning levels or conditions. A mass lobby of the Tribunal was organised for 13th February.

On Southern Region,

where feelings have been particularly strong, the membership have called on the EC to give BR management until 17th February to answer our claim. Failing any positive response by then, they are demanding that official strike action recommences in the week following.

Failing a strike call by the ASLEF leadership, Southern Region members are preparing for 24-hour strike action on Wednesday 21st February. ASLEF's Southern Region Executive Council has sent a letter to every British Rail and London Transport ASLEF branch outlining the dispute, encouraging branches to keep up the pressure on our national leadership and appealing for support from

other branches for the action. London Transport workers face similar problems. LT management have offered only a miserable 5% increase this year, plus a productivity deal which if agreed to, would likewise mean cuts in manning levels and attacks on conditions.

At a meeting of LT branch representatives, it was made clear that management's proposals were totally unacceptable. LT members are now demanding a substantial increase in basic pay rates and improved enhanced rates for unsocial hours, frequent late night, early morning and weekend work.

Sections of LT workers will also be taking strike action on 21st February in pursuit of

their claim and in support of their brothers on British Rail.

The latest industrial action and the problems facing workers on BR and London Transport have had the very positive effect of drawing together the membership in both sections at local level.

Meetings organised by the BR membership have been attended by LT workers and vice versa. We are determined to keep this up in the future.

One clear lesson from the dispute is the need for the membership at local level to build the same unity with our brothers in the NUR and TSSA.

By Martin Elvin

Stratford ASLEF

## LONGBRIDGE

A Longbridge worker reports:

All gates at the plant are being picketed and also car storage depots are being covered on a 24-hour basis.

Pickets are in a determined mood and are very keen to ensure that the dispute is pressed at every opportunity to bring it to a swift conclusion.

There is a lot of concern that as many plants as is possible join the dispute—a massive show of strength on behalf of the unions in Leyland is long overdue.

Press and TV have been given short shrift when they have appeared at what they hoped would be flashpoints on the picket. Workers shouted out "Lies at Ten", and refused to be filmed whilst persuading other workers not to cross our picket lines.

Many lorry drivers have been indicating support for us as they drove past, probably a reflection of their recent strike.

One particular picket line at a strategic point necessitated a mass picket of 150 or so workers, who in freezing conditions and with difficulties in getting early morning transport, turned out at five o'clock to be on the line at 6 in the morning—tremendous sacrifices from workers who had already been on the line the previous day.

These workers should not be let down by the officials. The strike must be made official and the claim must be won.

Richard Lewis T&GWU shop steward Longbridge

## UNIPART, COWLEY

Faced with dismissal if they did not return to work by last Monday, 1,000 workers at the Unipart depot of Leyland, Cowley, called off their strike over special payments to deal with the backlog of work during the lorry drivers'

strike.

The matter has been taken to normal grievance procedure. Danny Murphy, AUEW senior steward at the depot told us. The local press, he said, have clouded over the full story.

**Sell Militant  
to your workmates**

For details contact Circulation Department, Militant  
1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



# TYNE AND WEAR PORT AUTHORITY- SECRET CLOSURE PLANS THREATEN JOBS

Secret closure plans which will have a devastating effect on jobs in the area have been drawn up by the Port of Tyne Authority.

Until now these plans have been kept secret within the Port Authority, and were even withheld from top officials of other authorities concerned until a recent application from Parsons in connection with their future use of Tyne's port facilities.

'Militant' is now able to reveal that the Port Authority's proposals are to close all operations along the whole of the river above the Jarrow point from 1982. In these upper reaches of the river dredging will cease and the river will be allowed to silt up.

The Port of Tyne are trying to keep these amazing proposals absolutely secret and up to now have not entered into any discussions with the dock trade unions. Their fear is the obvious angry reaction of the workforce.

The implications of such

a closure are absolutely staggering. The first casualty would be the dock labour force. At present 800 dockers are employed by the Port. The only course that could be offered to them would be the road to the dole.

But in the longer run, the secret plans threaten the livelihood of workers in Jarrow and further down-river.

And what of the major industries along the river?

NEI Parsons in Newcastle have to tender for giant 1,000 KW generators in order to keep jobs in the future. But Parsons can only produce these generators if they can ship them out by river.

Parsons's last big generators, involving a load of 437 tons for Drax power station, only narrowly cleared the roads and bridges on its way to North Shields docks. The next two

generators would mean loads of 600 tons and then 1000 tons.

In discussing further plans for modifying roads and bridges to provide these massive loads with a route to the docks, it seems that top officials of Tyne and Wear County Council, found out by accident about the Port Authority's closure plans.

Parsons' management were shocked, and it seems likely that not even senior officials in the Department of Transport or the Port Authority itself were fully informed.

As the Tyne comes under the National Ports Scheme, closure would almost certainly mean a

complete ban on loading and unloading. Even if an exception were granted for Parsons, silting-up of the river would create serious difficulties.

The consequence of this would once again be the loss of jobs at Parsons. For a firm which has just narrowly averted large scale redundancies, such a proposal must inevitably put a gigantic question mark over its whole future.

Other firms along the Tyne must also be affected by these proposals. Spillers flour mill, for instance, uses the Tyne's facilities, and would therefore suffer from closure.

Already, the North-East is ravaged by unemployment. Redundancies pile up one upon another each week. In the last year alone, Tyneside has seen over 8,000 redundancies.

These Port closure proposals will only add to this. Are the authorities aiming to sabotage industry in the North-East? Thousands of jobs are at risk because of these proposals.

The trade unions concerned should immediately demand that all the proposals of the Port of Tyne authority are published. Only in this way can the full implications be seen and the necessary plans be drawn up to combat this madness.

Militant  
exclusive  
by  
Dave  
Cotterill

# Militant

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## NUM

# MINERS DEMAND RECALL CONFERENCE

When the Coal Board offered 3½% (less than £2 for face workers), it was considered a derisory joke by most miners.

The talk of only so much money being in the kitty ("it can be increased a little bit") is nothing new. There has never been any money in the kitty for mineworkers.

The revised offer has been increased by cropping existing payments, i.e. taking away 'delayed time' payments in the incentive bonus scheme, non-payment for mealtimes etc.—amounting to an offer of £10. What this really means is that £8 of it is already in the miners' pay; the increase is still only £2.

Once again the propaganda being used by the press and the NCB about average gross wages makes miners wonder how £30.40 is missing from our wage packet every week.

The NUM has published a projection of our purchasing power, on basic rates, compared to March 1975, if we only get a 5% increase this year. The take-home pay of a faceworker would be £59.39 minimum in March 1979.

This would be a 38% increase since 1975, while if this year's price increases are taken as only 8%, prices will have risen by 67%.

That means a cut in real wages by 17% since 1975. For surface and underground workers there has been a 16% cut, on a lower basic wage.

Faceworkers would need a take-home pay of £71.64 or a gross wage of £103.49 just to stand still. The claim for £110 for faceworkers is quite reasonable in this light.

Considerations about levels of bonus payments should not cut across the need to achieve decent basic rates for the mining industry.

Lodges must now demand a recall delegate conference: the NEC must carry out the 1978 annual conference decision, that in the event of an unsatisfactory offer from the board, a delegate conference be held to decide which form of action is necessary to achieve the claim.

By Ian Isaac  
Secretary St John's  
Lodge NUM  
(personal capacity)

## CORBY

[continued from page 1]

use steel for tractors, factories, ambulances and other equipment they badly need.

BSC claim that the closure of the steel-making side of Corby steel works is necessary because it is making a loss of £40 million per year. Prove it!

Surely the cost of transporting steel to Corby from elsewhere must be prohibitive also? Does BSC really have long term plans to close down the whole steel works?

This is what workers in Corby really fear. A complete closure of the steel works would mean a terrible unemployment rate of over 30% in Corby.

But the shop stewards are determined to fight.

As a first step, all strip transported to Corby from elsewhere will be blacked. If the management close down the furnaces, the unions will open them up again.

In the words of Dennis Turner, a fraternal speaker at the meeting from Billston: "If the management can't manage, then we will!"

The meeting expressed its determination to fight the redundancies. Now it is up to the trade unions to organise a campaign to resist the plans of BSC.

A conference of shop stewards and convenors from all steel works threatened with redundancies, such as



Corby, Billston, Shotton and Consett, should be organised within the next two or three weeks to link up in the struggle and draw up a joint campaign.

The conference should demand a recall conference of the ISTC to discuss the future of steel making in Britain and give its full backing to the campaign to resist the closures. Pressure must be put on the trade union leaders to organise a campaign in the trade union and labour movement to mobilise support for the steelworkers.

After all, if the British steel industry is run down, the whole of manufacturing industry in this country will be threatened.

The conference should call on the BSC to make all its plans public. The minutes of meetings between BSC and the TUC/ISTC should be published.

The books of the BSC should be open to the

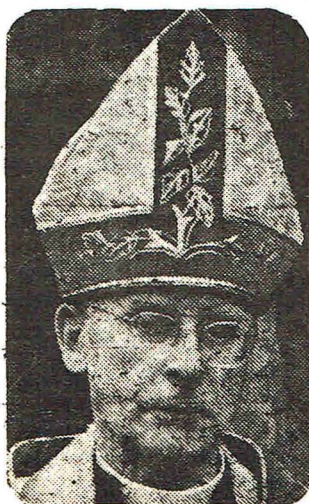
inspection of the trade unions to see just where the money is going.

If the management are shown to be bankrupt, then the trade unions and labour movement should take over

the running of the steel industry under democratic workers' control and management.

If the campaign is organised along these lines, then the steel works can be saved.

## TORY PRAYERS



Dear Doctor Coggan, the Archbishop of Canterbury, has spoken out against strikers. He can afford to. On a salary of £9,628, free palace accommodation thrown in, he finds he hasn't much in common with them. Although he says that one of his best friends is a trade unionist. And he does come in contact with workers. In Paddington the Church Commissioners are putting up the rents and threatening critics with libel writs. Now what was it Lord Hailsham said about the Anglican Church being the Tory Party at prayer?



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