

**AFTER THE
ELECTIONS IN SPAIN:
Workers question
labour leaders**
See pages 8 and 9

FOR A LIVING WAGE! END UNEMPLOYMENT!

**'We
are
angry'**

-NURSES DEMAND ACTION

How many workers would accept what nurses are expected to put up with? Terribly long shifts of up to twelve hours. Heavy responsibility for human life. And all for less than £1 an hour!

Now the Tory press are shedding crocodile tears about the nurses. But since when did they care about the NHS? They are usually calling for cuts.

By
**Marie Harrison
(COHSE)**

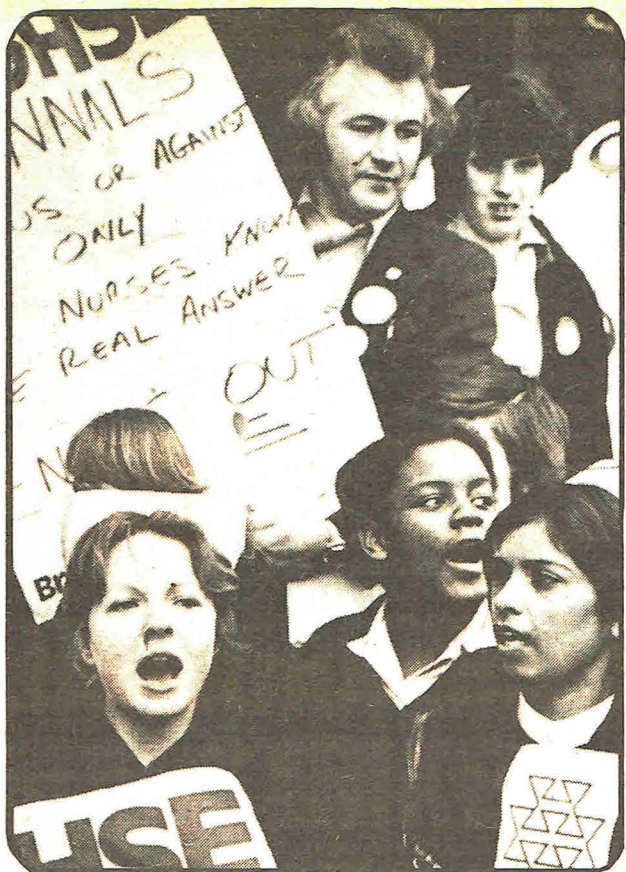
By a hypocritical show of 'sympathy' the big business media hope to deter nurses from determined trade union action. Once again, they are trying to exploit our dedication.

But is it surprising that more and more nurses are starting to think in terms of trade union strength? For instance: A staff nurse, trained for four years, gets £39.42 for an arduous 40-hour week. Many other nurses, particularly those still training, get far less.

I work in an intensive care unit, where patients are very seriously ill. Nurses here have to make critical decisions about patients on artificial kidneys and ventilators. Patients have to be consistently monitored.

This we have to do for extremely long periods—12-hour shifts during the night and often during the day. Night shift is from 8 to 8 and an hour's pay is deducted for our meal-break. Yet we often have to eat at bedsides because of the pressure.

Weekends are part of



Angry COHSE members demonstrate outside DHSS during negotiations

the 'normal' week, as are late evenings on day shifts, and work on bank holidays.

And there is the terrible emotional strain of being in a ward where you know many patients cannot be saved.

Generously, we are given time-and-a-quarter for weekends and double-time for over 40 hours [though to save money we are encouraged to take time off in lieu, which we usually take].

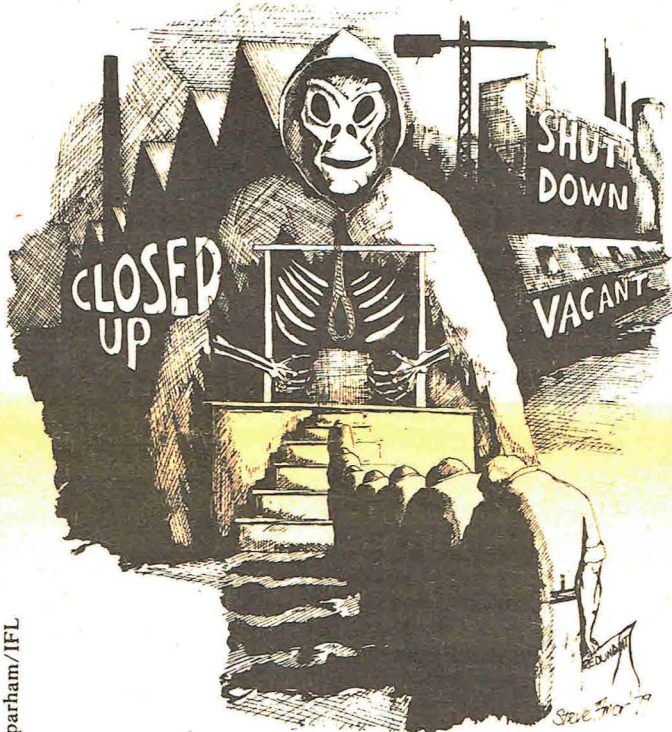
On night duty in our

hospital, untrained nurses are often left in charge of whole wards. In this new hospital, with wards divided into small rooms—we are permanently on our feet. There has been no attempt to improve staff/patient ratios.

Not surprisingly, really, there is a very high turnover in student nurses even in a new hospital like this. Sometimes it can reach 50% in the

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DOLE QUEUE KILLS



A redundancy notice can be not just a blow, but literally a sentence of death!

Dick Jenkinson, a foreman at GEC Stafford, had worked for GEC since he was sixteen. His reward for forty years' service? A redundancy notice.

Worse than that, he was

asked to hand similar notices to his workmates. He couldn't do it. He was driven by this brutal blow to take his own life.

In Speke, where Dunlop have threatened closure,

By Gordon Bell
Secretary, Sunderland District Labour Party Campaign for Full Employment

Alan Kelly was last week driven to despair. He drove down to the beach and connected the exhaust up to poison himself. He was 29 years old, married with children.

In my own area, there has been a horrifying increase in suicides directly related to unemployment.

The day after the Labour MP for Sunderland North demanded emergency action to reduce local unemployment, the local paper reported the death of a 52-year-old man who had jumped off the Queen Alexander bridge into the river Wear.

He was suffering from depression at being jobless for the first time in his life. The coroner's verdict: suicide while "the balance of his mind was disturbed."

A cold, clinical phrase! But it is the balance of society which is disturbed—by a handful of profiteers and financiers who have laid

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DUBLIN WORKERS CALL GENERAL STRIKE

Joe Higgins

(Vice-Chairman, Dublin Regional Council of the LP, personal capacity)

In Dublin, 50,000 workers turned out in a massive demonstration last Sunday, against the policies of the Fianna Fail government.

Fianna Fail, the bigger of Ireland's two Tory parties, is trying to unload the main burden of taxation on the workers' shoulders.

Galway, Limerick, Sligo, Carlow, Tralee, Ballina, Mayo, Arklow and Cavern also had big demonstrations.

In Dublin the workers, marching six abreast behind their trade union banners, took over an hour to pass over O'Connell

bridge. The nation-wide protest was organised by the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, with many other unions coming out in support.

The anger of the workers over low pay and the burden of taxation was clearly seen. At the rally, held outside Liberty Hall (ITGW headquarters) at the end of the march, the trade union leaders were greeted with spontaneous choruses of "Strike! Strike!

Strike!" from large sections of workers.

The biggest cheer of the day went up when John Carroll, vice-president of the ITGWU, said that they should work towards co-ordinating activity by trade unions throughout the country and build up to a national day of working class action.

This is the general mood of workers throughout the country. Already, the Dublin Council of Trade Unions has called for a one-day general strike in the Dublin area on Tuesday. CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE

COME TO THE LPYS CONFERENCE

Why go to Blackpool for the Labour Party Young Socialists' conference at Easter [13-16 April]? One young apprentice, at least, knows why.

"I'm going," Terry told 'Militant', "and I hope all the young apprentices who will be there will get together and start campaigning for action against the bosses and their rotten system!"

Aged sixteen and just starting his apprenticeship straight from school, Terry explains why he feels things should be changed:

"There are only five people in the place and we produce special dies for casting. It's real precision engineering, but all three of us on production are apprentices. You can guess the type of firm when you know the foreman is the manager's son."

"For our skilled work we get 73p an hour till 18—when I think it goes up to £1 an hour. When you're 20 and have your apprenticeship, you're out of the door because they won't pay a decent wage."

"Training? They say you get it 'on the job' and about once a week they show you a few new tricks. I asked if I could go on a day-release course. They said they wouldn't stop me but warned that last time they fired a lad because they believed he was just taking the release day off...I got the message."

"Training? They say you get it 'on the job' and about once a week they show you a few new tricks. I asked if I could go on a day-release course. They said they wouldn't stop me but warned that last time they fired a lad because they believed he was just taking the release day

By Phil Frampton
(National Chairman, LPYS)

off...I got the message.

"There's not much chance of standing up to them when there's no union. The boss gives you a ten minute tea-break, but they 'like' you to drink while you work. There's not even a real guarantee of getting the apprenticeship at all. Of course I'm in the AUEW union, but expect they would fire me if they knew."

So I've joined the LPYS because it's time to end this way of treating young people as cheap, dispensable labour. The unions should take control over apprenticeships to ensure that we can get a decent training in the shortest necessary time—and on a living wage."

Terry will be just one of hundreds of young trainee workers coming to the LPYS conference.

Young mechanics, machinists, draughtsmen, nurses and people from many other trades have all expressed a special interest in this year's conference which will launch the LPYS's new 'Charter for Young Workers'.

Members of the AUEW, UCATT, G&MWU, NUPE, NGA, T&GWU, TASS, AS-

LEF and other unions will also be having their own meetings to discuss how to further the LPYS's links with trade union youth.

If you haven't yet booked, remember there are only four weeks to go! Young or old, you should get in touch with your local LPYS branch and book now before you miss out on the labour movement's highlight of the year.

The conference is a golden opportunity to meet and discuss with workers from all over Britain. If you're still only just thinking about joining the Labour Party or the Young Socialists, here is the best way to find out about Britain's biggest socialist youth movement, their policies and how they are decided upon.

The significance of the conference has not been missed in Europe. There will be delegations of socialist youth from over ten countries. International visitors will be speaking at the rally on the first night (April 13th) when Peter Taaffe, editor of 'Militant', will be speaking on the subject 'Workers of the World, Unite'.

You'll also have the chance to hear Ted Grant of 'Militant', Tony Benn, and Frank Allaun, National Chairman of the Labour Party.

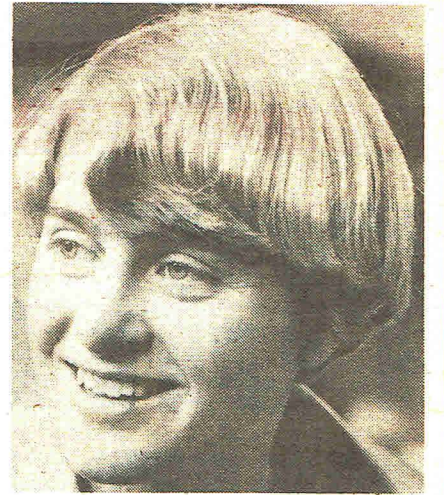
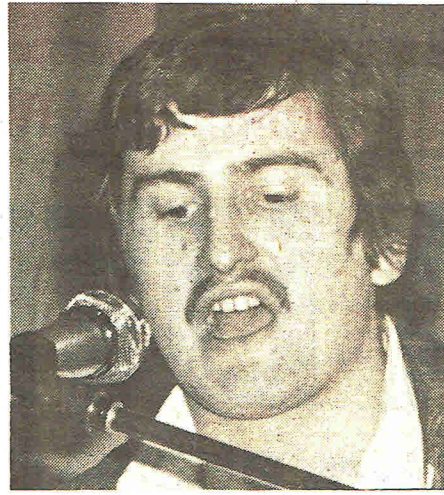
There are also two great discos, and a cabaret every night.

If you're still not convinced, here's the verdict on last year's conference of Anneke Poppe of the Dutch YS.

"This conference was new to me...It's completely different from the Dutch YS conferences. There is so much discussion from the floor during the debates, and the alternative views of the delegates come across more clearly."

"The political level of the British YS is very high. Most of the debates were on lively political matters rather than organisational problems..."

"But what really struck me was the enthusiasm of the young people here!"



Top left: AUEW delegate at 1978 Conference. Top right: Anneke Poppe, Dutch YS member. Below: LPYS week of action last summer.

the highlight of the year

Photo credits: Top right, Mark Rusher/iff Top left and bottom: Julian McKittrick/Militant



LABOUR PARTY SCOTTISH CONFERENCE PUBLIC OWNERSHIP THE ONLY SOLUTION

By Pat Craven

Two themes dominated last weekend's Scottish Conference of the Labour Party: the demand for a fundamental change in government policy; and the determination to keep the Party united in face of an imminent General Election and the possible return of a union-bashing Thatcher government.

Unfortunately, this led to many of the debates and the resolutions failed to spell out the kind of being somewhat muffled, clear socialist alternative

passed by last year's Scottish conference.

It also led to a debate on the key topical issue of devolution which only succeeded in avoiding the real issues.

Conference passed overwhelmingly an Executive statement on the Referendum result, which, while restating its commitment to devolution and urging the government "to do all in its power to implement the Scotland Act", seemed resigned to seeing the government defeated on this.

Eric Clark of the NUM observed, however, that "we are talking about a basic principle of democracy" and pointed to a survey which suggested that 70% of the youth voted 'Yes' to devolution.

Tam Burke (Central Edinburgh CLP) put forward a class approach to the Assem-

bled: "Clay Cross Council proved that the Labour Party can increase its support by steadfastly carrying out policies in favour of working people. The same would be true to a far greater extent with a Labour Assembly vigorously pursuing socialist policies."

"We have socialist alternatives and we must not be afraid to use them."

In the debate on employment, industrial strategy, and economic policy, conference demanded greater public ownership of industries, banks and insurance; a 35-hour week with retirement for all at

60; national and local job creation programmes; a bigger role for the Scottish Development Agency in promoting new technology; a return to free collective bargaining; and reflation of the economy with selective import controls.

While these resolutions contained many criticisms of the effects of the government's policies—the rundown of major industries like sheet steel and shipbuilding, and the 3,700,000 workers who still earn less than £50 per week, and put forward many reforms which are urgently needed—they did not get to the root cause of the problem, the private ownership of the major industries and financial institutions.

The socialist case was argued by Willie King (Queens Park CLP). The government persuaded workers to

accept wage restraint in order to increase investment; £25 million a day was being given to big business in grants and tax concessions—and yet unemployment was still rising, while wages are being held back and investment is still below the level of 1970.

Eric Clark of the NUM proclaimed: "We have socialist alternatives and we must not be afraid to use them. I never joined the NUM and the Labour Party to prop up a capitalist system. Public ownership is the solution!"

Red Ladder Theatre Group presents
'Nerves of Steel'
sponsored by Bilston
Joint Trade Union
Liaison Committee
7.30 pm, Thurs 22 March,
BSC Social Centre, Bilston
entrance: 50p

B'HAM GENERAL HOSPITAL

Stepping up the fight

On Monday 19th March, NUPE health members in this District—supported, I hope, by workers from other districts and even NUPE members from outside the health service and other trade unionists—will be staging a mass picket outside the Birmingham General Hospital.

Our aim will be to dissuade the other unions in the hospital—COHSE, ASTMS, EETPU, NALGO and UC-ATT—from crossing, and to convince any volunteers that the best way to support the health service is to support decent wages for those who work in it.

We are calling a complete strike of NUPE members at the General, and we plan to close it indefinitely. After seven weeks of an overtime ban, work-to-rule, and of providing emergency cover only at all the hospitals in the District, this is the only possible way to step up the action.

My members on £45 and less a week are utterly scornful of the 9% offer. "Send Ennals to the kennels", is the latest cry.

This mood was clearly expressed by overwhelming votes to throw out the offer and to empower the stewards to close one of the hospitals; at the mass meetings arranged at the General and the Queen Elizabeth.

Concentrate effort

In fact, after seven weeks there's even a feeling of disenchantment with the pay campaign. It's been dragging on but we haven't even been offered the same as the Water workers.

I have actually been in the situation of having to hold members back who want to have a go and step up the action; but have been in a... where it would have had little effect, and I haven't been able to get strike pay for

them.

Now we are going to concentrate our action at the General, and even call off the overtime ban in the rest of the district. Although there will be a half-day district strike on the 19th to ensure that there is as large a number of pickets on the mass picket as possible.

These are our plans to
Photo: Derek Spiers/IFL

increase the pressure for a decent offer. But the hospital administrator is determined that we will not be effective and the hospital will stay open.

Poverty wages

The reason we've given him as much notice as we

have—12 days—is so he can arrange to transfer the 300 or so patients to other hospitals.

As they are working at emergency level only, there is obviously room for these patients to be fitted in. Our members are prepared to increase their work-load to cope with these patients at the other hospitals. In no way are we threatening the health

or well-being of patients.

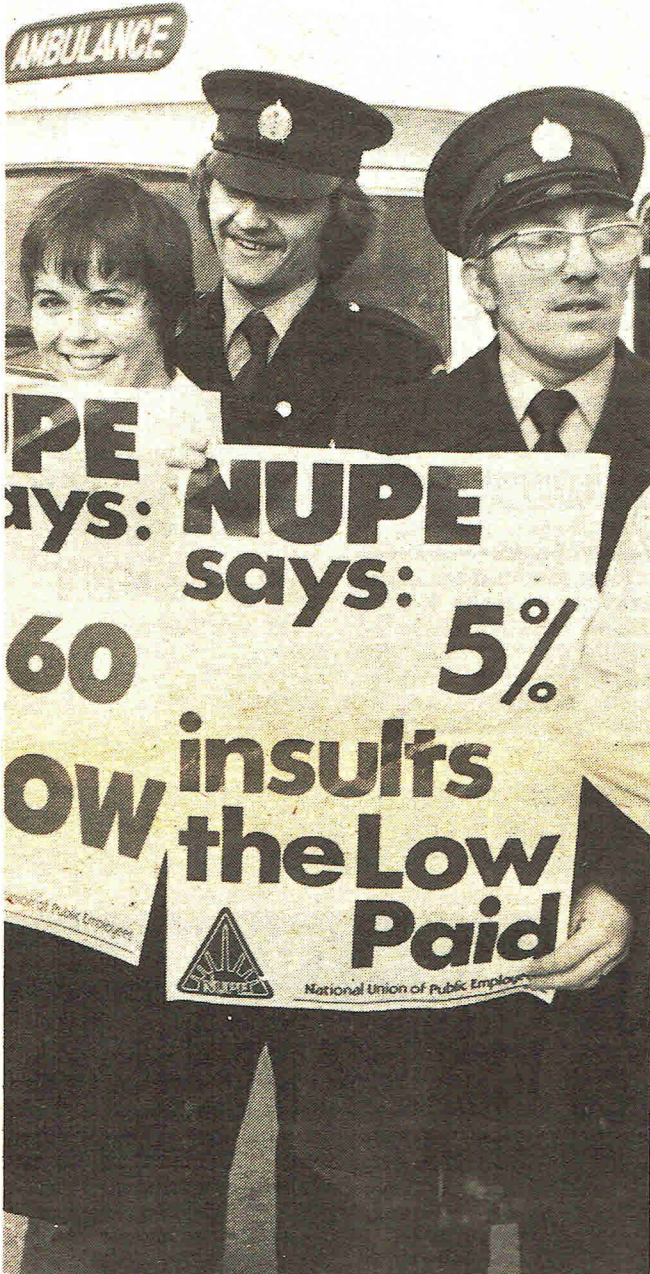
The 90 NUPE nurses at the General will not be called out on strike, but rather we are demanding that they be re-allocated to other hospitals along with the patients they are caring for.

The responsibility lies with the health authorities to make sure no-one suffers.

We have no alternative but

to take firm action because we suffer, the health and living conditions of our families suffer, as long as we stay on poverty wages.

By Dick Hackett
(NUPE Central
Birmingham Health
District Secretary)



Health workers in Belfast continue their action

WATER WORKERS A MOOD OF DISCONTENT

Water workers were the first group in the public sector workers' dispute to settle. The government, fearing the effects of an all-out strike, rushed through an offer in order to remove this powerful weapon from the public sector workers' armoury.

The 16% deal shattered the government's discredited 5% pay limit. But many workers in the water industry are very dissatisfied.

For the lower grades, pay rates are still below the unions' original objective of £60. But it is over the question of the new £5 'efficiency supplement' that a mood of discontent now exists among water workers.

Launching the deal, management virtually accused these workers of being 'work-shy' and 'shirkers'. This was seized upon by the press and TV. Announcing the deal on ITN, the newscaster said that the bonus was to "combat gross absenteeism" in the water industry.

Peter Morris, NUPE Soar Water Branch Secretary, described management's accusations as a smear against water workers, who because of the very nature of their job are

more prone to illness. Peter describes what he faces in his line of work:

"As soon as someone pulls the chain, it's something they don't want to know about—that's where our job begins!"

"Water workers employed on Water Reclamation Works (Sewage Disposal) are more prone to time off through sickness because of the very environment they have to work in. We have to work in wet wells 18 to 20 inches deep and sludge drying beds. Sludge, by the way is a polite name for ****. There's sometimes a danger from toxic gases produced by trade effluents. We use breathing apparatus for certain jobs.

35-hour week

"The majority of our members in Reclamation are not happy with the pay deal. These workers are amongst the lowest paid in the division—£57 before deductions and that's with the new deal.

"There's a lot of discontent. We feel that we've been let down by the union negotiators. At our National Conference we decided to go for a £60 minimum wage for a 35-hour week, but we're still a long way from that.

"Quite a few of our members have come up to me

and said: "What's happened to the 35-hour week"? With the cutbacks we've seen going on within our own division of the water industry, the 35-hour week in itself would perhaps help the unemployment situation.

"I can definitely see storms on the horizon if there's no sign of any further improvement in conditions and wages.

And I think that industrial action could be much more severe in the water industry than was the case last time.

"The government wanted to buy us off because they knew we have got the industrial muscle—no one can do without water! I think we were bought off for too low a price. We could have been a really big lever in the Low Pay campaign. I feel upset because this has weakened the campaign. It's a shame we couldn't have kept together.

"Many of our members are angry that the Labour government has allowed this type of situation to happen to the working man. Members in the water industry are really cut up about it."

Peter Morris, Secretary Soar Water Branch spoke to Laurence Coates, union steward Oadby and Wigston and NUPE

NEXT WEEK: Peter Morris will describe the conditions in which water and sewage workers have to work.

TOWER HAMLETS- IT'S AN INSULT

"We would regard it as an insult if our members accepted £3 plus £1. It's not good enough.

"We've spent six weeks, living in some cases in Salvation Army hostels in the area because we couldn't afford rent during the strike."

This was the feeling of anger at a recent meeting of Tower Hamlets public sector workers.

This was the feeling of anger at a recent meeting of Tower Hamlets public sector workers.

The speakers on the platform adopted the attitude that it was now up to each borough to fight for a 35-hour week with a minimum wage of

£60 a week. Why should they go back to work with a 9% settlement. "Camden has shown us the way. Let's follow them."

While Tower Hamlets manual workers have been on strike the council have been saving money but the safety officer told me that they would have to spend this and more on the vandalism in parks alone. So the sooner in his eyes the council give the men the money the more money they will save.

The Chairman told me that over 90% of the union members present voted to stay out until they got a settlement like Camden's.

By Danny Cooke
(Tower Hamlets LPYS)

BARNET- Workers occupy against low pay

By Bruno Cassiato
(Finchley LPYS)

On Tuesday of last week public sector workers in Barnet occupied Gateway House, Finchley.

As one of the pickets at Gateway House said "This is a Tory council. What the Tories want is collars and chains round our necks!"

Barnet Borough Council have since the public sector strike started, been using sub-contractors, McGovern's.

Bill Tierney, Dustman's shop steward, Barnet NUPE, maintains that this was done in spite of the workers volunteering to clear rubbish from hospitals, schools and old people's homes on the proviso that no private contractors should be used to clear the rubbish.

The contractors have, how-

ever, even gone as far as collecting rubbish from council estates!

Bill was enraged that they should be used at all. Contractors don't help the rate payer, they merely help spend his money.

All the workers efforts to get a meeting with the council have been in vain. They have waited over five weeks. So these drastic measures have had to be taken.

Stubborn

Bill Tierney also commented that in neighbouring Camden, council workers got a deal which means that dust drivers will earn £25 p.w. more than the Barnet drivers, plus a 35-hour week!

A G&MWU shop steward at the Hendon Way works said that occupation was

necessary to get publicity as the management have been so stubborn towards their own men, but have been prepared to let McGovern's in to do the work, reportedly for over £20 a day.

The council, as soon as Gateway House was occupied set up police watches on all council works in the area in fear of further occupations.

On Tuesday evening Finchley LPYS members who had joined the picket were moved off. I was asked for a copy of 'Militant' by one of the workers inside the building and tried to put it through the door only to have it ripped by a policeman.

However the top half of one page got inside with an article headlined 'End low pay and unemployment'. One worker immediately removed a council notice from a noticeboard and pinned up

the headline!

On Monday an eviction order was served on the workers occupying the building. Yet there is no meeting with the council to talk about an agreement as yet.

The workers say that they will fight on until they get a satisfactory settlement. They have threatened to occupy another building if their demands are not met.

Tory laws will not stop the labour movement in the fight against low pay!

MERSEYSIDE LPYS Demonstration against youth unemployment. Saturday March 24th 11 am. Assemble outside New Teaching Hospital. March through Edgehill Constituency. Leading TU & LP speakers.

LABOUR IN ACTION

The anger and militancy shown by millions of rank and file trade unionists over the past few months was graphically reflected at the Yorkshire Regional Labour Party Conference, held last weekend.

Delegates from Constituency Labour Parties and trade unions came to the rostrum demanding an end to low pay, unemployment and public service cuts. Resolutions laying the basis of a clear socialist programme for the Yorkshire Labour Party were overwhelmingly passed.

The shift to the left, not only in policy, but also in the elections to the Regional Executive brought a sharp rebuke from Reg Underhill on the second day of the conference. He asked "where are the parliamentarians... why aren't they defending the government"?

Conference began with a strong speech from one 'parliamentarian', Joan Maynard MP, which was received enthusiastically by the delegates. She ended by stating "the crisis of capitalism that we face is not an excuse for putting off socialist policies, indeed it is the time to implement them."

It was left to the rank and file delegates to point the way forward. 'Militant' supporters played a decisive role in giving

By Tom Doyle
(Hillsborough CLP visitor)

coherence and direction to what many delegates expected to be a dreary conference.

Attempts to rule out of order an emergency resolution on low pay, giving full support to the actions being taken by the low paid workers, was defeated.

Jane Hartley, from E Hull CLP, described how both NUPE and COHSE workers were united in their action. Resolutions of support passed by the local Party had been taken around the picket lines. They were welcomed by the workers who were disillusioned by the role of the Labour government.

Conference overwhelmingly supported the resolution.

The government were again heavily criticised in the discussion on wage restraint and a realistic wage. **John Ingham, Leeds North East, called on the NEC to launch a national campaign for a basic minimum wage, to counter the lies**

YORKSHIRE CONFERENCE MARKS NEW MOOD



Public sector workers on national march, 22nd January 1979

and distortions of the press and the mass media.

Public opinion

There are 12 million people affiliated to the TUC. We must show that we are the majority of public opinion.

The delegate from York CLP was able to tie together the previous discussions by pointing out that you cannot plan what you don't control and you can't control what you don't own. Unless we take over the banks and insurance

companies along with the 200 monopolies, then a Labour government is doomed to impotent reforms.

At the 'Militant' public meeting delegates listened to Glynn Robinson, COHSE, and Pat Wall, President of Bradford Trades Council.

Glynn described the determination of health service workers on Humberside to fight for their full claim. He thanked the Labour Party Young Socialists and 'Militant' supporters for their assistance and welcomed the

leftward shift at the conference.

He concluded that it was the duty of every socialist to build support for conference policies and to ensure that our leadership is fully accountable to the rank and file.

Fight defeated

£53 was collected at the meeting for the Fighting Fund. During the conference, over 100 people bought copies of 'Militant' along with 60 copies of the 'Militant' anti-

Tory poster.

Many delegates agreed that the conference marked an important turn. Right-wing policies and their spokesmen were left high and dry; the programme of Marxism was increasingly seen as the only effective alternative.

The mood of the rank and file was a signal for the future—when the labour movement is aroused, ideas are tested in action. If they do not serve our interests, they will be cast aside.

Photo: MILITANT

NORTH WEST LPYS

SUPPORT GRANT FOR SCHOOL AND TECH STUDENTS

"To get £4 a week I have to get up at six every day before school and work ten hours on Saturdays... I and thousands of other working class youth will be supporting the Labour Party Young Socialists' demand for all students over 16 to get a minimum grant of £20 a week."

16-year old Chester LPYS delegate, Simon Swinnerton, was addressing the evening meeting following the North West LPYS Regional Conference.

115 delegates and visitors took part in the conference in Blackpool on March 3rd. Delegates unanimously backed an emergency resolution moved by John Hunt (Ardwick LPYS) to support the grants campaign and end the scandal of youth being forced out of education by lack of finance.

Josie Aitman (Kirkdale LPYS), elected by 31-1 to the National Committee, explained that the money for the school students grant, for education and in particular

for council house building, was constantly being soaked up by the moneylenders.

Almost £1,500 million now disappears into the banks as payment of interest charges on council loans for house-building, she said. Labour should cancel off the bank debts and take over the banks to end profiteering and introduce cheap credit.

If things such as these were in Labour's election manifesto, said Peter Rubenstein (Toxteth LPYS) then Labour could expect massive support from the youth in the election. The Tory programme to attack the unions, cut education spending by £8 billion and sell off more council houses should be countered, not with different ways of tinkering with capitalism but a programme of nationalisation of the monopolies.

Delegate after delegate pointed out the worsening situation facing youth and called for united action around a socialist programme to defeat unemployment and its twin offspring, sectarianism and racialism.

In a short contribution, Debbie Venton (Birkenhead) illustrated that despite the Equal Pay & Opportunities Act the plight facing working class women remained: "I'm happy to see the

Queen has won equal rights in the Middle East (as long as she covers up her legs). If the media were making her out to be a champion of women's rights, they never mentioned the problems in the country she 'reigns'.

"One girl I teach has tried to get a job as a joiner but though the employers, because of the law, have had to give her interviews, she's just been treated as a joke. Fortunately their sick humour has at least shown her the need for a political alternative to their rule."

The school on Sunday heard Jo Marino (Bakers' Union Executive) explaining how vital the work of the LPYS had been in the Western Shiprepairers dispute and the Bakers' strike. **Not just because of the show of solidarity but more because it had shown trade unionists that if they joined the Labour Party they could join others who were fighting there to change it into a real weapon for workers in struggle.**

Several had joined from his bakery and he would encourage still more to join the LPYS and go to the national conference at Easter.

Steve Hyams

(NW Regional Committee)

LOCAL REPORTS

ISLE OF WIGHT

The February meeting of the General Management Committee of the Isle of Wight Labour Party was the best attended for a year, with four new delegates (three of them LPYS members) attending, reports agent **Brian Jones**.

The meeting overwhelmingly passed two resolutions. The first called for the nationalisation of the Dunlop tyre plant at Speke under workers' control and management in the light of the plant's threatened closure, and for the nationalisation of the UK rubber industry as a whole.

The second resolution was

a copy of the one the Isle of Wight LPYS is sending to the National Conference of the LPYS on Labour Party democracy. The resolution has as its basic demands:—

"That decision of Party Conference be binding on the leadership of the Parliamentary Labour Party in the same way as they are binding on the National Executive Committee and that the leaders of the PLP and Labour ministers or shadow ministers be elected at Annual Conference and subject to recall.

"That all MPs, Assemblymen and PPCs be subject to

instant recall and to election at the AGM of the constituency for which they are standing, in the same way as any other Party officer, and that they pay their salaries into the Labour Party and receive from the Party the average wage of a skilled worker plus necessary expenses and for all Party officials to be elected annually by the bodies they represent, and subject to recall, and to receive the average wage of a skilled worker."

YEOVIL

At a meeting of the General Committee of Yeovil LP in November 1978, the following resolution was passed, to send to South West regional conference:

"This Conference urges Transport House to reconsider their plans concerning the position of the National Youth Officer, Andy Bevan during the election campaign. We feel that a full-time Youth Officer is essential to the growth of the Young Socialists and will give our full support to Andy if he is permitted to carry on his normal duties during that period."

Nobody at the meeting voted against it.

Unfortunately Roy Wilton, the now deceased Yeovil CLP Secretary, received a letter from the South Western Regional Office on the 8th January 1979 which stated:

"The Standing Orders Committee has given consideration to your resolution concerning the National Youth Officer...this resolution has been rejected as the Regional Conference can only deal with internal organisation and other local administrative affairs."

It seems to me, writes **Arthur Greaves, Yeovil LP**, that although at least one constituency Party would like to see this discussed at regional level, the Standing

Orders Committee has decided that they do not want it discussed and their word is final.

HUNTINGDON

Keith Wyatt writes: this resolution was passed unanimously by **Huntingdon CLP** at its meeting on the 3rd March.

"This CLP supports the resolution recently passed by the Labour Party's Home Policy committee in calling for a minimum basic wage of £60 and a 35-hour week for public sector manual workers."

LEFT & RIGHT

BOSSSES AGAINST APARTHEID?

It's not often the 'Daily Mail' devotes its editorial columns to ideological debate. Perhaps, for capitalism's sake, it's a good thing.

The strike by white South African mine workers, against any encroachment on their better-paid jobs and relatively privileged position proves, according to the 'Mail' [8.3.79], that all those 'western liberals', the Left and student protestors have got it wrong.

The drive for profits under the racist apartheid regime is not what keeps the black masses in shanty-town poverty, chained by pass-laws, curfews and zoning to the poorest land, the lowest wages and the worst conditions.

Not at all. "Capitalism, left to itself, would create new opportunities and raise the Africans from their economic serfdom." The problem? It's the unions and the closed shop. Heard it before?

The multinationals in South Africa, "in the forefront of the efforts to improve the pay and prospects of the blacks"—have had decades of 'freedom', with genuine trade union organisation illegal for the majority of workers, to carry out their charitable intentions.

But there, as here, relying on the bosses good-will never did the working class much good.

ESCAPE FROM THE KREMLIN

The bureaucrats who have usurped power in Eastern Europe, resting on the mighty struggles of the achievements of the working class, may fear that their rule will not be peaceful or permanent. But they're doing their best to make it comfortable.

The 1980 Olympic Games to be held in Russia are being used as an excuse for a massive public-relations show. Not by opening the factories and housing estates before the eyes of the world to show the benefits for the working class of a planned economy.

The Russian rulers are, as a top priority, spending £80 million on a lavish restoration of the Kremlin.

Once the home of Ivan the Terrible and of Stalin, now the meeting-place of the Politbureau and the 'Supreme Soviet', the ill-named one-party government is being given a face-lift. The wealth produced by the labour of the workers is being diverted to pay for gold leaf worth an estimated £½ million, to replate the famous cupolas—a long-term investment'.

A poster produced by the Bolsheviks just after the revolution, in the short-lived period of genuine workers' democracy, proclaimed "the old owners...have left behind a great legacy [of art, buildings etc] which must be preserved".

When the Russian workers move to reassert their control, these parasites will perhaps find use for one part of that legacy—the secret tower, unearthed in the excavations, with its hidden escape tunnel from the gilded Kremlin.

SCRAP 'SUS'

Did you think it was an offence to stand at a bus stop, walk down a street, and look in a shop window or sit on a bench?

Every month in Britain, hundreds of young people are dragged into court for any one of these things.

All the police have to do is say they 'suspect' you of intent to carry out a crime and suddenly you find yourself up before a magistrate. Once you are in the dock, the police don't need any evidence or witnesses—just two officers' matching notebooks.

You don't believe it? 'A Greek student, living in a bed-sit, late one night went down to the 24-hour supermarket in Westbourne Grove allegedly to buy some chocolate.' According to court records, two plain-clothed policemen claimed they saw him trying car door handles. He was taken to court on 'SUS' in September 1977, pleaded not guilty and was convicted. He had no previous convictions, there were no witnesses and no evidence was produced.

Two black girls were convicted of being 'suspected persons' and fined £20 each. The police claim they saw the girls standing in a bus queue, unsuccessfully trying to steal off other people waiting for the bus. No one noticed except the police, who didn't call any witnesses.

In the 'Lewisham 21' case, one black youth was charged of suspicion to commit crimes unknown against persons unknown at times unknown!

If you've never heard of

'SUS' you won't understand why thousands of black youth fear going to the West End of London, to face continual police harassment. Is it a crime for blacks to walk the West End?

Those arrested under 'SUS' are charged with the offence of 'being a suspected person loitering with intent to commit a criminal offence contrary to the Vagrancy Act of 1824.' Under this primeval law you can also be convicted for telling fortunes and sleeping rough.

The original aim of the Vagrancy Act was to keep in check peasants who were thrown off their land by the development of capitalist farming in the early days of the industrial revolution.

Now it is used largely to harass black youth; the police can keep whoever they choose under constant threat of being locked up. The whims of the magistrates, judges and police decide the defendants fate.

You cannot even decide to be tried by a jury—it is a 'summary offence'.

The police therefore know that they have a better chance of getting a conviction when their victim pleads not guilty on a 'SUS' charge than on most others. In surveys taken in the autumn of 1976 it was found that 82% of those brought to London courts on 'SUS' pleaded not guilty, compared to 12% for other crimes.

But as one West Indian

mother said, after her 12 year-old son was convicted, 'What do you expect the magistrate to do? Tell four Flying Squad officers that they are lying?'

In 1976, 42% of those charged under 'SUS' by the metropolitan police were black and the proportion of those convicted who are black is even higher. Yet the proportion of blacks arrested for offences of 'theft and handling' was only a little over 10%.

'SUS' charges give the clearest possible evidence of police harassment of black youth. A member of the People's National Party Youth is at present being charged.

But 'SUS' is also another warning to the working class that behind the facade and rhetoric of democratic rule, those who own, control and rule Britain have an arsenal of laws to throw against any who oppose them. The Criminal Trespass and Conspiracy laws, the Prevention of Terrorism Act, could all be openly turned to use against the trade unions by the Tories, should they get to power.

The Terrorism laws have already been used to detain trade unionists. Assuredly 'SUS' would be used in a similar way. If the labour movement ignores the fact of the use of this weapon against black youth today, the workers in struggle will find it used against them.

Only powerful trade union

By Phil
Frampton

(National Chairman,
LPYS and member of
the PNP Youth)

organisations stand between workers on the picket line and the police, the courts and prison cells. Otherwise, as in the past the bosses would not hesitate to use every legal weapon they have against 'suspect' workers.

The labour movement must immediately demand that these laws are repealed. It is a disgrace that the Labour government has allowed these powers to remain in use.

Here the labour movement has a chance to show black youth the power and willingness of the working class to defend all the oppressed sections of society. Thousands of disaffected black youth could be drawn into action with the trade unions and the Labour Party if they were shown that the flexing of labour's muscles could smash such reactionary laws.

The Pentonville dockers in 1972, jailed for contempt, were released by the threat of mass union action. Similarly it was the strike action of the Liverpool dockers which forced the release of an Irish trade unionist detained in Merseyside in 1978.

That is why the Labour Party Young Socialists and PNP Youth are calling a march on April 7th in Brixton. They are demanding labour action to scrap 'SUS'.

End the 'SUS' laws, abolish the conspiracy laws and all other anti-trade union measures.

Disband the Special Patrol Group; end all police harassment of blacks.

End the arbitrary right of police arrest.

For a trade union and black organisations tribunal to assess all those charged under 'SUS' and campaign in their defence.



Anti-fascist march in Winchester last weekend. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

NF FORCED TO THE BACK STREETS

By John Kelly
(Southampton
Labour Party)

Last Saturday over 2,500 people, demonstrated in Winchester against the proposed march and rally of the National Front. The anti fascists included members of the Anti-Nazi League, Labour Party and LPYS. Considering the lack of time for the Winchester Labour Party and the Anti-Nazi League to organise and publicise the demonstration [approximately one week], the size exceeded all expectations and far outnumbered the NF. Despite the call for a national mobilisation, only an estimated 500-800 NF members were present.

The Front had called for the demonstration to express support for the imprisoned fascist Robert Relf who has been on hunger strike since 31st January. The NF were obviously hoping for a lot of free publicity and so bring their name and racist ideas into the spotlight for the local and general elections this year.

From midday onwards demonstrators began to gather. The ANL were in a small park at the top of the town, near Winchester Prison while the NF were directed to another park over a mile away near the town centre. As the time approached

for the anti-fascists to begin their demo, the police informed the stewards that it was proposed that the route would be in a figure of eight round the prison to the town centre back to the starting point. The NF would follow the same route about half an hour behind the anti-fascists. Suddenly at the last moment the police changed their plans and informed us that we would only be allowed to march around the prison and not into the town. The fascists would only march into the town and not past the prison.

To enforce this decision, the police, by forming road blocks at various points, cut the town in two, and it was impossible to move from one section of the town to the other. This prevented the NF carrying out their declared aim of demonstrating outside the prison in support of Relf. This was certainly a defeat for the fascists who did not manage to carry out their declared objective. The Front had not got their hoped-for publicity and the massive anti-fascist demonstration had forced the police to change their tactics and prevent the NF from marching where they wanted to.

FIGHT THE THREAT TO JOBS

Unemployment in the North West stood in 1973 at 102,400. In 1978 it stood at 197,700. Doubled in five years!

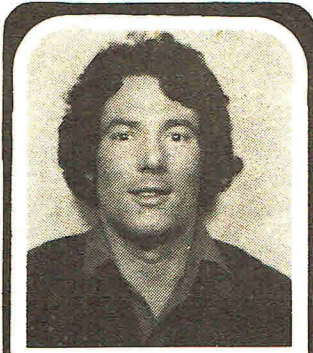
These figures, produced in a special report by the Regional Executive Committee, provide a stark background to the North West Regional Labour Party Conference on March 17 and 18.

Unemployment has doubled despite huge state hand-outs. 119,300 workers are 'generously' employed by the bosses only on receipt of Temporary Employment Subsidy. £209.5 million in regional grants, £19.4 million in EEC grants, £110 million in Regional Employment premiums, and £22.3 million for the Youth Opportunities Programme. All are added 'incentives'.

Even with this massive state bribery, employers are still acting like mad hatchet-men—slashing jobs back, and even closing down whole factories.

The resolution from Liverpool Garston deals with the latest danger to jobs; the threatened closure of Dunlops, Speke. The resolution calls for nationalisation of any factory facing closure.

Unfortunately, the EC



By
Derek Hatton
(Candidate for EC)

document only calls for more of the same 'medicine', i.e. state grants, and hand-outs. But haven't the last few years shown that however much the bosses palms are lined with silver, they will not invest?

Public ownership

We the working class, provide this money. Surely we should control it in our interest. Let us open the books and see where the

money has gone.

This must be linked to the question of public ownership. The bosses cannot develop the region. They have wantonly destroyed industry and it can only be re-built under the direction of the working class.

Next to unemployment, low pay dominates the agenda. Resolution after resolution calls for support for the low paid. As Liverpool Wavertree point out in their resolution, Labour conference has come out in clear support of the low paid—the government must carry out this policy and include it in their manifesto.

With many lower paid workers questioning their unions' commitment to the Party, it is imperative that they receive support at every level of the Party.

The Regional Conference has a real chance to show a way out of the mass unemployment in this region. The EC document finishes with the following quote: "Our first priority must be to commit all our efforts to the return of a Labour government with an effective working majority committed to a fully planned socialist economy."

This conference is a chance to thrash out these socialist policies.



LPYS members campaign for nationalisation of Western's shiprepairers. Labour Party must take up the fight Photo: MILITANT

KEEP THE TORIES OUT

The conference of the South Western Labour Party takes place at a time of crisis for the working class.

The recently announced plans to close Falmouth Docks are a clear sign that no area of the country is immune from this capitalist crisis.

The capitalist class are not content with the Labour government's attempts at wage controls and social expenditure cuts in order to boost profits. They are demanding, through their representatives, the Tories and Liberals, still further sacrifices by the working class.

The return of an axe-swinging Thatcher government would spell disaster. Keith Joseph has already admitted that unemployment would be allowed to soar to "reduce excess costs to industry", while trade union rights, picketing, the closed shop, will be attacked. It is vital therefore that Regional Conference decisively rejects the Labour government's policies of the last five years by adopting a bold socialist programme to combat capitalism.

Unfortunately the standing orders committee has moved out of order a resolution from Yeovil CLP calling for the National Youth Officer, Andy Bevan to be used in a public and not merely organisational capacity during the general election.

Conference should not accept the view of the SOC that national organisational questions are out of the scope of the conference and should support reference back. Andy, a former Chairman of the LPYS, can be vital in winning the youth vote for Labour.

Delegates to the 1978 Conference overwhelmingly supported a call for a campaign against racism and fascism. The Executive have not yet acted on this

clear mandate, other than by declaring their intention to hold two one-day seminars around this question. Such a response is unsatisfactory. Although the National Front has receded from the limelight recently, its insidious message still poses a threat to all workers.

Resolution 2 from West Gloucester CLP shows the role of technology under capitalism. It calls for a massive extension of training facilities and a coherent industrial and social policy in order to cope with technological unemployment.

The amendment from Bristol SE CLP argues that job threats should be met by the implementation of a 35-hour week without loss of pay and the sharing out of work. The amendment correctly recognises however, that only under a socialist economy with democratic workers' control and management could the benefits of technology really be harnessed in favour of working people.

Campaign

In its resolution (15) Bristol SE CLP draws attention to the continued use of wage restraint even after national conference has rejected it. It points to the damaging breach between the industrial and political wings of our movement and demands an end to such divisive policies. The Executive are opposing this resolution, arguing that it would damage the Party in a pre-election period. But history itself answers such a claim. Every time the Party has gone to the polls on a radical socialist manifesto it has been rewarded by victory.

Conference can, by passing this resolution, show a real road forward for the movement. But passing resolutions is not enough! We must ensure that a systematic campaign is now launched around the slogans: 'Keep the Tories out!' 'Implement clause 4, part 4 now!'

WHY WE ARE STANDING

We are standing for the Executive as supporters of the policies and programme of the 'Militant' tendency in the labour movement.

We believe that the policies carried out during the last five years have proven once again the need for a decisive break with capitalism. The Labour Party must launch its programme around Clause IV, part 4 of the Constitution.

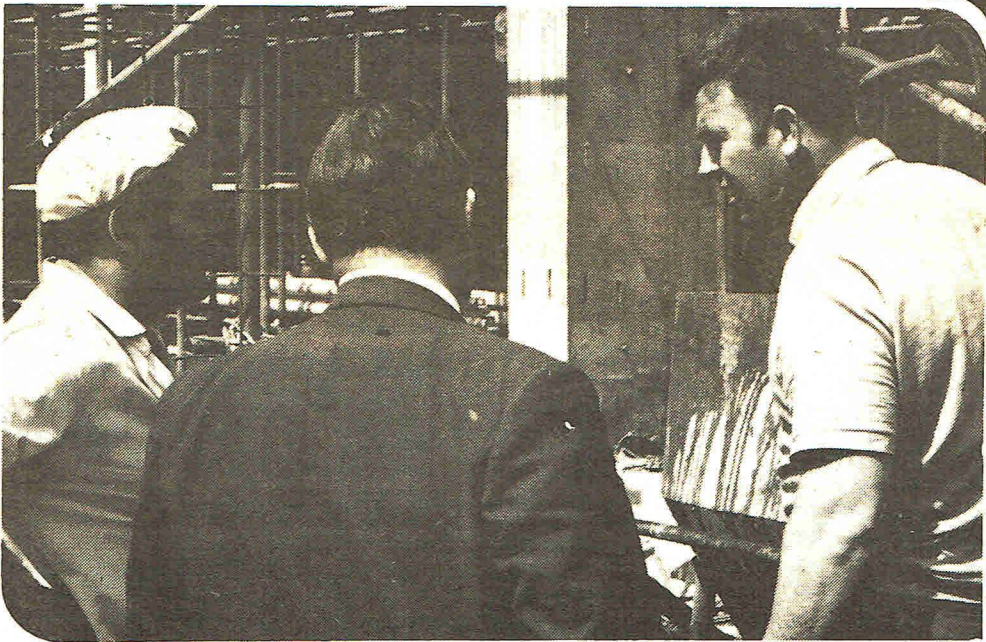
A massive propaganda and education campaign must be launched through the multi-million strong movement showing the hypocrisy and class nature of Toryism and the need for public ownership under democratic workers' control and management of the 220 monopolies, banks and finance houses which control 83% of wealth in society.

In order that the Labour Party can become truly democratic we demand that all officials be elected and not appointed, that MPs be accountable through right of recall to their constituency parties and that MPs' salaries be linked to average wage rates.

Furthermore we support the annual election of the leader of the Labour Party at conference and demand that conference decisions be binding on the elected leadership of the Party, the NEC.

If elected, we shall play a full and active role on the Executive in pursuance of these objectives.

Robin Clapp [Young Socialists]; Harriet Stevens [Young Socialists]; Pete Hammond [Avon Constituency Section]; Arthur Greaves [Somerset Constituency Section]; Bob Sulatycki [Socialist Organisations]



Private enterprise—or chaos? Photo: J Sutton

PRIVATE BUILDERS

By Ian Jenkinson

Readers may remember that last year the building bosses organised a campaign against nationalisation of the industry—CABIN.

They claimed that private ownership was better than national planning; casual labour better than a register of building workers and stable employment.

However, a recent publication by the Brick Development Association shows the industry in a completely different light. The publication called "Bricks and Brickwork on Site" is a technical pamphlet about "unsatisfactory brickwork".

It points out that the cause of poor brickwork can frequently be attributed to bad

DROPPING A BRICK

site practice and reads like a catalogue of elementary errors and malpractices that have grown up with the Lump and the virtual ending of apprenticeships and training.

Such advice as not to unload facing bricks by tipping from the back of a lorry; or that cement should be stored off the ground and under cover would seem self-evident and common practice.

Chaos

But it shows that not only can't the bosses provide a stable job with a future; they even act against technical advancement and standards within the industry by their penny-pinching attitude to training.

The pamphlet further points out the problems

caused by management's failures in the ordering of bricks. When there is a boom in building, builders try to cash in by double or treble ordering with different manufacturers.

This, of course, creates an artificial shortage and total chaos. So much for the quiet efficiency of private ownership!

However, the most telling point about the Victorian attitude of the bosses and the way basic facilities are so often thought of as luxuries is one of the last "points of action" in the publication. I quote it below:

"Do not permit insanitary behaviour. Urinating on walls can lead to efflorescence and staining of brickwork. Proper lavatory facilities should be provided early in the contract."

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

NURSES: You can't eat conscience

Last month, the Staff Side of the Nurses' and Midwives' Whitley Council submitted their wage claim, for a £60 minimum wage and a 35-hour week, in line with other public sector workers in dispute.

Also outstanding from last year's settlement is a commitment from DHSS Secretary, David Ennals, for compensatory payment, in lieu of productivity deals, to bring nurses back to their 1974 Halsbury Report position.

This is even supported by the management side! But Mr Ennals has said that any such study award will not be paid until after 1979.

In 1974, we needed a 55% increase to get our pay back to 1970 levels. Unfortunately only the highest grades got anywhere near this, with student nurses getting only 5-15%. Since 1974 we have fallen by a further 18.6%.

Our claim is not only essential for nurses' living standards but also standards of care in the National Health Service, as low pay and expenditure cuts have resulted in a drastic decline in nurses entering training.

Last year, nearly 8,000 fewer nurses started training than in 1977,

and the drop out rate is about 33%. And those who complete their training and qualify as State Registered or Enrolled Nurses face difficulties getting posts, or even the dole. Others are tempted out of the NHS by more lucrative agency and private nursing or go abroad.

There are over 5,000 nurses on the dole at a time when COHSE estimate the nursing shortage to be over 70,000 staff. What an indictment of policies of cuts and low pay!

Since the wave of action by nurses in 1974, union membership has steadily increased. Many have become involved in campaigns against private practice and the cuts.

The Royal College of Nursing [RCN], in the past a "professional" organisation dominated by higher grades, is now posing more and more like a trade union, at least discussing industrial action and TUC affiliation.

But the success of our claim depends largely on the outcome of the present ancillary staff's claim. Traditionally nurses have got what the ancillaries accepted.

It is vital that the undoubted sympathy among nurses for ancil-

laries and ambulancemen in dispute is made concrete. All nurses should support any action, and except where there is a health hazard, refuse to do any non-nursing duty.

This will make the ancillary workers' action more effective and bring the dispute to a speedy and successful conclusion. It will also guarantee other hospital workers' support when the nurses need it.

In 1974 car workers, dockers, builders etc. struck or walked out to join marches in many places in support of nurses. This type of support must be co-ordinated, through local Trades Councils and Labour Parties, because of the restrictions nurses find in taking industrial action.

However, nurses must also fight their own battles. Despite the enormous moral pressures, conscience doesn't feed a family. Neither does public sympathy win wage rises.

Unless a satisfactory offer is forthcoming, we have to work out a programme of overtime bans, work-to-rules, no nursing of private patients, and as a last resort strike action.

This should be national and not



Photo: Lawrence Sparham (IFL)

selective, which would isolate groups of nurses to face the wrath of the press etc., and would maintain emergency cover.

Such action could succeed in a week if coupled with sympathy action by other hospital workers, and organised support of industrial

workers through strikes and demonstrations. This would end nurses' low pay and the staffing crisis threatening the Health Service.

By Alistair Tice

(Staff Nurse and NUPE shop steward, Hull Royal Infirmary)

WAITING LISTS: Means Wealth Service



Queues for the working class. Though not for the rich.

Photo: MILITANT

"Isn't it marvellous to live in a country where medical treatment is free?" I've been asked that quite a few times by friends from the USA. In all honesty the only answer I can give is that it damn well isn't free.

To qualify my answer I will tell you about my latest encounter with the NHS. Six months ago I went to my GP after a minor accident at work. I thought it was just a twisted knee, but he decided it was more than that and arranged an appointment for me to see a hospital specialist.

Three weeks later I received an appointment card, for seven weeks later. My GP told me, though, that if I was prepared to pay for a private consultation I would most probably get an appointment the next week.

As I couldn't afford the £15 fee, and didn't see why I should have to pay, I just waited the seven weeks. While waiting my knee got much worse. I couldn't go to work as I couldn't stand for more than twenty minutes, and walking was extremely painful.

I finally saw the specialist, he examined my knee X-rays, and told me that I had got rheumatism and I would have to see the physio. So every week day for two weeks I was down in the gym exercising a knee which got worse each day.

At the end of the two weeks the physio said that he thought it was torn cartilages and a displaced knee cap. Exercise would only do more damage. I should have an operation pretty quickly.

So, back to the specialist who looked at my X-rays and the notes from the physio and then asked me "How bad is your knee?" I told him it was killing me.

His reply was, "I don't think that it is that bad as you've managed to get here. Anyway it looks as if we're going to have to have a look inside your knee. I'm afraid I can't give you a date for this operation. It might be 12 months; it might be 18 months or it could be two years. Thank you, good morning."

I was amazed. I asked him what I was supposed to do about going to work. His reply was, "You hadn't better return to work until after your operation."

I was even more amazed and told him that I couldn't afford to be off work for two years.

"Well there's nothing else I can do I'm afraid, good morning." End of appointment.

Since then I've been at home for four months. I quite often wonder what would have happened if I'd waved a cheque book about at my last appointment, and I come up

with the same answer every time. I would somehow have been found a bed which was strangely "not available" as an NHS patient.

It seems to be a question not of how sick you are but how healthy your bank balance is.

Another thing I worked out while I've been at home is that if I'd been operated on straight away it would have cost somewhere in the region of £600. The cost of keeping me out of work for two years plus the cost of the operation works out at about £2,600.

And that doesn't include the cost of hundreds, literally hundreds, of pills I've been prescribed. And we know what kind of profits are being made in that field. So in these days of cut-backs and economies it seems to make more "economic sense" to spend £2,600 rather than £600.

That brings me to another thing I've been thinking about. Just how long will it be before the NHS crumbles and dies due to lack of finance? From what I've seen that day can't be too far away.

There is only one answer: stop the cuts, and put more money into the NHS to give us a truly national health service for everyone and not a wealth service for the few.

By Jim O'Grady

(Coventry NE CLP)

CONTRACTORS: Use Direct Labour

Nearly eighteen months ago, our District Joint Shop Stewards Committee held a number of meetings to discuss management's plans for cuts in Tower Hamlets. Inevitably at these meetings, workers would get up to point out some of the more glaring examples of waste and inefficiency caused by management.

For instance, the number of new administrative jobs created by 're-organisation'; the plush offices that were re-furnished and decorated for one administrator and then re-done because his successor didn't like the colours; and lavish functions and white elephants galore!

While porters and nurses are not being replaced on leaving, management placed adverts in the press for secretaries whose main qualification appeared to be 'a sense of humour'!

But most irritation was caused by the large amount of maintenance work done by private contractors. The Works dept., i.e. the fitters, electricians, carpenters and painters were livid about it.

Numerous examples were given where the men knew they could have done this work cheaper and better. Many times they had later been sent in to patch up the contractors' shoddy work.

There was even a feeling that someone was getting

back-handers from the contractors, it seemed the only explanation for their use, but no solid evidence has yet been produced. Furthermore, tricks are apparently used to ensure the 'right' firm gets the job.

Arising from the meetings in the Works Department it was resolved that stewards from the three unions involved, together with myself would investigate the scale and type of contract work, and the reasons given for using it.

Our view was that with proper manpower levels, proper organisation, and appropriate agreements for necessary weekend work, (such as 'jobs and finish'), most work

put out to private contractors could be handled by the department, giving higher quality work at lower cost.

For various reasons, the stewards at that time failed to take this issue up in a serious manner, but it is already cropping up again.

The latest available figures; for 1977/78, show that the proportion of work going to private contractors has actually increased over the previous year from 24% to 26% of the total works costs.

One of the Works Dept. management alleged that it was cheaper to put work out to private contractors. But this expense is in fact explained by enormous management overheads which are

all included in the 'costs' for direct labour.

The solution lies with unions in the Works Department. The stewards should:

- 1 Establish a trade union panel of stewards and deputies for each union.
- 2 Black all work done by contractors which could have been done by direct labour.
- 3 Demand opening of the books, and give the closest scrutiny to contract work costs and bidding.
- 4 Vet management's requests for contractors, and draw up alternatives.
- 5 Establish the right of veto on all contracts.
- 6 Insist on expansion of direct labour force to cope

with all work.

7 Ask for training to be provided where specialist skills are needed.

8 Negotiate improved arrangements and flexibility for working and covering unsociable hours.

By Ian Burge

(ASTMS, London Hospital)

'SHOULD NURSES GO ON STRIKE'

A 'Militant' Pamphlet (10p inclusive of post and packing). From Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

The results of the Spanish general elections were a considerable blow for Spanish workers. The last few months have seen massive industrial unrest and opposition to the government and it was widely expected that the Spanish Socialist Party [PSOE] would win the election.

Instead, Adolfo Suarez's Centre Party [UCD] won 167 out of 350 seats, compared to the PSOE's 121. Yet only a few months before, the PSOE had been easily leading the UCD in all the polls. It is vital for socialists to understand why the explosive social situation did not result in a massive victory for the workers' parties.

Reading the speeches of the PSOE leaders, Felipe Gonzalez and Alfonso Guerra, in the last few months, one could form the impression that they were already comfortably installed in the Palace of Moncloa, and that the only doubt about the elections was the size of their majority. The "statesman-like" behaviour of the PSOE leaders, their studied moderation and strenuous efforts to avoid anything remotely resembling a serious opposition to the Suarez government bore all the hallmarks of a dress-rehearsal for the moment when they would be called upon to "assume the burden of civic responsibility."

They acted, spoke and thought in a way scarcely distinguishable from the capitalist politicians of the Centre, imagining, no doubt, that this was how "realistic" labour politicians ought to behave, in order to curry favour with the electorate and win the "floating voter". Now, in a moment, all these ridiculous posturings and vain illusions lie shattered in the dust.

If the Centre Party, a ramshackle coalition, had lost these elections, all the inner rivalries and tensions which Suarez had managed with difficulty to keep under control in recent months, would have burst to the surface.

On the left of the UCD, self-styled "social democrats" like Fernandez-Ordonez were putting out feelers to the Socialist Party as to the possibility of collaboration in the event of an election defeat. On the right, the old reactionary party of Fraga, the Popular Alliance (Alianza Popular) had reformed itself into a new and more "respectable" party of the Right, the Democratic Coalition (Coalicion Democratica) with a view to hiving off the more right-wing elements of the UCD.

But events took an altogether different turn from what had been expected by these politicians. The UCD maintained its lead over the PSOE.

The great loser in these elections was the main party of the Right, the Democratic Coalition of Fraga-Areilza. They were only able to muster 5% of the vote and retain 9 of the 16 seats they had previously held.

A section of the old Popular Alliance had veered to the right to support the fascist National Union which is intimately linked to the gunmen of the sinister "Guerrillas of Christ the King". This party got 2% of the vote, and returned one MP, Blas Pinar.

His presence in the Cortes,

although it should be seen in the context of an overall defeat for the Right, is a warning to the Spanish working class as to what would happen in the future if the workers do not take power.

The collapse of the right-wing CD was paralleled by a small advance of the CP whose share of the vote increased from 9.2% to 10% leading to an increase in parliamentary representation from 20 to 22 seats.

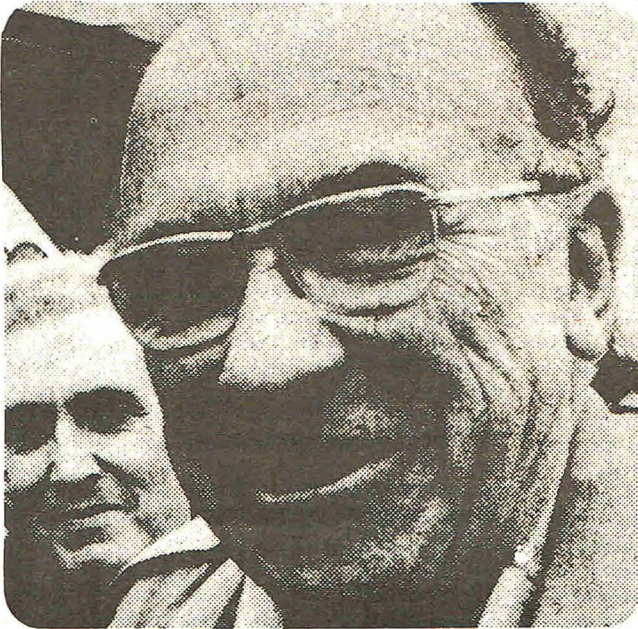
Nationalism

Perhaps the biggest change in the composition of the new Cortes was the sharp increase in the number of deputies representing radical nationalist and regionalist parties. This reflects one of the most acute problems facing the Spanish ruling class at the present time.

After 40 years of the most ruthless repression of the different nationalities by Franco, it was inevitable that the accumulated frustrations and national antagonisms would erupt in a violent fashion. The ruling class and its principal party, the UCD, met this elemental movement with a policy which vacillated between the two extremes of repression and concession.

While paying lip-service to the recognition of the national identity and aspirations, the Suarez government did its best to reduce the powers of the projected regional assemblies, and rejected outright the right of self-determination. It turned the Basque country into one enormous prison-house, held down by

what amounts to an army of foreign occupation of armed police and civil guards. To their shame, the Socialist and "Communist" leaders, while encouraging the spread of autonomist moods, publicly identified themselves with the basic position of the Suarez government. Promin-



Santiago Carrillo, PCE leader

ent labour leaders stated publicly that the solution to the problem of terrorism in the Basque country was "both by police methods and political methods". To a man they supported the Suarez Constitution, which explicitly denies the right to self-determination.

The fruits of this fatal policy have now been reaped, in particular by the leaders of the PSOE. Two years ago, the Socialist Party, for the first time in history, beat the traditional Basque Nationalist Party, the PNV, in the Basque Country.

This reflected a profound change in the class balance of forces. New industries had sprung up in Alava and Navarra, enormously increasing the strength of the working class at the expense of the peasantry and the middle layers of society. Yet, in these elections, the PSOE saw its gains wiped out by the rising tide of nationalism, losing one seat in Navarra and only returning one member in the Basque stranglehold of Guipuzcoa.

The vote in the Basque Country cannot be seen as a turn to the right. The PNV returned 8 MPs, the same as before. On the other hand, in a truly dramatic development, the extreme nationalist trend (the so-called "abertzales") represented by two coalitions, Herri Batasuna and Euzkadiko Ezkerra, got 170,000 and 89,000 votes with 3 seats and 1 seat respectively.

But under the present system, the national question, especially in the Basque



The PSOE leaders campaigned for a 'firm government', not a socialist government

ded as an army of foreign occupation, means that the situation of terrorism and counter-terrorism will continue to go from bad to worse.

This will act as a festering sore threatening the stability of the whole Spanish state.

Many rank-and-file socialists feel dissatisfied with the policy pursued by the PSOE

"consensus" pursued by Felipe Gonzalez and the other main party leaders in the last 12 or 18 months.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that the "moderate" and "statesmanlike" policies of Gonzalez and Co. led the party to disaster at the polls.

These self-styled "realistic" labour politicians did everything to help Suarez to steer through his so-called "Reform" in the last period. They justified the policy of class collaboration by the need to "consolidate democracy" and elaborate a new Constitution. But this Constitution itself contained many anti-democratic elements which the ruling class insisted on maintaining as a safeguard against the danger of a socialist government in the future.

On the economic front, with one and a half million unemployed, a rate of inflation more than twice the average of the EEC, primitive working and living conditions and scandalously deficient social services, the leaders of the main workers' organisations signed the notorious "Moncloa Pact".

This led on the one hand to the acceptance of wage restraint and falling living standards, and on the other to massive factory closures and a rapid rise in unemployment.

Instead of leading a serious struggle against the Suarez government, the leaders of the PSOE and PCE leaned

over backwards to facilitate its work. As a result, the mass of the population, not only the workers but also the small shopkeepers, peasants and housewives, peasants and Suarez and were disillusioned with the UCD government, did not see the PSOE as a viable alternative.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that, had the Socialist leaders waged an energetic campaign of mobilisation against the Suarez government, putting forward a bold alternative policy based on the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy, it would have transformed the situation. They could have linked the question of unemployment, factory closures, the high cost of living and the housing problem to the control of the economy by 100 wealthy families, thereby securing the support the overwhelming majority of the people.

They should have coupled this class programme to the democratic demands: the right of self-determination for the oppressed peoples of the Spanish state, the disbanding of all the repressive bodies inherited from the Franco period, abolition of the monarchy and the Senate, and reactionary elements.

In this way the PSOE leaders would have won over the middle class and cut the ground from under the feet of the nationalist and regionalist parties.

	1979 election	1977 election
Centre Democratic Union [UCD]	167	165
Socialist Workers' Party [PSOE]	121	121*
Communist Party [PCE]	23	20
Democratic Coalition	10	16**
Convergencia i Union	9	11
Basque Nationalist Party [PNV]	7	8
Andalusian Socialist Party	5	1
Herri Batasuna [Basque]	3	—
Euzkadiko Ezkerra [Basque]	1	1
Others	4	7

*Includes three members of the People's Socialist Party which joined the PSOE after 1977 election

**Seats won by the Popular Alliance

Country, has no solution. There is in fact a deteriorating economic situation in the Basque provinces, where a great deal of the declining heavy industry is concentrated. High unemployment, especially among the youth, and the continuing presence of what is universally regar-

leaders on the national question which undoubtedly has played into the hands of the nationalists. Txiki Benegas, one of the most prominent leaders of the PSOE in the Basque country has stated that the reason for the electoral failure of the socialists was the so-called policy of

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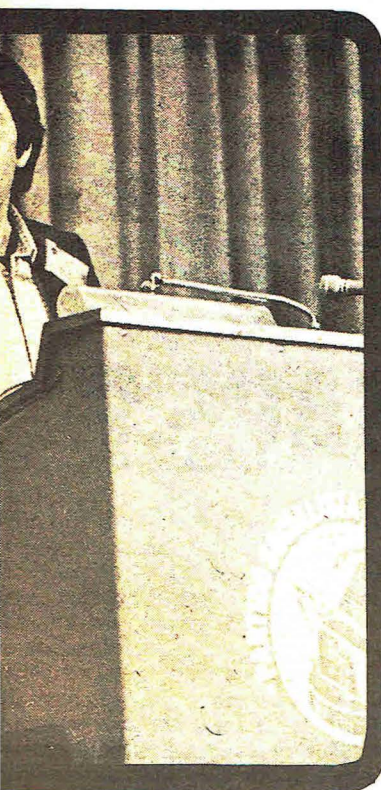
WIN

PARTY LEADERS

ELECTION DEFEAT



Fraga Iribarne. Extreme right rejected



strikes in Spain, affecting practically all layers of the working class. Television, refuse collectors, transport, engineering, textiles, chemicals, mining, airport workers, barmen, building workers, all have been involved in bitter disputes over the renewal of labour contracts in the pre-electoral period.

Indeed, the main reason why Suarez was forced to call the elections at all was the failure to reach agreement with the leaders of the principal trade unions (the UGT and the Workers' Commissions) on the question of a new Social Contract to replace the Pact of Moncloa.

These strikes have often had an extremely sharp and militant character, owing to the intransigence of the employers who in many cases have resorted to lock-outs, sackings and victimisations, sometimes even refusing point-blank to negotiate with the trade unions or recognise the elected shop stewards' committees. The magnificent general strike of the engineering workers in Pamplona, with street demonstrations, barricades and running battles with the police was the most militant action of the workers of Pamplona since the war, exceeding even the general strike of 1973.

This militant mood, which is widespread throughout Spanish industry, was yet another factor which ought to have benefited the workers' parties, in particular, the PSOE. Yet the leaders of these parties used all their influence to put the brakes on the strike movement, under the ridiculous pretext that such strikes could only "further the interests of the

plied by the leadership, the rolling wave of strikes has continued throughout the election period.

An important phenomenon in the election was the large amount of abstentions, especially among young people who were able to vote for the first time. The reason is not difficult to see. Nowhere has the reformist politics of the workers' leaders had such disastrous effects as among the youth.

At the time of the last general election, the Young Socialists (JSE) were a thriving organisation which actively participated in the PSOE's election campaign. But the general dissatisfaction with the policies pursued by the leaders of the PSOE and PCE had its most immediate and baleful effect among the youth.

A matter of months after the previous election, the

giant photographs of Felipe. Who paid for it all? Officially the party received credits from German banks.

But it is widely believed in the rank-and-file that the leadership received subsidies from the German SPD and the Swedish Social Democrats. Such allegations have been made publicly by Carillo and never denied by the PSOE leadership.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with the giving of fraternal assistance from one member party of an International to another. But many Spanish socialists suspect that there are strings attached to this aid, and that this steady rightward drift of the policies pursued by the leadership is being dictated by right-wing social democrats such as Brandt and Palme.

Olaf Palme, leader of the Swedish Social Democracy, visited Madrid on the eve of the elections and made statements to the press that what Spain needed was a "reformist socialist party". A couple of weeks later, 29 members of the PSOE in Madrid, all supporters of the Marxist

fact of the matter is that if Felipe Gonzalez and Alfonso Guerra had wanted consciously to lose the election, they could not have gone about it in a better way. Their policies have alienated the workers and the youth, and have not convinced the middle class.

Many people believed that the PSOE leaders did not want to win these elections, or more accurately, did not want the kind of enormous majority which they would have undoubtedly achieved on the basis of a socialist programme and a serious campaign.

In private, the leaders are sceptical about the prospects of carrying out a serious programme of reforms in the context of a profound economic crisis, and fearful of the consequences in the ranks of the party of a failure to "deliver the goods".

The row that broke out over Felipe's statements advocating the abandonment of Marxism some months ago indicates that the leadership's control over the rank-and-file is extremely tenuous. The inability of the TU leaders to sign a new Social Contract or to call a halt to the present strike wave is a further warning of what could be expected in the event of a Socialist government in Spain.

Collision

The great mobilisations of the working class took place after election victories such as in 1931 and 1936. Gonzalez and Co. undoubtedly feared that a big majority in these elections would spur the workers on to make demands on the government which it could not meet without entering into a head-on collision with big business.

That is why a certain section of the leadership, led by right-winger Enrique Mugica, has been all along in

to go over to the offensive and turn left or suffer a new and humiliating defeat and increasing opposition.

For its part, the new UCD government, for the moment, is riding high. Suarez, who gave every impression of tiredness and demoralisation even during the election campaign, is euphoric with his unexpected stroke of luck. The capitalists breathed an audible sigh of relief at the election result. Prices rose on the stock exchange and the peseta floated upwards.

Nevertheless, beneath the surface of this euphoria, there remains a nagging doubt. The electoral victory of the Centre in no way resolves any of the pressing problems facing Spanish capitalism. On the brink of a new international recession, Spanish capitalism is in a very weak position.

Prior to the elections, there were signs that the Suarez government was willing to temporarily relieve ailing industries with state hand-outs. But with inflation officially running at about 17%, it will be impossible to maintain a policy of deficit financing based on an increase in the money supply. Inflation would roar out of control as it did two years ago.

In a context of reduced world markets, Spanish industrial exports will not be able to compete. The competitive edge given to exports by the devaluation of the peseta has now practically disappeared. On the other hand, as shown by the latest strike wave, the Spanish workers are not prepared to be made the scapegoats for the crisis of capitalism.

The ruthlessness of the employers will undoubtedly be stiffened by the victory of Suarez. The scene is therefore set for a long and bitter series of labour disputes in the coming period which will not be easily controlled by the trade union leaders.

It is extremely unlikely, in this situation, that the Suarez government would be able to last four years. In spite of all the optimism of the capitalist press, this is a weak government.

In order to survive, the UCD will have to look for support outside its ranks in the other parties represented in the Cortes. The CP leader Carillo has advocated a Spanish version of the Italian "social compromise"—i.e. a UCD government, supported in parliament by the votes of the PSOE and PCE! On the other hand, if Suarez is forced to lean on the right-wing Coalición Democrática this would only antagonise the workers still further and increase the social polarisation he wishes to avoid.

In opposition, the Socialist Party will be pushed to the left. Faced with indiscriminate attacks on the workers' living standards, the unions will be forced to take up a more aggressive stand. The crunch may come over closures in the steel industry, strikes against government pay norms or the murderous behaviour of the "Forces of Public Order". But come it must.

The defeat suffered by the left in these elections will be a temporary one. The Socialist Party will emerge with redoubled force and the Marxist wing of that party will transform itself into a decisive factor in the situation.

By Jorge Martinez



Suarez and PSOE leader Gonzalez

The electoral victory of the Centre in no way resolves any of the pressing problems facing Spanish capitalism. The defeat suffered by the left will be a temporary one.

It is not generally realised in Britain that the first months of this year have witnessed a great wave of

extreme right!"

It is indicative of the mood of the rank-and-file that despite all the pressure ap-

planned youth organisation of both parties fell to bits. They were helped on their way by the vicious policy of purges and expulsions carried out by the leadership in the best traditions of Stalinism. On the eve of these last elections, the Young Socialists of the PSOE existed in name only. They even issued the amazing statement that they would not organise any campaign to gain votes for the PSOE.

The party, whose finances are not in the best of health, launched a lavish campaign of posters mainly consisting of

journal 'Nuevo Claridad', including sitting members of the Madrid Regional Committee of the party, were expelled on orders of the national leadership. The same pattern is discernible in all the expulsions which have marred the history of the PSOE over the last three years.

Whatever the truth behind these funding allegations, the right-wing policy of class collaboration has led the party to an election defeat which only a few months ago appeared impossible. The

favour of a coalition government with UCD, or a section of that party, at least.

This electoral setback will obviously cause a serious shake-up in the ranks of the Socialist Party. The working-class rank-and-file will blame the defeat on the policies pursued by the leadership. They will demand a more militant policy of opposition to the new government.

With the municipal elections just one month away to be followed by the much-postponed Party Congress, the leadership will be forced



THE 'MIRACLE' IS OVER

By our Japanese correspondent

Japan has been much mentioned in the Western press as the country where the post-war economic 'miracle' continues. But recent years in Japan tell a different story for Japanese workers.

Since 1974 the workers have faced the threat of growing unemployment. Unfortunately so far as the Japanese trade union has failed to effectively counteract this threat. Instead leaders of the largest trade union federation, the Sohyo, with 6½ million members, have shifted towards the position of the company unions and accepted 'self-restraint' regarding wage increases and co-operation with management on redundancies.

Work-in

But in the last two years the pattern has started to change. Some workers have begun to fight redundancies by occupying the plants and commencing a 'work-in'. At present most of the occupations are isolated from each other, but one of the work-ins, by Tanaka workers could well become the focus for

united action by the labour movement.

The 300 workers at Tanaka Machineworking Ltd., began their work-in last September when the management declared their firm bankrupt. Tanaka is a subsidiary company of one of the largest steel companies in the world, Shin-Nippon-Seitetsu.

Tanaka had sustained serious losses since 1974. At first the workers began the struggle with the slogan "never allow capital to run away." They refused to agree to any sackings, but agreed to delays in the payment of their wage increases. Dates of delivery for work were scrupulously adhered to. Despite all these compromises by the workers, in the end management turned round and blandly announced it was not good enough and the plant would have to close.

This time the workers decided they could do without the management. They began a 24-hour picket and living in to prevent creditors and their thugs coming to remove machinery from the plant. Tanaka's liabilities tot-

alled £7 million, some of this though was unpaid wages.

With the plant occupied, the workers have instituted what they call 'workers' autonomy'. In reality this is a form of syndicalism with workers assessing and distributing wages, having a standard wage increase, and maintaining work discipline not by foremen, but by appeals to class solidarity.

Solidarity action

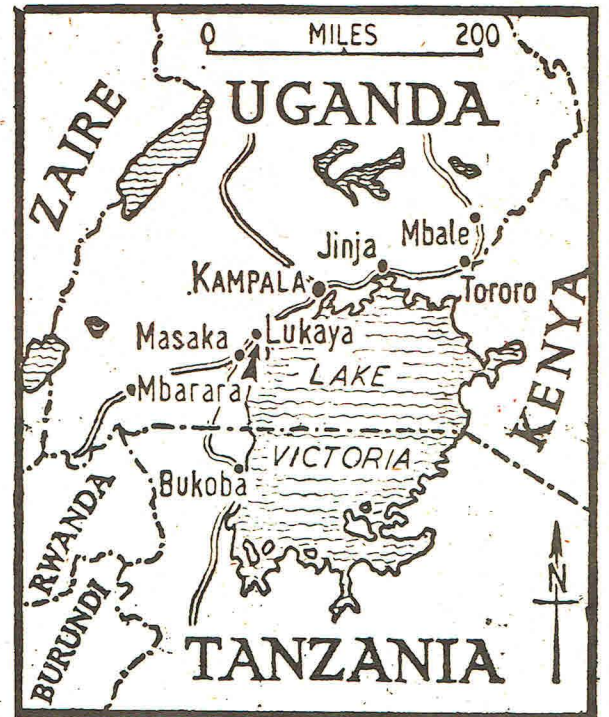
The Tanaka workers had been involved in past struggles. Their branch of the National Union of Metal Workers had defeated a management attempt to set up a company union in 1965. After that they became the regional centre of the workers' struggle and from 1968-76 their region achieved higher wage increases than the national average for metal workers.

Their occupation last year has sparked off massive support from workers in the Osaka area. Nearly 100,000 workers attended a rally of support outside the Osaka Town Hall shortly after the work-in began.

Mass picketing was organised. Branches of the union, the NUMW, demanded that their management place orders with Tanaka's. The Tanaka workers have called the workers' organisations in the different local factories to unite in a concerted attack upon the monopolies.

Since September, the Tanaka workers have faced an onslaught from big business, notably from the Shin-Nippon-Seitetsu, the Mitsubishi Bank and the Kansai Management Organisation. These firms have tried to get a court order to 'protect' their private property and in November the issue was referred to the local court of conciliation.

So far with massive support from workers in the district, the Tanaka workforce have maintained their work-in. But it is a difficult task ahead and the workers would be encouraged by international messages of support. They can be contacted by writing to: **The Tanaka Machine-making branch, National Union of Metal Workers [Zen-Kin], 20-3 Ichioka-Hama-Dori, Minato-Ku, Osaka, Japan.**



UGANDA

END OF THE NIGHTMARE?

Over 300,000 Ugandans have been murdered since Amin came to power eight years ago in a coup supported by Britain and Israel. Now the nightmare of Amin's rule might be drawing to a close.

Last year, faced by growing discontent within his army, Amin attempted a diversion and invaded Tanzania. This has since rebounded on him and Tanzanian forces have occupied large parts of southern Uganda.

They have linked up with a broadly-based opposition organisation, the 'Save Uganda movement' SUM was formed two years ago in Lusaka and included most groups who were opposed to Amin, with the exception of ex-President Obote.

It includes royalists (who were persecuted by Amin and Obote), regionalists (who object to Amin's reliance on people from the West Nile district) and nationalists (who oppose Amin's reliance on Sudanese mercenaries). It also incorporates some who profess a socialist alternative to Amin. All claim to wish to establish a democratic Uganda.

Democracy

Amin may well be overthrown, but it will prove impossible to ensure democracy on the present basis. SUM has called for a Council of State to run the country for two years, after which there would be elections.

Ugandans have heard this before. Amin overthrew Obote's despotic rule and promised elections in a year.

Elections might be held this time but it will not lead to stability. There is no large Ugandan capitalist class capable of maintaining power in their own right.

The petit bourgeoisie, who are the leadership of SUM and Obote's forces, are also incapable of charting out a secure future for the Ugandan masses. There is therefore the danger of a return to military rule.

The only force capable of providing a decent future for the people of Uganda is the working class, allied to the peasantry. Whilst fighting for the overthrow of Amin, they must also struggle for the dismantling of the army and the establishment of free organisations of the working people.

Federation

Alone and isolated the very small Ugandan working class would be unable to sustain a workers' democracy. It would need to link itself in the first instance with workers and peasants in neighbouring Tanzania and Kenya.

In Kenya there is already a growing discontent with the neo-colonial regime. In Tanzania last year there were protests against the special perks to be given to government representatives.

The leadership in these three countries have proved unable to maintain even the limited Federation of the last days of colonialism. If the movement against Amin moved on a socialist basis and cut across these national divisions, it would not only open up a new future for the people of Uganda, but for all of East Africa.

Les Smith

SOUTH AFRICA

White miners' strike

Last week for the first time since the ruling Nationalist Party came to power in 1948, white South African miners went on strike.

The immediate reason for their strike was entirely reactionary—it was to protect their racial privileges. Only whites are allowed to do blasting in the mines. Now, for economic reasons, the mine-owners want to extend that to some Africans and Coloureds [mixed race].

When three Coloureds were given blasting certificates in a mine in the Cape Province, over 100 white miners walked out. They were quickly joined by most of the 38,000 white miners throughout South Africa.

White miners have been strong supporters of the Nationalist government. On average they get paid eight times more the wages of a black miner. They mostly do

supervisory work, leaving the hard grind for the Africans. They are organised in the all-white Mineworkers' Union.

But now the South African gold industry is facing serious problems. The growing African revolution led to a cut in the number of Africans coming from other countries to work in the gold mines. So now nearly half the 360,000 black miners are South African.

Coupled with this has been the growing revolt in South Africa itself, which has led to some increase in wages for black miners. [Ten years ago white miners got paid 21 times what a black miner earned].

The mine-owners were not averse to some of these developments. It was in their interests to have a more settled workforce which could be given increased skills. And skills needed to be broadened. For gold production was becoming stagnant with the existing workforce.

So the mineowners are



Dilemma for Prime Minister Botha

trying to build up the skills of black miners—pay them a cheap rate and undercut the higher wages and racial privileges of the white miners. The white miners have seen the question of blasting certificates as part of these salami-style tactics.

In the past they had the support of the Nationalist Party and resisted similar schemes from the mine-owners. Now the government is much more equivocal. The

response to last week's events from the Minister of Labour, Botha, was that there should be the 'free bargaining' between the two sides, with no government interference.

As last week's article in 'Militant' showed, the South African ruling class is caught in a crisis as it can no longer balance the interests of the big capitalists and the labour aristocracy. The white miners' strike is the most graphic indication of this.

The monolith is cracking. The fundamental reason for this is the revolt from below by blacks, especially black workers. And in that struggle over a period of years even sections of white workers could be won if they were shown a clear socialist alternative.

In the immediate future white miners might turn to the extreme proponents of apartheid, the Herstigte Nationalist Party. But their revolt this week is a further illustration of the growing problems facing the South African capitalist class.

"MILITANT" AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY



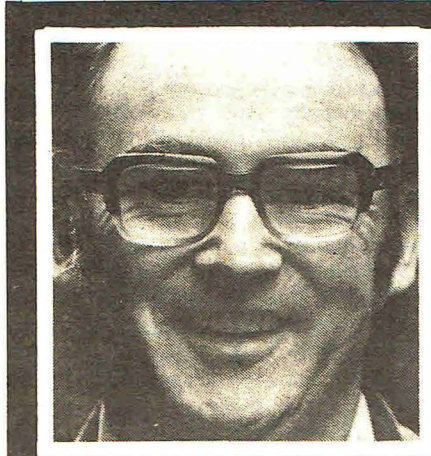
'Militant' welcomes this opportunity to outline our differences with the CP and to explain some of our policies. Space does not allow a detailed explanation, so we would refer the reader to the latest issue of our theoretical magazine 'Militant International Review' for a fuller treatment of the issues touched on here.

We agree with the CP on the necessity of supporting any movement towards the left within the labour movement. Within the unions, together with the CP and others on the left, we recently supported Bob Wright against Duffy within the AUEW, and we are at present an important part of the left within the CPSA which is engaged in a fight against right wing manoeuvres within the union.

But unlike the CP, while supporting these movements and individuals, we have always criticised the deficiencies of their programme, tactics, etc. Witness the CP's uncritical support for Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon for a whole period.

'Militant' supported the steps which these leaders took which advanced the movement—and they did play a progressive role, e.g. against the Industrial Relations Act—but attempted to show to the workers that no matter how sincere they would inevitably seek to apply the brake to the movements of the working class. Given the fact that their programme did not go beyond the framework of capitalism and they were not marxists, this was inevitable.

The CP's position on this and related issues was not at all accidental. It arose from their programme which in fundamentals is no different from that of the Tribune tendency within the Labour Party. On import controls, on 'reflation' of the economy (which is presented in a Keynesian fashion)



The Communist Party has invited a number of different left-wing newspapers to contribute articles for their fortnightly magazine 'Comment'. The following article from Peter Taaffe, editor of 'Militant', appears in the current issue of 'Comment'.

programme.

The conception of a gradual shift towards the left through a series of 'Left Governments' is utterly reformist and is, moreover, completely utopian. The CP envisage the possibility of a peaceful socialist transformation in Britain.

Against the sectarian grouplets on the outskirts of the labour movement, 'Militant' has also urged that such is the balance of forces in British society that peaceful socialist change is theoretically possible. But only if the labour movement is equipped with a marxist programme involving the taking-over of the 200 monopolies which control 85% of the economy.

Prevarication and piecemeal measures cannot satisfy the demands of the workers but will irritate the capitalists, and give them the necessary time to organise sabotage, undermine the gains of the workers, stoke up the fires of inflation and inflame the middle class against a left government and the working class. Rather than eliminating the possibility of civil war and bloodshed it actually makes it more certain.

The responsibility for violence

and Communist Party leaders—the capitalists are preparing the ground for a 'Chilean' solution. However, given the arming of a section of the working class, together with other factors, it is not certain that they will succeed in Portugal. Yet the peaceful socialist transformation of Portugal was entirely possible following the March 1975 events if a programme of workers' and peasants' democracy had been implemented.

A similar fate would undoubtedly await the working class in Britain if the CP's policies were to become those of the labour movement as a whole. The British Road outlines the power of the monopolies, yet argues for the nationalisation of only "the key firms amongst the top firms which dominate the economy". Why not propose the nationalisation of all monopolies? The document argues that by nationalising only these 'key firms' the ruling class would be divided and counter revolution would be avoided.

On the contrary, any attempt to take over even one profitable industry would provoke the combined resistance of the ruling class as a whole. They would correctly see this as a springboard for further nationalisations. Their resistance would take many forms, including armed resistance if conditions permitted this. Where the relationship of forces is unfavourable to them and they are forced to accept some nationalisation they would retreat and prepare to crush the government and labour movement at a later stage.

The document even concedes the possibility of developments along the lines of Chile. Any thinking Communist Party member would draw the conclusion that if the leadership envisages this possibility on the basis of piecemeal measures, why not propose the labour movement should be armed with a programme for completely eliminating the power of the capitalists? Such a programme, if implemented, would completely undermine the social reserves of capitalism and ensure peaceful change.

The same utopianism is also shown by the CP in relation to the 'broad democratic alliance'. It is entirely correct to advance the idea that the labour movement must win over the intermediary layers within society. But to imagine that this is possible through an alliance of the labour movement 'with many of these sections of the capitalist class'

is completely false.

Marx, Engels and Lenin showed that the middle classes can only be won to the side of the working class by demonstrating in action that it was the only force which could provide a solution to the problems of the petit-bourgeois. Rather than forming blocs with the alleged leaders of the middle class—Lenin called them 'political exploiters' of the little men in town and country in the employ of big capital—it was necessary for the workers' movement to unmask them in action

the growth in the influence and support of 'Militant' within the Labour Party and increasingly within the trade unions. Yet during this period the CP has declined in numbers and influence.

It is not, of course, discounted that the CP may temporarily grow along with other left tendencies when an upswing in the class struggle takes place, but the deficiencies in its programme will soon undermine any growth which takes place. This will be re-inforced by events in Russia and Eastern Europe. The CP criticises the more abhorrent features of these regimes yet still characterises them as 'socialist'. This tramples the very idea of socialism in the mud and discredits the CP in the eyes of advanced workers.

The workers of Eastern Europe and Russia are in revolt not against nationalisation and a plan for production—these are enormously progressive features as opposed to rotting capitalism in the west—but against the bureaucratic elites and their one-party, totalitarian regimes. New upheavals are being prepared in these countries with the masses striving to overthrow the bureaucracy and establish workers' democracy. Despite the isolated

The conception of a gradual shift towards the left through a series of 'Left Governments' is utterly reformist and completely utopian.

and particularly on the issue of piecemeal nationalisation by a series of 'left Governments' the CP are at one with Tribune.

Indeed Gwilym Roberts, himself a Tribune MP, characterised the CP as 'a minute impotent version of the Labour Party'. ('Morning Star' 25/3/78). If Robert's harsh judgement is correct—and we believe it is—then there is no justification for the CP as a separate party. When confronted with two parties with the same programme (the policies of the Tribune have become the programme of the Labour Party if not the government), then the workers will always prefer the larger one.

Only if it offered a clear revolutionary programme in opposition to other trends within the labour movement could it justify its separate existence. The British Road to Socialism is not such a

and civil war lies with the reformists and those who wish merely to tinker with the system. Is this not the lesson of Chile and the present unstable situation in Portugal? The Allende Government presided over the nationalisation of about 30% of industry and important improvements in the living standards of the workers and peasants. Yet because the levers of economic and state power remained in the hands of the monopolies the capitalists were able to overthrow the government and drown the workers' movement in blood. In fact the capitalists forced Allende to guarantee that he would not interfere with the army before they allowed them to take power.

Even in Portugal, where 60% to 70% of industry has been taken over, because the process of the revolution has not been completed—due to the policies of the Socialist

Only if it offered a clear revolutionary programme in opposition to other trends within the labour movement could it justify its separate existence.

before their followers. This would not be possible through forming political blocs with them as the CP did, for instance, in linking up with the right-wing chauvinist Tories during the Common Market campaign. On this issue and the whole question of alliances with the Liberals and some 'progressive' Tories the CP is to the right of the average Labour Party member.

With this programme the CP will never be able to become the mass revolutionary force which the leadership hopes. In a situation which has seen the undermining of right-wing reformist ideas within the labour movement (with left reformism posing no real alternative programme or action against the right wing) the CP's membership and influence has fallen.

Hundreds and thousands of workers within the labour movement have looked for an alternative to reformist ideas. This accounts for

criticism of the worst features of bureaucratic absolutism, the CP is still associated in the eyes of the mass of the British workers with these totalitarian states.

Only if the CP worked out a real marxist programme on Britain and international issues by returning to the ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky would it be capable of playing any decisive role in events in Britain.

Given the character of the Party and the leadership—which still looks towards Moscow for support—this is unlikely. However, we believe that some of the rank and file of the CP will seek a genuine marxist road by linking up with the marxist left of the Labour Party in the fight to re-arm the mighty British labour movement with a programme capable of guaranteeing victory over capitalism in the period which lies ahead.



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LETTERS



Photo: MILITANT

WHEN CAN "A SENSE OF DUTY" PAY THE BILLS?

Dear Comrades

I have just seen on 'News at Ten' a Cumbrian branch secretary of the Royal College of Nursing advocating nurses work "unpaid overtime" to draw attention to their cause. I would have liked to hear some comments from other nurses!

My sister, for example, has been working three nights a week to make ends meet. She wrote: "If you were to compare it to days, it wouldn't be accepted—it would mean starting at 9 am—the only breaks after that are half an hour at 1 pm for dinner and half an hour at 5 pm for tea, then finishing at 8 pm—but these nights I only got ten minutes altogether."

"It was really dreadful, and worse still, I still feel guilty about leaving some jobs undone that shouldn't have been left at all—even though I know it was impossible to do them."

Despite being 4½ months pregnant, one evening during the blizzards she walked from Bradford City Centre to the hospital, believing it was nearer than trying to get back home when the buses stopped. "My legs were killing

me by the time I got to work [the snow was easily 1 foot high] and I was also soaked through.

"All the Nursing Officer did when I arrived was to laugh [I was well wrapped up], then it was straight on duty—with an hour's work to catch up on."

These incidents could no doubt be multiplied throughout every hospital. Little wonder that the nurses are becoming restive and contemplating action.

Mr Ennals and all those who call on the "sense of duty" of all hospital workers only reveal their total detachment from reality. Can you imagine the reaction of landlords, shopkeepers, etc., if a nurse [for example] said she was very sorry but she really didn't have enough money, but surely their concern for her welfare would be enough?

Would they stand by and let her die [of starvation or exposure]? Or would they shrug their shoulders and turn to their next customer?

Yours fraternally
Lynne Faulkes
Hackney Central CLP

NHS dentistry becoming a sick joke

Dear Comrades,

Eventually I have found a dentist who would do false teeth on the NHS, after my dentist declined. The new dentist's first question was 'private or NHS?'

When I eventually got into the chair, I asked what the damage was. I was told I needed a partial set upstairs and downstairs. How much? £30 subject to the Dental Estimates Board approval.

When I got back to reception I was asked for a £5 deposit. I was glad it was pay day. Few workers carry that sort of money around. Although in future, visits to the dentist are going to be dicey affairs.

Certainly no problems for the private patients, who pulled out their cheque books or wallets brim-full of tenners.

Before leaving I asked what would have been the cost of having my partial dentures done privately. Roughly it would have cost £150-£200, but possibly more. No wonder when I got back to work and told my work-mates, they described the NHS as rapidly becoming a sick joke.

Going home on the bus I passed a swish dental practice in Hove. I couldn't help but wonder what the starting figure would have been there. No more cuts—restore the Health Service to full health. Fraternally
Mike Singleton
Hove CLP

Speke closes, but... Only 8% of British tyre market are imports

Dear Militant

So Dunlop are closing down their tyre factory at Speke, and throwing 3,000 workers on the dole because they just 'can't compete with cheap foreign imports'.

The picture painted by the Dunlop bosses of the British tyre industry is certainly a bleak one and of course we all sympathise with their dilemma—that is until we examine the figures!

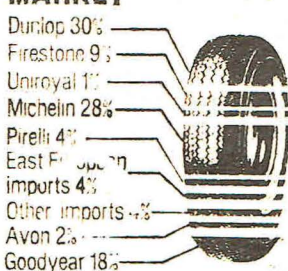
The following table was printed in the 'Observer' on 4.3.79 and shows that these "cheap foreign imports" account for only 8% of the British tyre market. Dunlop, of course, having the largest single share of 30%.

Confronted by these statistics, the capitalists' excuses sound pretty lame. They begin to sound even more lame when we cast our minds back a few months to the Dunlop advertisements on the telly [made, of course, with the help of our old friends Saatchi and Saatchi] which boasted of the £200 million that Dunlop have made "for Britain".

If the industrialists in this country want to pull the wool over our eyes, they'll have to do much better than that!

Yours faithfully
Phil Samuels
Harlow CPSA

BRITISH TYRE MARKET



Total market 21 million tyres worth £250 million

STEEL BOSSES TWIST FIGURES

Dear Editor

As Ted Grant pointed out in his article 'Britain in Crisis' ['Militant' 22nd February], British steelworkers are less productive than their Japanese or German brothers, not because they work less hard but because of the machinery they have to work with.

It must be said, however, that the nationalised British Steel Corporation is responsible for one-third of all the investment in steel in the EEC countries [much of which is privately-owned].

The figures quoted by Ted, however, are part of management's con-trick to sack still more people.

For years the bosses have been using bogus figures to 'prove' that overmanning is ruining BSC. In this instance, they have been counting all British workers in the industry while excluding from the Japanese, German and others the sub-contractors who do finishing work.

There is a gap, but it is nothing like nine or even three times. A better comparison would be to say that in 1977 a German steel worker took 6½ hours to make one tonne of steel while a British steelworker took 11 hrs 45 minutes.



Even then you would have to allow for the mix of steel a country produces. If it makes a high percentage of special steels, for example, that might increase the average time taken. Lack of orders in big steelworks also makes workers less productive, because there are no economies of scale.

But Ted was absolutely right to say that the fault does

not lie with the steelworkers. In fact in Britain they work longer hours than in other countries. And no wonder, because, as Ted showed, they are paid less. In the steel industry of the EEC, the lowest labour costs are in Britain.

Yours fraternally
Martin Upham
Stevenage CLP

FOREMEN AND FAMILY RULE, BUT IT'S NOT O.K.

Dear Comrades

There is a large company in Wembley that on the face of it seems a very fair-minded firm. They employ West Indians and any other nationality willing to work for them.

This company does not give its workers any rule book; rules are by word of mouth.

In one small part of this firm, if the foreman says you are a good worker, then everybody says the same. If you are 'no good', then everybody says the same. You must never say he is wrong.

The foreman has his family working for him—needless to say his one cousin is his

chargehand and the other one he's just worked in to a staff job with the company. Good luck to him, if he can hold it down—with the foreman covering for him he will.

In the years I have been with them I have seen staff come and go, some staying for just four hours. No-one asks why they want to leave. 'After all, they can't be any good,' says the foreman.

The lack of immigrant workers in this part of the company is noticeable. The foreman has the last say. We have had one or two Indians for a short time, but their coloured skin upset the

foreman, and they have left. Of course he blames these workers' time-keeping.

I have seen this foreman tell some poor lad off for drinking coffee on overtime as he should be working. "You can drink coffee any time you like, so long as you keep working": that is the company's rule.

It is a very small department, 12 in all, run by the family of three, with their own ideas of what is right. A short time ago a young lad who has had two to three years' office experience with another company tried to get a job in the office. He knew that going

through his foreman he would get nowhere so he jumped over his head. He had the interview for the job and in due course was informed that he did not have enough experience in handling the goods (he has been handling our goods for three years) and was turned down.

Who do you think got this office job? Why, the foreman's cousin. How long has he been handling the goods? Six months; office experience—none.

It is company policy to pay £100 to any staff member who can get someone to work for them.

The staff canteen consists of six cracked cups. You take your own sandwiches in to eat. I have a better garden shed than the company canteen.

Unions are out—any talk of unions in this firm is just not on. On the employment contract it states that you may be a member of a trade union or not as you choose. If you are a member you may take part in union activities.

I remain yours in a free country, if not company,
David J Evans

OUR FUTURE IS IN YOUR HANDS

For the second time in six months, speculation abounds on the date of a general election and the fate of the Labour government as the nation waits for one man—the Prime Minister—to decide how to interpret a set of percentages, i.e. the results of the Welsh and Scottish referendums and the 'popularity polls' of the different parties.

The 'Militant' has consistently argued a clear position on the question of devolution [a majority is a majority for a that]. It has also forcefully argued that a Labour government could be confident of victory whenever an election is called it campaigned on and adopted bold socialist measures in relation to every issue that troubles workers and their families.

That is why this paper gets the sort of support indicated in the letter from Jon Ingham (reproduced here) and in the reports of other conferences elsewhere in the 'Militant'.

But when we come to look at certain percentages in relation to the 'Militant' Fighting Fund, we see that, unlike the Prime Minister, we literally cannot afford to wait for a few weeks to decide on the best course of action.

In just four week's time we should be 25% of the way to the year's target figure of £85,000. At present we are 9% of the way with £7,846. Made up from literally thousands of excellent donations, this figure is only just over half of what we should have at this stage of the year—37% instead of 69% of the way to the £21,250 we need by April 7th!

What percentage of the first quarter's target has your area got?

East Midlands—the front-runners—95% thanks to donations large and small. Next closest **Manchester & District** with 53%. This week's post included £10.87 from 'guarantors' at GEC and Ardwick CLP, £3 from M Winterbottom (Blackburn) and half shares in £32.24 raised at the NW Regional LPYS conference.

South East and **South West** are neck and neck with 49%. Amongst this week's many donations, outstanding examples were set again by B

Stoneham, a Brighton student, who gave £35 and Hove Labour Party member, C Walder, who gave £30.

South London comes next with 47% of the quarter's total, helped by readers like B&K Kidd (whose late contribution was £6.90) and Belgian socialist R Schepens, who gave a 'fiver'.

Northern's line and that of **Yorkshire** have reached 44% of the way, both with a spurt of nearly £100 in a week. £10 came from the Gamlins (Blyth), £2 from B Smithson (Newcastle), nearly £13 from a curry evening and, most welcome of all, £27.50 from CPSA members fighting for a decent wage at the DHSS Newcastle Central Office (one of them giving a whole £5).

The Yorkshire Regional LP Conference collections were shared with Humberside but still meant over £60 on the line. £12 came in from student supporters in Leeds and £1 from C Hammersley, an ASTMS branch secretary in Sheffield.

Humberside follows closely with 43% (including £1s from M Todd, B Johnston and P O'Brien).

West Midlands has 41% after raising nearly £200! Contributions included £5 from K Bentley, £2 from J Fair (Small Heath YS), £3 from an AUEW Youth Committee/YS meeting in Coventry and over £70 from socialists in Banbury and Birmingham (where a collection alone made £29).

Hants & IOW have reached 35% of the quarter's target and **West Wales** 32% with a generous 'tenner' from Mrs Cawley of Bridgend.

N London has a long way to go with its total reaching just 31% this week with contributions at the GLRC Conference, a 'fiver' from L Curry (who promises one every month) and £1s from R Mooney, L Gauntlet and S Marchini (EETPU) amongst others.

Merseyside—at 30%—needs more donations like the £5 from P Owens, those from 3 members of Liverpool University Labour Club (£3.70), from NGA members (£5) and the £1s from J Nelson (St. Helens YS), M Jelliman (Wavertree) and Liverpool Docks ACTSS members—L McCluskey, M Carr, B Roberts and T Donnelly.

Build the Militant

Area	Target 52 wks	Target 13 wks	Proportion of target received	Received
Eastern	4,700	1,175		318
Hants & IOW	3,100	775		273
Humberside	2,000	500		213
London North	9,500	2,375		726
London South	3,900	975		456
Manchester & Dist.	4,500	1,125		598
Merseyside	5,000	1,250		376
Midlands East	3,300	825		782
Midlands West	9,000	2,250		923
Northern	5,500	1,375		602
Scotland East	2,900	725		181
Scotland West	4,500	1,125		217
South East	4,500	1,125		552
South West	3,100	775		377
Wales East	2,600	650		52
Wales West	3,400	850		267
Yorkshire	6,800	1,700		767
Others	6,700	1,675		166
Total	85,000	21,250		7,846

Progress towards year's target

Towards April 7th target

TARGET FOR THE YEAR £85,000 - TARGET FOR APRIL 7th £21,250.

TOTAL THIS WEEK: £879

Eastern—at 27%—needs more donations like the £4 collected from shop stewards at 'Porvair', King's Lynn and the £5.50 donated from Southend readers.

East Scotland (25%) and **West Scotland** (19%) shared £20 raised at the Regional LPYS conference but needed considerably more. N Beveridge gave a generous £12, a party in Irvine raised £8 and 'bevy dregs' (money left over in the beer kitty) after meetings meant £5.54 from Glasgow.

Last and least comes **E Wales** with just 8% of the first quarter achieved, and nothing arriving this week! It's true that this area has 'traditionally' shown it can catch up before it's too late. But we only wish our supporters—in Callaghan's country and elsewhere—wouldn't, like him, keep us waiting in such suspense!

Every reader knows how to

interpret all of these percentages. They mean action being taken now to get on target. Special 'pledge' sheets are available for getting promises of donations to be 'honoured' by April 7th. An all-out drive must be made by every seller to get a minimum of five pledges from individuals and organisations in the labour movement.

Try for the 'tenners' and 'fivers' but don't pass up the chance of any donation. The regular commitments to donate the pennies and £1s have helped build the 'Militant' as much as the 'one-off' bigger donations. We appeal for both.

We are confident that you, the readers, can rise to the challenge of raising over £13,000 in four weeks, but don't wait a moment longer! The future of the 'Militant' is in your hands.

Dear Comrades

The Yorkshire Regional Conference of the Labour Party, at Bridlington, adopted a clear socialist programme, spelt out in many major resolutions moved and spoken on by 'Militant' supporters.

To see how far the support for the 'Militant' had extended in the Yorkshire Labour Party we tried several ways of raising cash.

Just to start the ball rolling, in one hotel 12 delegates gave the odd 8p each change from their bill.

Another £1 came from a COHSE delegate after reading the reports of their disputes in the 'Militant'.

A Sheffield engineer unable to attend the 'Militant' Readers' Meeting also donated £1. This cash was used to start a collection at the 'Militant' meeting which raised a magnificent £53.31.

With such enthusiasm shown for the ideas we were sure some people may have missed the meeting but still be keen to contribute to the paper so at the social given by the 'Mayor' we pushed the fighting fund up by £9 in individual donations.

This work was followed up the next day with a further £6. Anti-Tory posters raised a further £5.80 for the paper and a rattling of boxes on Sunday dinner time raised £3.80 in coppers as delegates left conference.

The grand total now stood at £78.90, so a few 'Militant' supporters went round asking for 10ps to allow a full £80 to be sent down to the paper. The result of this last effort is the £81 enclosed with thanks to the 'Militant' from delegates at the Yorkshire Regional Labour Party conference 1979.

Yours fraternally

Jon Ingham

LPYS national committee [Yorkshire]

ads

RATES

CLASSIFIED: 5p per word, minimum ten words
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres
All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

MILITANT MEETINGS

SOUTH WEST Regional Labour Party Conference 'Militant' public meeting: 'Socialist Policies for Labour'. Speaker: Robin Clapp (LP Regional Executive Committee in personal capacity). Chairman: Peter Hammond (delegate and candidate for REC). George Hotel, High Street, Taunton, Saturday 17th March, 1-2 pm.

NEWCASTLE Militant Public Meeting: 'China and Vietnam—the reasons for the war'. Speaker: Jeff Price. Durant Hall, Ellison Place, Newcastle (next to the YMCA). Thursday 22nd March, 7.30 pm. Everyone welcome

STEVENAGE Militant Readers Meeting. Speaker: Ed Bober (Militant Editorial Board). 'The Revolution in Iran'. Stevenage Leisure Centre (near station), Room 1. 7.45 pm start. Monday 19th March.

HARTLEPOOL 'Militant' Public Meeting: 'The trade unions and the Labour Party'. Jackson Arms, Tower Street, Hartlepool. Monday 19th March, 7.30 pm.

MANCHESTER 'Militant' Readers Meeting. 'Crisis in the Health Service'. Slide shows and commentary. Gordon Henthorne ASTMS. Monday March 19th, 8 pm Star and Garter, Fairfield St. Manchester.

WALLSEND Marxist Discussion Group. The first Wednesday of every month. Contact Wallsend 687678 for details

NEWCASTLE Marxist Discussion Group for students and unemployed. Friday afternoons, in Newcastle University. 9th March: 'Trade Unions on the Shop Floor'; 16th March: 'Spanish Elections'. For further details contact Roy Goodspeed, tel: 748001

MORRISTON Marxist Discussion Group meetings: 22nd March: 'Is Russia Socialist?' Venue: Morriston Public Library, Treherne Road, Morriston. Meetings start 7.30 pm prompt. Contact Swansea 33542 for further details

ROTHERHAM Marxist Discussion Group 'Trade Unions and the Fight for Socialism'. WEA Rooms, Corporation Street, 7.30 pm, Monday 26th March

CHESTER-LE-STREET Marxist Discussion Group. Mondays starting at 8 pm. For further details contact: Eddie Lowson, Chester-Le-Street 88146

CLASSIFIED

MILITANT Northern Camp May 25-28 (Bank Holiday). Programme of discussion: Marxist Economics; Historical Materialism; Marxism and the trade unions; Perspectives for Britain; an international topic. Cost: £7; cheques payable to 'Militant Northern Camp'. For further details contact: Richard Knights, 3 Olive Mount Villas, Liverpool 15. Tel: 051-722 0928

UXBRIDGE LPYS. Darts competition. Saturday March 24th. Three Tuns, UXBRIDGE. 8pm. All Welcome.

SPANISH CIVIL WAR: little known diaries of John McNair, who fought with ILP and POUM. 50p from 36 Robinson Street, Stockport, Cheshire.

NEW MILITANT INDEX. Comprehensive, covers issues 300-436. 20p per copy plus 10p p&p. Cheques payable to 'Militant'. Orders from Simon Heather, 30 Mayfield Road, Mosely, Birmingham B13 9HJ.

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Cartoons drawn for 'Militant' by Alan Hardman

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Alan Hardman's collected cartoons. Price £1.
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NOTTINGHAM EVENING POST

UNIONS MUST BACK NUJ STRUGGLE

Twenty eight journalists sacked. Six of them, plus wives and children, told to leave their company-owned flats. Fourteen trade unionists arrested on mass pickets.

That's the Nottingham Evening Post bosses' score so far, since they locked out journalists who supported the NUJ's national strike.

High-handedness and union bashing have been common practice at the Post since a previous all-unions' lock-out in 1973. Since then no union official has been allowed on the premises and a third of the printers and journalists have been expelled from their unions for working in the 1973 dispute.

The unions' weak position has allowed T Bailey Forman, the parent company, to introduce the new technology still being fought over in the rest of the newspaper industry. The number of print-workers employed is estimated to have been cut from 150 to 40.

Pole-Carew (a self-confessed admirer of George Ward, of course) has been telling the journalists: "The chances of taking you all back are non-existent. The chances

Tony Cross

(E Nottingham LPYS)

of taking some of you back are very remote..."

These bosses put the extreme right-wing views of their editorials into practice!

Now newspaper bosses from Times Newspapers to IPC must be watching the Post dispute to see if they should try getting away with what TBF have.

A defeat in this dispute would be a threat to the jobs of all workers in the printing industry. It would weaken the whole Nottingham labour movement. Every trade unionist, especially in the print industry, must take up the fight to reinstate the 28.

The Nottingham labour movement has blacked the Post, as have two of the city's three Labour MPs. Only William Whitlock (Nottingham North) is still talking to the Post and even sent the scabs a Christmas card! Labour Party members are already protesting over this scandalous behaviour by a supposed representative of the labour movement.

Mass pickets with trade unionists from all over the country have been held.



Peter Anderson, NUJ, Nottingham Evening Post, arrested on picket line

These must be stepped up. The NUJ and the Trades Council must mobilise to the full, leafletting factories and pits and pressing all trade union branches in the area for active support.

But the experience of Grunwick, from which the bosses and police have taken heart, shows that these ac-

tions alone may well not be enough. The NUJ and Nottingham's Trades Council and Labour MPs should call a conference and campaign for representation from every trade union and Labour organisation in the area.

The conference should discuss how other trade unions can help. The threat of

cutting off services, supplies and mail was about to bring Grunwick to its knees when trade union leaders stepped in to lift the action.

These are the measures that must be taken if the Forman Hardys and Pole-Carews are to be forced to recognise that the trade unions are now twelve and a

half million strong and that workers have the right to a job and the right to organise.

Support the mass pickets etc.—details from: Nottingham News dispute office, 61A Derby Road, Nottingham.

**WITH UNITED ACTION
WE WILL WIN**

The civil service selective strike action by the CPSA and SCPS for implementation of the Pay Research Unit (PRU) recommendations, is continuing throughout the country. The government are refusing to negotiate.

In London five CPSA branches are involved: 100 people in the cypher and signals section of the Foreign Office; 20 people in four Department of Trade and Industry branches.

Picketing is being maintained in the headquarters branches of the Departments of Trade and Industry, where Telex operators, who deal with urgent ministerial work, investment, export, EEC and other government business, and the register of companies, are on strike.

The UPW branch involved have been magnificent in giving support by not crossing picket lines. Unfortunately, the TGWU drivers who deliver the internal government mail have been instructed by their leaders to cross CPSA picket lines, as they have been threatened with suspension by management.

T&GWU shop stewards have, however, agreed not to deliver computer tapes and paper.

The Civil Service Union, which covers messengers and internal mail van drivers have also been instructed to cross picket lines. However, the messengers are mostly in sympathy with our action. Their members are lower paid than the clerical workers in CPSA and Executive grades in SCPS.

The battle for full implementation of PRU will only be successful if there is co-ordinated action throughout the civil service.

Pulling out messengers would stop all mail being sent or received. Key militant sections such as DHSS and Department of Employment workers should be called out.

At the recent meeting of the CPSA NEC, the progress of the civil service pay battle was discussed. 'Militant' supporter Kevin Roddy submitted the following resolution:

"We applaud the efforts made by our members on the magnificent one-day strike of 23rd February and in the continuing selective industrial action.

"Nevertheless, we recognise that a considerable escalation of action is necessary in order to bring sufficient pressure to bear to win the struggle. We accordingly call upon all Section Executive Committees, including DHSS and DE, to meet urgently to offer suggestions about where escalation can be effective."

This motion was defeated by the right wing majority who are clearly prevaricating. They have declared that they want no stepping up of the action whatsoever.

Resolutions should flood in to the NEC demanding escalation as the best means of achieving a speedy victory.

DHSS members are angry at their exclusion from any strike action by the CPSA's 'moderate' leadership. This is not the way to win disputes.

The nine civil service trade unions could halt docks,

airports, telephone payments, Trade and Industry statistics and the complete defence system of the UK if they combined to force the government to implement PRU.

This is, anyway, only a catching up exercise with comparable workers in banks, local government and other public sector workers.

Our action has proved we have the strength to take on our employers directly in negotiations. This dispute, over the government's refusal to implement the comparability findings, is convincing more and more government workers that, as 'Militant' supporters have said, we cannot lean on other workers' pay struggles; we must show we are ready to fight to defend our living standards.

The only way selective action can be effective is if whole sections of a branch are brought out. Otherwise, as in our branches at the moment, the vast majority of members may not even realise that a strike is going on.

With the public sector manual workers' dispute still unsettled, links should now be established between the unions, preparing for joint public sector and civil service industrial action over pay.

We must bring home to the Labour government that they were put in power by, and are there to represent, the trade union movement and working people, not the other way round. Giving in to Conservative, big business, and IMF pressure is not the way forward to socialism.

Philip James
(CPSA DTI Ashdown, personal capacity)

ANGER ON THE NIGHT SHIFT

Just to add insult to injury, Longbridge management handed out a letter on February 28th, addressed to each worker individually.

It informed us (we were fully aware of it when we took strike action at the beginning of the month) that due to our "unconstitutional" action we had forfeited all lay-off pay for three months, from May 1st. This penalty clause is

part of the 'security of earnings' agreement.

But by sending the letter round they are just trying to show who's boss, and to gloat over the fact that we had to call our strike off.

Unfortunately for them the letters were greeted with howls of derision. On our line they finished up ripped into little pieces on the floor where they belong. On the next line the stewards collected the letters up, and handed them

back. The story going round the shop at the moment concerns the legendary factory ghost, supposed to be a worker killed years ago in the tunnel the car bodies come through.

One night last week a bloke apparently thought he saw it, and was quite shaken up. The joke goes, the ghost told him he wouldn't appear again till he got the night allowance we are all after.

By Bob Geoghegan
(TGWU-Longbridge)

GEC THREATEN 30,000 JOBS

GEC and Stafford workers came together on 23rd February to hear John Byrne (AUEW-GEC Distribution Switchgear division) and Dave Rothwell (AUEW, GEC Castle Engineering division) speak on the GEC jobs' crisis at a 'Militant' public meeting in Stafford.

The Chairman, Dave Mole ASTMS GEC HV Switchgear Division, pointed out that the speakers (all in a personal capacity) are attempting to broaden the struggle against redundancies throughout the labour and trade union movement.

Dave Rothwell told the meeting that the 170 redundancies in GEC Power Transformer Division had cost £78,000 and that was the thin edge of a very big wedge. The government's 'Think Tank' (CPRS) report recommended cutting 30,000 jobs at a cost to the exchequer of £110

million. Redundancies in the industry on this scale raises the question of a possible closure.

Management have refused to look into diversification, instead GEC prefer to enter markets for guaranteed profits. 'Weinstock goes for wonder technology' was how the 'Daily Telegraph' (3.12.78) put it.

The Joint Shop Stewards' Committee have set up a working party to investigate alternative work.

John Byrne showed that long-term planning of the industry was essential.

There is the capacity to produce 8-10,000 megawatts of generating plant per year but the Central Electricity Generating Board (with 20% over-capacity) only requires 2,000 megawatts of new plant per year.

This capacity was built during the boom of the 1950s and 60s when the massive investment programme of the

CEGB meant a guaranteed market and fat profits for the bosses.

Inadequate levels of investment by private industry have meant the decline of the industry as a world leader. The German AEG, for example, has twice the investment level of Britain.

The moves towards the formation of a GEC Combine Committee on a product group basis, a structure similar to that in Leyland, are gaining support, with 50 factories showing a real interest. But convenors at Trafford Park and Rugby have refused to take up the issue.

The building of a Combine Committee, with the exchange of ideas and information, is of key importance. When asked several years ago why GEC was successful, Weinstock replied "trade unionists in GEC very rarely look beyond their factory gates."

DUNLOP MILK OFF PROFITS -

And throw us on the stones

"The works director emigrated to Australia... We had a new director appointed at the beginning of February—a Mr Hope, and he's openly blamed the present problem on management's bad planning in the past.

"They say that Mr Hope will be replaced soon: first by Faith and then by Charity—when we all queue up at the dole office!"

This was the bitterly ironic comment of Dave James, MATSA (GMWU) convenor at Fort Dunlop, Birmingham. Dave was a member of one of the delegations from Dunlop plants throughout the country who last week lobbied the company's London headquarters to protest at plans which threaten to wipe out hundreds of jobs.

Fifty workers from the Bynmawr plant were on the lobby. AUEW convenor R Cook explained that they faced a 200 job loss by the end of the month. That day, all the Bynmawr workers were out in sympathy with Speke.

Representatives of the four main unions at the Leicester Polymer Engineering Division, which had been hit by 'rationalisation' two years ago, were also demonstrating.

All the stewards were bitter about Dunlop's failure to

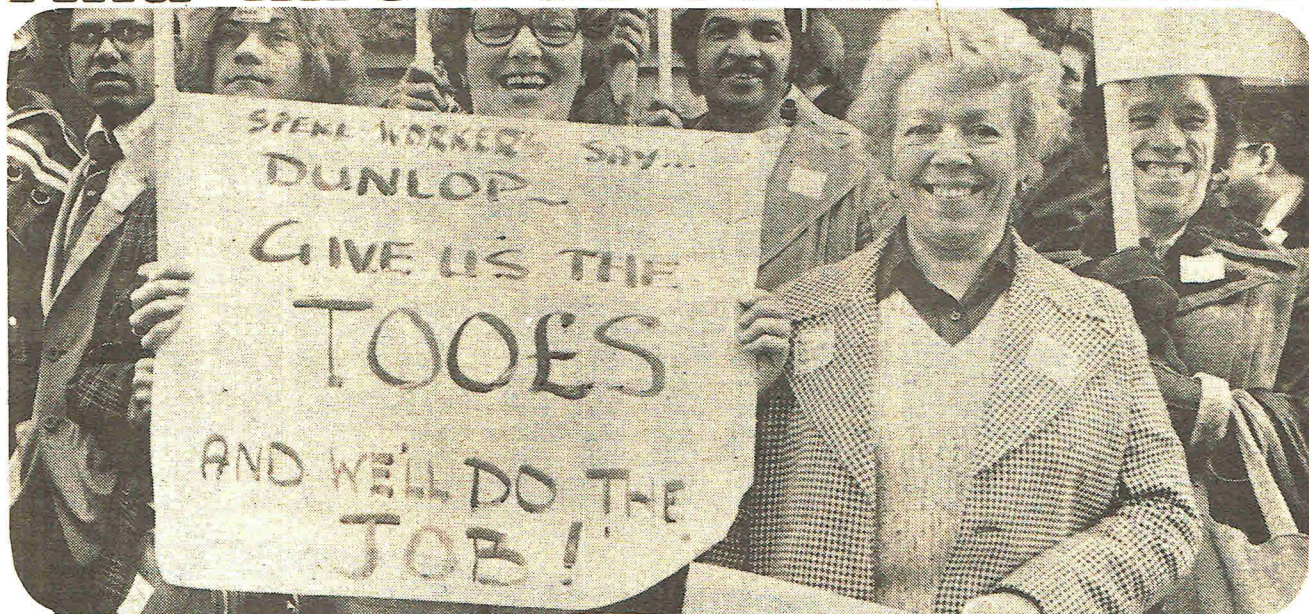
Dunlop workers on the lobby spoke to Julian McKittrick

invest in up-to-date equipment. Having milked the maximum profit from clapped-out machinery, the bosses are now producing abroad and importing back into Britain.

At Fort Dunlop, management have announced redundancies for 350 engineers and 150 to 200 staff. In the last five months, since the rubber production section was shut, over 400 have 'voluntarily' left the plant.

"But," explains Noel Johnson, G&MWU and chairman of the shop stewards' council, "really they were forced to leave because of the terrible effects of shift-working and the ancient machinery. Nobody was taken on to replace them.

"The machinery in the Mill Line dates back to 1919, and



Dunlop workers protest at jobs threat outside the firm's head office in London

Photo: Julian McKittrick/Militant

some in the Preparation Department is even older, believe it or not.

"There's been no investment for years. Now they're planning a brand new plant right next to Fort Dunlop, supposed to be ready in five years' time. If the bosses get away with it, over 75% of the workforce will lose their jobs."

For Speke workers, the horror of further big redundancies was brought home by the shocking news of the suicide of one of their workmates, Alan Kelly.

"Whole families will be decimated if our plant closes."

said one Speke worker: "There are six of us in my family working there' now. We'll all be out on the stones.

"Have you seen what it's like in Speke now? Rows of houses are boarded up—deserted!"

John Ellis and Richie Madigan, shop-floor production workers at Speke, also condemned the chronic back-

wardness of this run-down capitalist 'enterprise':

"We work in the motorcycle tyre bead section. Eight years ago they decided to stop making car tyres and change over to motorbike tyres. They just adapted the old machinery—already 25 years old. In 1965 they painted the machinery blue—and that's the last time it's been painted. It's

unbelievable!

"If something goes wrong with one machine they have to go over and take a bit off another to make it work. Cannibalising is the only way of keeping them running.

"There's a joke that it takes longer to produce a tyre in our plant than it does to wear it out!"

Strike at Bank of India

NUBE members at the Bank of India are at present on strike in the bank's head office and branches in order to reinstate a sacked member.

Despite recognising the union for three years, management have refused to meet a full-time official to discuss the many outstanding claims. As a result a one-day strike was called on 22nd January 1979. Immediately management agreed to meet the union. However, the day before the meeting a union member was sacked in the

Leicester branch, with no explanation.

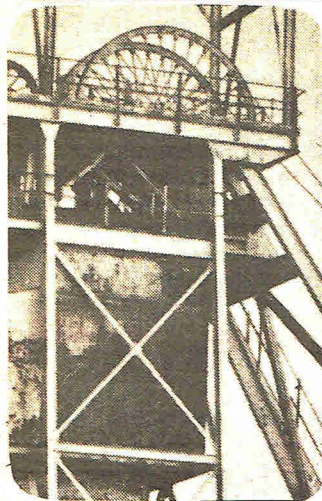
This member had joined the bank two months before. His only 'crime' was that he took part in the one-day strike.

On the 5th February the branches struck again and were joined by the members at head office on 8th February. Management immediately sent those on strike a letter of warning but has since informally agreed to meet the union as long as the sacking is not discussed.

The union is considering involving other members in associated banks and clearing banks to step up the impact on the Bank of India. However, we should also involve more of the members on strike in winning active support of other unions in the local areas.

Messages of support etc. to: Hashed Patel, NUBE, 4th floor, 627 Queen Street, London EC4 MISR

By a bank worker



SOUTH WALES PIT CLOSURES - MINERS READY TO FIGHT

Blaengwrach Colliery is one of the pits named by the NCB for possible closure. Rob Sewell and Meirion Evans interviewed lodge chairman Ken Dlewelyn and secretary Dane Hartwell, at the pit.

What are your views over the threatened closures of ten pits in the South Wales area?

This would be a disaster for the coalfield, it could finish South Wales. With the reserves at this pit, it would be criminal.

Without being parochial, this colliery has the biggest reserves of anthracite in the area. Two adjacent pits were closed in the early 'sixties. Then the Board stated that it would work their coal from this new mine at Blaengwrach, opened in 1961.

When we heard of the closure of Deep Duffryn this lodge immediately offered all support and assistance in their fight. So we feel we can morally and justifiably ask any lodge in the area to support us.

But we realise the tactics of the Board. They have said that ten loss-making pits

must fall, but they will be 'flexible' over them. Of course we would like to come off the list but by Blaengwrach coming off it means another pit goes on, so the problem is not solved.

When we heard of the closure plans we were not really surprised.

For example management prepared to work a new face in our six foot seam to the dip (i.e. travelling forward and down). We knew this was futile from past experience.

They went ahead, installed conveyors and roof supports, then decided to abandon it. Later we were forced to accept the position whereby 32 men would have to go to a nearby pit because there was no face available for them to work on.

A blind man could see that the policy of the board was to close this pit. It's been deliberately run down over

the last two and a half years.

We first heard about the closure plans at the area conference last week. The men are prepared to accept any proposals which the Lodge Committee presents to them in order to fight.

We were very pleased at the conference. There was a feeling of demoralisation at the previous one in January, but at this one there was an obvious change in the mood of delegates.

The mood was one of determination and indicative of the stand that would be made by the South Wales miners. I think South Wales may have the biggest bump, but this issue must be taken up nationally.

There is no link up between the threatened pits other than the official channel. We have five of the ten already participating in our joint lodge meetings in the district.

We knew right from the beginning the reasons for the reintroduction of piece work. It was in preparation for a further round of pit closures.

But miners must not accept these schemes and lie down—we must fight back.

BY TIM HIGGINS [AUEW Shepherds Bush]

WORKING IN THE UNION

Tim Higgins, AUEW Shepherds Bush, last week argued that dissatisfaction with the leadership of the Engineering section must not be allowed to set back full amalgamation. This week he takes up the questions of craft unionism and trade union democracy.

If you want to comment on these or other issues you face in your trade union, write to 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Mer'ers say, "Why not the construction Undoubtedly the amalgamation issue (or secti 1 of the AUEW merging with lack of it) played a certain role in the election UCA' ?" This by itself does not solve of the right wing to national positions within anything. It would mean one less union but the AUEW's engineering section. Because the would not add one member to the ranks of broad left/Communist Party leadership trade unions. (particularly in TASS) refused to subject themselves to election by the rank and file, time graduate towards what they regard as they allowed the right wing to portray the strongest union. They would not in the 'themselves as "democrats". Attempts by first instance examine the leadership, but those leaders to justify their actions by raising would see a large union as being the best the tactical issue of postal ballots (an protection against the bosses. important question) was quite rightly seen by members as dishonest.

All craft unions are contracting. This is the inevitable result of the division of labour. The In spite of this, we should put the issue of AUEW engineering section has a minority of amalgamation first, and continue the fight for craftsmen, hence the approach by the democracy within that union. Executive to the EETPU, NSMM and sheet But just as in the present public sector metal workers' union. unions' dispute, the need for one union in

Although the EC is doing this for their own each industry will be seen in action. A lead by reasons, we have to support them. As trade the AUEW will draw all sections behind it. unionists, we fight for the interests of the For full amalgamation of the AUEW. working class; strength and unity will best For full amalgamation of the Confed. serve those interests.

NORTH EAST WORKERS SAY-

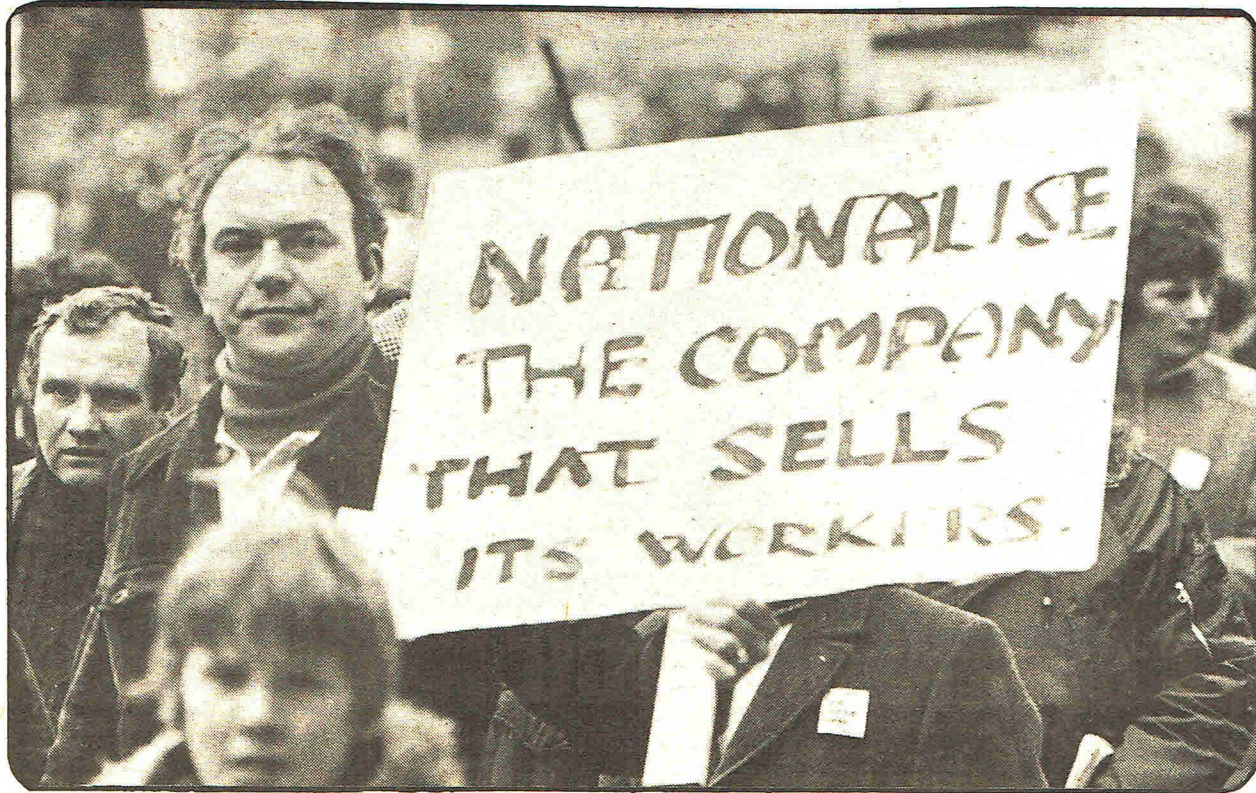


Photo: John Sturrock (Report)

Dunlop workers march against closure of Speke plant, Liverpool [10 March]

NO RETURN TO THE 30s

A real blizzard of redundancies has hit the North East! Apart from Northern Ireland, the North of England has the highest unemployment rate in the United Kingdom.

"No return to the Thirties!" This is now the alarm call of workers in the region who are not prepared to sit back and accept disaster.

By John Pickard
(Gateshead CLP)

Next Wednesday, hundreds of workers will be lobbying their MPs to demand action.

The shop stewards committees of Head Wrightson (Teesside) Courtaulds (Spennymoor) Vickers (Newcastle) and some of the Swan Hunter yards have formed a joint committee to fight the growing number of closures and sackings in the North East.

This committee has organised a mass lobby of Parliament, booking a special train for some 600 workers.

The workers have displayed unstinting support for the Labour Party in the past. There is not a single Tory MP

in the whole of County Durham. There are constituencies like Chester-le-Street where there has been a Labour MP continuously for over 70 years.

The Labour Party and the Labour government must now return the loyalty of the North East workers. Reduce the working week to 35-hours! Share out the work with no loss of pay!

The government must take over the firms threatening redundancies—with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.

Organise production in the North East industries on the basis of community needs. Nationalise on the basis of democratic control and management by the workers!

PTA- THREAT TO WORKERS

Just as the Prevention of Terrorism Act [PTA] comes up again for its annual renewal, the police have demonstrated yet again the draconian powers it confers on them.

Last Sunday, four more adults were arbitrarily held under the PTA. Mrs Margaret Bradley, four months pregnant, and her brother, who were travelling from Belfast, and two brothers who had come to meet them, were arrested and detained at Heathrow and then Paddington Green police stations for well over ten hours.

No reasons were given, and there were no charges when they were eventually released. We may speculate that, as far as the police were concerned, the fact that Mrs Bradley's husband was formerly a detainee in Northern Ireland, who five years ago took his case to the United Nations and was awarded substantial compensation for RUC brutality, was reason enough.

As if this was not outrageous enough, however, the

five children accompanying the adults [aged between one-and-a-half and fourteen] were also detained—separated from their parents, the older ones being questioned about their political views (!), and released only after ten hours at the police station.

We have warned before of the threat to the labour movement posed by the Act's draconian powers of incommunicado detention and arbitrary 'exclusion orders'.

The police—backed by the Home Office and the Labour government—claim that the PTA powers are essential to combat terrorism. But every conceivable terrorist act was an indictable crime long before the introduction of PTA.

And why is it that the great majority of people detained under the PTA have never been charged with any crime at all, let alone 'terrorist' crimes?

Under the PTA 'terrorism' is defined as "the use of violence for political ends, and includes any use of violence for the purpose of putting the public or any section of the public in fear." A definition which allows the police to cast a very wide net!

Already, trade union activists have been detained or

excluded, without appeal, from Britain.

The organisations of the labour movement should register strong protests at the highly repressive use of the PTA, particularly horrific in its use against pregnant women and young children. Neither the Labour government nor—even more alarming—a future Tory government should be allowed to take it for granted that it can automatically renew these powers every year—until, maybe, they become a permanent stricture.

NURSES

Continued from page 1

first year. Pay is a great cause of dissatisfaction; usually about £30 a week gross.

But even more irksome, is the way young nurses are treated like children. There are numerous petty rules and regulations if they live in. It can be like a convent.

No visitors. Get in by a certain time. In some hospitals they even have random

checks on rooms, supposedly for drugs.

In the past, our unions, like the Royal College of Nurses, were timid organisations, often top-heavy with senior staff. Now this is changing.

Now we are angry. We are looking to our unions for a way forward.

Unless nurses are given a living wage and reasonable conditions, the health service will suffer, patients will suffer. It is time that something was done.

DOLE QUEUES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

industry to waste and are incapable of providing a job and decent conditions for all.

The Brenner Report, featured recently on 'World in Action', showed the unmistakable link between high unemployment and exceptionally high mortality rates. The evidence in this area indicates that the Brenner Report, if anything, actually underestimates unemployment's deathly effects.

Sunderland Community Health Council recently reported that the rate of visits to local GPs is five times higher than the national average. The Sunderland Samaritans have revealed that they have a staggering 11,000 calls a year from people on the verge of despair.

It's sickening, in the light of all this, that Tory loudmouths, Fleet Street hacks and big business parasites still try to claim it's only the "workshy" who are out of work, and that the dole queues are full of "scroung-

ers", too feckless to find jobs.

It is the rotten profit system defended by these people which is responsible for the terrible waste and destruction of mass unemployment!

When workers at GEC Stafford heard of Dick Jenkinson's death, many were moved to tears. That morning, 5,000 walked out in protest. This tragic incident illuminated the seriousness of the threat facing thousands of workers and their families.

Workers cast out by the bosses must not be allowed to fall victim to despair. Unemployed workers must not be abandoned to demoralisation in the dole queue.

The trade unions, the whole labour movement must mobilise its forces to combat unemployment. It must provide a real alternative to workers threatened with sackings.

- ★ A 35-hour week!
- ★ Work-sharing without loss of pay!
- ★ £70 a week minimum for all workers!
- ★ Take over firms threatening redundancies!
- ★ Implement socialist policies to tackle the crisis!

DUBLIN

continued from page one

day 20th March.

There is no doubt that if such an action were organised properly, the whole of Dublin would grind to a halt and 100,000 to 200,000 workers, as well as their families, would take to the streets.

In the 26 counties at the moment, 87.6% of government revenue from taxation comes from 'Pay As You Earn' workers. Big business and the big farmers contribute a derisory amount. This is despite after-tax profits for the top 75 publicly-quoted companies increasing by 40% last year.

Fianna Fail's stand on

taxation and their blunt refusal to increase the wages of low-paid workers such as the Post Office workers is showing them more and more as the party of big business.

Labour Party leaders also took part in the march in Dublin. But what is needed is a determined campaign by the Labour leaders on behalf of the low paid, and to expose the bosses' parties. This would win huge support for Labour among workers and establish the Labour Party as the real alternative to Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, Ireland's 'reserve' Tory party.

A very encouraging sign for the future was that, for the first time, the newly-formed Labour Party Youth section took part in the demonstration under their own banner.



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