

Militant

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LABOUR MOVEMENT MUST MOBILISE

TORIES ARE 'REACTIONARY'

admits Thatcher

With less than two weeks to go to election day, the result is still in doubt.

By
Jim Chrystie

The opinion polls [for what they are worth] show the Tory lead narrowing in Britain as a whole and a 22% lead for Labour in Scotland. The campaign over the next fortnight is crucial.

It is vital that all the resources of the labour movement are put to use in exposing Thatcher and her plans.

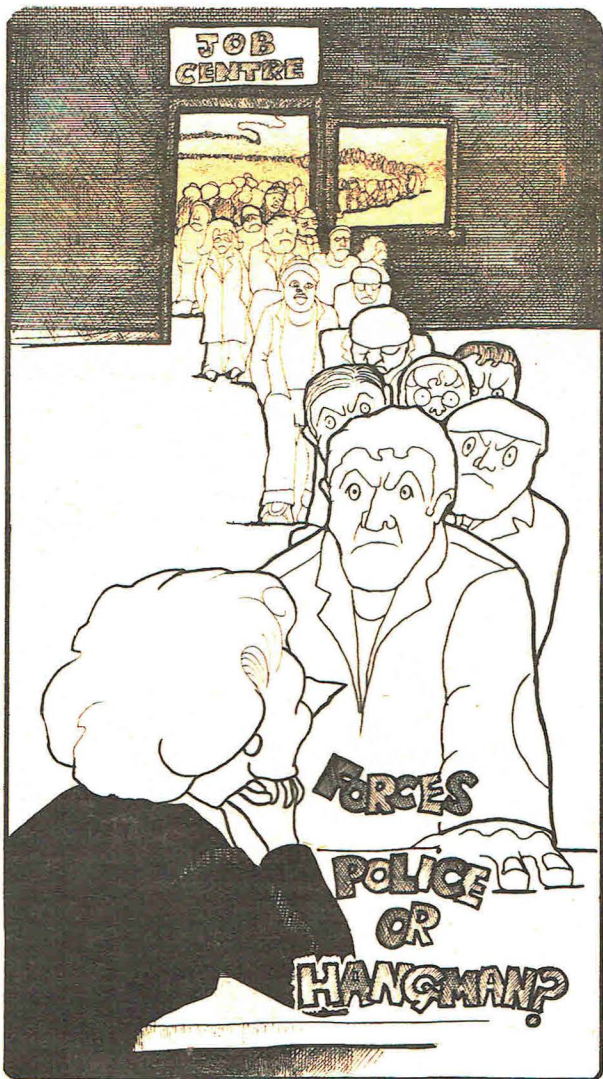
It is not difficult. After a deceptively quiet beginning the Tories are now revealing their real policies. Thatcher has spoken of the need for change—but change back to her favourite period, the Victorian age.

Workers knew their place then—to produce the wealth, but not to question where it went, to be prepared to die for the ruling class, but not to fight for their rights.

Last Monday she even resuscitated the spirit of Churchill to get rid of socialism: "Is this the nation that stood alone in 1940 against the collapse of European civilisation?"

In the same speech she proudly called herself a "reactionary", proclaiming "there is a lot to react against." The Tories are trying to turn the clock back, wiping out trade union rights, attacking the social services, selling off council houses—all the gains of years of struggle.

In their manifesto, the



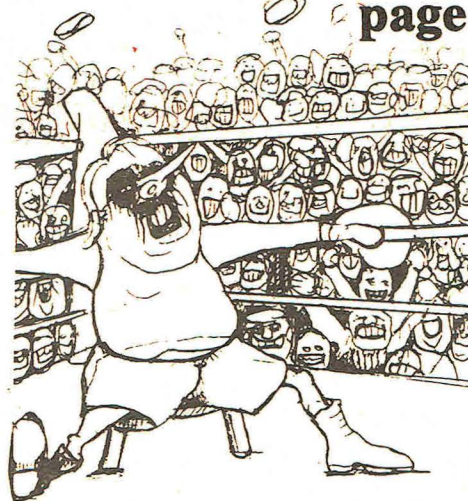
"We need to create conditions in which new, more modern, more secure, better paid jobs come into existence." —Conservative Manifesto 1979

Tories talk about "helping exist at the moment and the family." But which increasing the cost of ordinary goods through VAT.

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HENLEY HYMAC-

WORKERS MARCH AGAINST LOCKOUT

When workers at Hymac & Henley Forklift asked for an improvement in their totally inadequate wages [going through all the proper procedure], the bosses just locked them out.

Anger at this arbitrary management action brought over 700 trade unionists to a march through Blackwood last Saturday, the biggest march seen in the area for years.

The Tories may denounce the trade unions for all they are worth, but ordinary workers are well aware that strong union organisation is still vitally necessary to defend living standards and basic rights.

Organised by the Henley Forklift workers (now entering their fourth week of lock-out), the march included contingents from Switchgear, Penny & Giles, Johnson and Johnsons, the local Trades Councils, NCB Engineering works,

By Terry Burns
(Bedwelly Labour Party)

Bedwelly Labour Party, and the Labour Party Young Socialists.

This show of strength and solidarity was well received by Blackwood shoppers, with large numbers joining in on route.

Women workers from the Motil Plastics factory who are on strike for an increase in what can only be described as poverty wages also formed a contingent.

The march ended with a rally in the local Miners' Institute addressed by local trade union activists, full-

time officials, convenors, Neil Kinnock the Labour candidate for Bedwelly, and the Welsh LPYS chairman Chris Burns, all pledging support and aid in this struggle against the scandalous actions of the employers in the area.

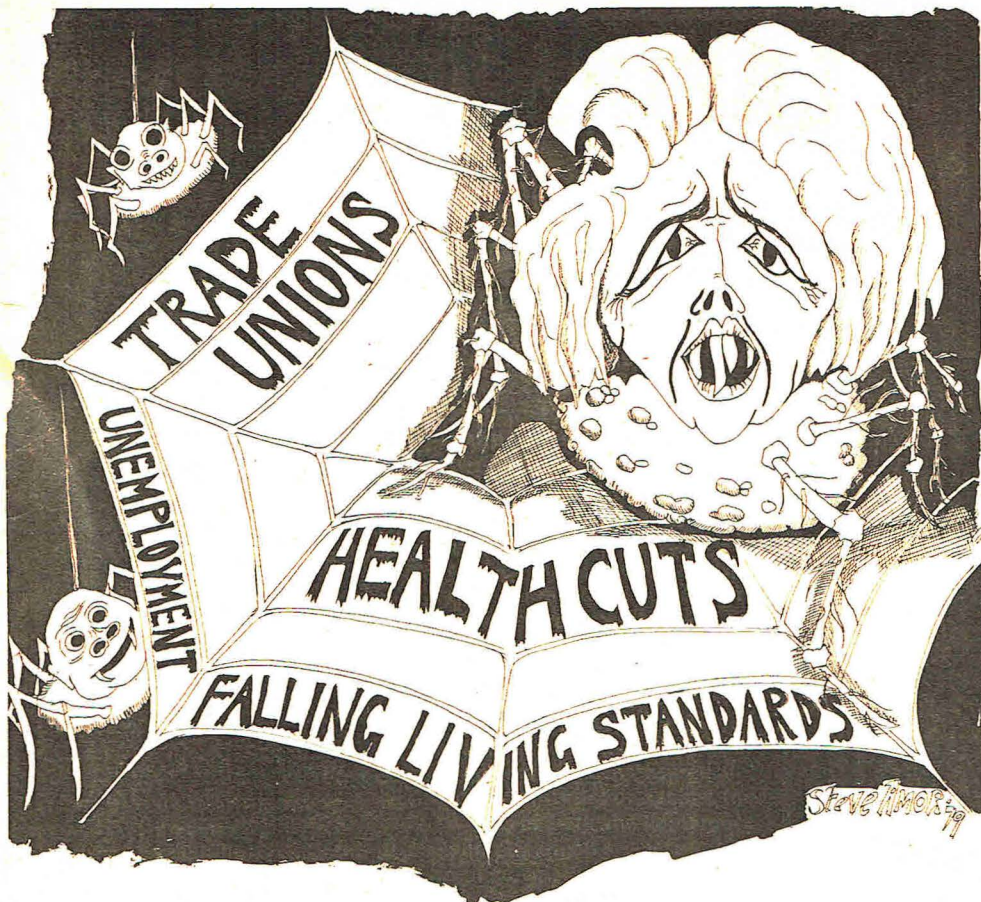
A number of speakers also raised the question of the role of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers' national organisation, calling for the union's full involvement in the fight against the actions of the Engineering Employers' Federation who are the instigators of these lock-outs.

There was a clear call from the rally for national action; and a resolution from the rally was sent by telegram to the AUEW President calling for such action.

A lobby of the AUEW Executive was also prepared.

Review of AUEW National Committee—page 5

LABOUR TO POWER ON SOCIALIST PROGRAMME



THE TORY PRESS

This election campaign has seen not only the sharpening of the talons of the Tory Party—in its attacks on the powers built up by the trade unions and the services won by the sacrifice of the working class—it has been backed to the hilt by an hysterical campaign against Labour by the millionaire press.

Thatcher, of course, gets film-star treatment—every reactionary syllable is greeted with an accolade.

The Labour Party—and even its right-wing leaders who before the collapse of the wage-restraint policy also received the backing of the press against the rank and file—have been subjected to a barrage of abuse.

The distortions of the 'popular' press are no accidental lapse of 'objectivity'. Four of the five popular dailies, the 'tabloids', openly support the Tory Party.

The 'Sun',—a thousand

miles removed from the old Labour 'Daily Herald' it took over—reported the Tories' election Manifesto under the pseudo-evangelical headline: 'I believe'. This yellow rag spoke of Thatcher declaring "her faith in a better, brighter, booming Britain".

In almost obscene contrast, Labour's Manifesto was squeezed off the front page by the headline: 'Sex Prisoner locked in a packing case'. This is the 'press freedom' championed by the Tories.

The 'Daily Mail' and 'Daily Express', for their part have been busy fabricating 'red scares'. The 'Mail' has a long dishonourable record in this, going back to the forged Zinoviev letter which aided the defeat of the first Labour government in 1924.

The 'Mail' lambasted the Labour Manifesto as being "loaded with hard-line socialist pledges". Had they been interested in the truth, the 'Mail' would have reported Labour Party members' disappointment at the absence of socialist measures and anger at the watering-down of the Manifesto by the right wing to placate 'moderate opinion' [i.e. big business]—an aim they evidently completely failed to achieve as far as the

'Mail' was concerned!

The labour movement should really expect no better of the capitalist press. The Tories are the party of big business, and big business owns the press.

Talk of 'freedom of the press', usually directed against workers trying to defend themselves against attacks by the press barons, is so much cant.

But the necessary conclusions must be drawn.

The Labour leaders must spell out the real facts about the crisis in the economy—and put the responsibility where it really belongs: with the big business parasites who simply milked British industry dry for their own profit.

And the enormous power of the press and the television must be countered by the mobilisation of the labour movement. Factory meetings, mass rallies, mass canvasses must be organised in every area—through which the truth about the problems facing workers can be hammered out and a socialist alternative put forward. Such a campaign would undermine the influence of the hostile media.

If they were only fully mobilised, the labour movement has all the resources necessary to assure a Tory defeat and a Labour victory.

UGANDA Amin falls

No tears will be shed over the defeat of Amin. His 'rule' cost the lives of over 300,000 Ugandans, many killed in the most brutal of circumstances.

But the stench of hypocrisy from Western politicians applauding his overthrow is nauseating.

It was Western imperialism, through Britain and Israel, which brought Amin to power.

Later, when Amin was refused modern arms by his former benefactors, he turned against them and was supported by Libya, Egypt and the

Soviet Union.

Only then did Western papers 'discover' that Amin was a tyrant.

Now they are hoping that the new regime will open its doors to Western business. It is vital for Uganda that they do not succeed.

The new government is a mixture of class forces, and has come to power with the support but not the active involvement of the mass of population.

The overthrow of Amin does open up the possibility of a new future for the people of Uganda. It is essential that



this future is not lost or handed over to a new elite.

In the coming period it is crucial that the workers, peasants and small farmers set up their own organisations to control the economy and the state.

Eileen Short

CROYDON CENTRAL Youth Rally for Labour

The Labour Party Young Socialists have been very active in Croydon Central during the campaign in support of Labour candidate David White. An average of twenty members have been out every night, and more at the weekends.

This activity will culminate in a mass canvass and rally this Sunday, 22 April, meeting 10-10.30 a.m. at Ruskin House, 23 Coombe Road, Croydon for an all-day canvass.

The nearest stations are East Croydon and South Croydon [BR] or buses 109, 166, 190, 197, 12a, 194, 68, 64, 54.

There will be a Youth for Labour rally at 1.30 p.m. at the New Addington Community centre: speakers, Dave White and Phil Frampton [LPYS Chairman].

Help is still needed every evening at 6.30 p.m. at Ruskin House, especially on polling day. Ring Croydon Central Labour Party [01-688-1378].

David White got a good reception when he spoke to a meeting of COHSE and NUPE members at Queens Hospital, Croydon, last week. He outlined the threat of a reactionary Thatcher government which would be the most right-wing government in living memory.

The Tories were committed to savage attacks on trade union rights and public spending on the



David White campaigning in Croydon day of action

Photo:

MILITANT

already inadequately funded NHS. He expressed his support for the fight of NHS workers for a £60 minimum wage and 35-

hour week, and said that a Labour government should implement it nationally for all low-paid workers.

REACTIONARY TORIES



Continued from page one

They will increase unemployment: "Too much emphasis has been placed on attempts to preserve jobs."

They will let profits rip. The manifesto declares: "Profits are the foundation of a free enterprise economy. In Britain profits are still dangerously low."

Workers' rights to picket and take effective industrial action will be curtailed.

The Tory manifesto announces: "We cannot allow a repetition of the behaviour that we saw outside too many of our factories and hospitals last winter."

In the manifesto, picketing is linked with violence. And in her speech last Monday, Thatcher scandalously and

ominously tried to link those who are struggling for an alternative socialist society with the mugger and the armed thief.

These would be treated "for what they are—dangerous criminals to be resisted by civilised society with all its power."

For the whole labour movement the danger signs are there.

But what has been the reaction of the Labour leadership to these attacks by the Tories? Unfortunately they have been conducting the campaign with one hand tied behind their backs.

The right hand has defensively tried to ward off the Tories and point out the social confrontation they would bring.

But the left hand has failed to punch out an alternative. The Labour leadership is not fighting this election as the party of change. It is calling for the continuation of existing policies, which have had such a disastrous effect on

workers' living standards over the last few years.

It is vital that the labour movement moves away from this approach. The election is not "all over bar the shouting." As the reality sinks in of what a Thatcher government would mean, the Tory lead has declined.

But many workers will still not come out to vote Labour, unless they are offered a positive socialist alternative.

It is crucial that trade unionists actively mobilise their resources for such a campaign. In some factories such as Rover, Solihull shop stewards have set up committees for a Labour victory and spelt out a real socialist alternative to Thatcherism.

It is not too late for the trade unions to organise and encourage these local initiatives on a national scale.

That is the way forward as Labour enters the last days of the campaign—resist the Tory threat with a fighting socialist approach.

NEWHAM NORTH EAST LABOUR PARTY

Events in Newham North East took a sharp turn on Monday, April 9th, when the Labour Parliamentary candidate, James Dickens, refused to be adopted as Labour's standard bearer in the general election in this safe Labour seat.

Dickens, who is Assistant Director of Manpower [Industrial Relations] with the National Water Council on a five-figure salary, had antagonised trade union delegates in Newham North East Labour Party ever since his selection in July 1978 by his unbending defence of the 5% wage restraint policy.

In September he was decisively defeated when an emergency resolution supporting the Ford workers was carried by Newham NE Labour Party despite his denunciation of the Ford workers' action.

Similarly, in December, his views were again in a minority when the local Labour Party voted to send a resolution to London Labour Party Conference calling for a general

By 'Militant' reporters

election strategy based on Party Conference decisions to end wage restraint and to introduce a 35-hour week and a £60 minimum wage.

These issues formed the background to the argument over Dickens' proposed election address which highlighted the Cabinet-TUC "Concordat" rather than Party Conference decisions on pay and other economic policy matters.

At his adoption meeting Dickens called for unanimous support for his election address as a "binding agreement" between himself and every General Committee member for the full duration of the next Parliament!

Despite the fact that many of his foremost critics were not present at what had been expected to be a routine adoption meeting, Dickens only scraped through 17-13

with 5 abstentions on his address which, in the circumstances, had taken on the significance of a virtual vote of confidence.

This led to Dickens walking out of his own adoption meeting. His resignation was confirmed in writing the following evening at an emergency General Committee.

At this meeting, Regional Organiser Bill Jones pledged that local officers would be called together to draw up a short list for a new candidate and that an emergency Selection Conference would take place on 17th April.

The Labour Party's Campaign Committee, meeting on Thursday April 12, however, reacted to Tory press pressure and decided to impose a candidate or candidates onto Newham North East Labour Party.

Dick Clements [Editor, 'Tribune'], Bryn Jones

[broadcaster] and anti-marketeer Ron Leighton agreed to go on the Transport House-imposed short list which was presented to Newham Party officers that evening.

The officers tied 3-3 on acceptance of this ultimatum which was finally accepted on the casting vote of the Chairman, Phil Bradbury. Party vice-chairman Andy Bevan had voted against, having argued that a local democratically determined short list should be drawn up.

Nevertheless, the officers' decision now means that the Selection Conference on April 17th will vote on the Transport House shortlist, under protest.

Predictably, the Tory press has gone to town on the issue. They have wheeled out all their old lies about "red plots". The 'News of the World' even suggested that

'Militant' supporter Nick Bradley, who was runner-up to Dickens last July, might stand against the official Labour candidate!

The capitalist press campaigned ferociously to prevent Nick Bradley from obtaining the Labour nomination. The millionaire owners of the press think they have the right to decide who will represent Labour in Parliament.

This is the right of the rank and file Labour members alone.

As it happens supporters of Nick Bradley had decided early on—mainly because there would not have been time to organise a campaign to secure his nomination—not to put him forward as a candidate.

The Campaign Committee's foisting of a short list onto Newham NE is, in our view, totally wrong. It is penalising Newham for

Dickens' resignation.

Clearly, whoever is selected will, as Labour candidate, get the full and loyal activity of all Party members in Newham NE in the election campaign. It remains of key importance to ensure that the campaign is fought on the basis of the very conference decisions which Dickens challenged unsuccessfully.

After the election, the political debate will continue and Party members will need to draw the lessons of Newham's rich experience of struggle over the past four years. One of the lessons must surely be for those delegates who voted for a pro-wage restraint senior manager as Labour candidate not to make the same elementary mistake again!

A fuller analysis of the Newham struggle will appear next week.

MODERATES TRY TO PREVENT GARSTON MEETING

A LABOUR VICTORY

By Brent Kennedy

"Labour's election campaign was shaken last night by a sabotage letter to the Prime Minister from his own side."

These were the words which appeared in big, bold type on the front page of the 'Daily Express' on 9th April as the Tory press gleefully reported an evidently well-prepared stab in the back for Labour Party activists from the right wing "Social Democratic Alliance".

While thousands of rank-and-file Party workers were out on the doorsteps fighting for a Labour victory these self-styled "moderates" were busy providing ammunition to Labour's worst enemies: the millionaire propaganda machine.

In language reminiscent of a cheap spy novel, the Social Democrats' letter to Callaghan warned of a sinister plot by left wingers to take over the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP). You may not have noticed it, but apparently there are no less than 43 "extremists" in the PLP.

The politically dubious men of the SDA who show open contempt for the official policies of the Labour Party adopted by democratic majorities at the Party conferences, are neither democratic nor particularly sociable, let alone socialist.

But just whom are they in "alliance" with?

Certainly, the Tory 'Daily Telegraph' found their smears and insinuations so useful to their campaign to get a Thatcher government elected that they gave free

space in their paper to Douglas Eden, SDA Secretary, to try to do more damage to the Labour movement.

But here Eden revealed that the right wing carpet-baggers do not even want the return of a majority Labour government.

Bemoaning the fact that Labour's rank-and-file members have chosen more left-wing candidates in place of old right wingers, Eden complains that:

"Barring an outlandishly large defeat for Labour, there will be at least 11 more left wing and 11 less moderate centre MPs in the next PLP. Beyond this the five most marginal Conservative-held seats in England have left-wing Labour candidates. If there were a one per cent swing to Labour, at least eight of the 13 MPs from the new marginal Labour seats would be left wing."

Clearly, then, this attack on the Labour Party is designed to sabotage an election victory and a Labour majority in Parliament. With "friends" like these, who needs enemies?

But it is only when you look at the list of "Labour's danger men", as the 'Daily Express' quickly christened them, that the ridiculous nature of the attack becomes clear. Among the "extremists" on the "fringe" of the Labour Party is the National Chairman of the Party himself, Frank Allaun MP!

Next comes Norman Atkinson, who was elected by a majority at the Party conference as National Treasurer.

Then there is Cabinet Minister Tony Benn—and ex-left winger Michael Foot, who advocates wage restraint and must now be counted among Jim Callaghan's staunchest colleagues.

If these are on the "extreme left"—it just goes to show

how "extreme right" the SDA is!

But one man at least agreed with these right wingers—turncoat Reg Prentice, who betrayed the Labour Party by joining the Tories. At least Prentice is consistent in his attacks on socialists.

Endorsing the views of the Social Democrats, he urged them to take the only logical step—wash their hands of the Labour Party and join...the Tories!

Replying to this point on TV, Transport Secretary William Rodgers, himself formerly active in the right-wing Campaign for Democratic Socialism and the misnamed 'Manifesto' Group, said he was only too sorry that Prentice had left the Labour Party. But the more likely reply from ordinary Party members would have been: "Good riddance to bad rubbish!"

Labour has been held back from fighting for a real socialist change in society for years by a whole layer of well-to-do interlopers who have shifted the Party away from its honest, working-class traditions and socialist aims in order to use the movement as a stepping stone for their own careers.

Now that the rank-and-file are demanding a change and the careerists have established comfortable positions, many are moving on to greener pastures.

The Party is well rid of these people!

While the right wing continue their reactionary crusade against socialist policies and to run Labour's electoral prospects, the Marxists in the Party will carry on the fight to keep out the Tories and return a majority Labour government—and to return the Party to the fundamental socialist ideas of the Labour pioneers.

"Unemployment caused by the capitalist system can only be eradicated by public ownership of the means of production to plan the economy in the interests of working people."

Eddie Loyden, MP for Garston, opened his election campaign with this clear socialist message.

In a rousing speech at a public meeting on Tuesday 10th April, he hammered the anti-working class policies of the Tories. He put forward an alternative of socialist nationalisation to fight the closures,

redundancies and mass destruction of jobs which big business has inflicted on Merseyside.

The horror and misery of unemployment was highlighted by Paul Astbury of the LPYS when he pointed out that unemployment was 32% in Wavertree and Edge Hill, and 43% in the North Docks area. The poverty and social problems arising from this was shown by the fact that 1 in 4 people in Speke were receiving social security benefits of some kind or another!

Arthur Todd from Dun-

lop's, a firm whose workers are under threat of losing 2,400 jobs, praised Eddie Loyden for his consistency in fighting to save jobs in Merseyside. He pledged the full support of the Dunlop workers to return him as their MP.

The bold socialist policies outlined were enthusiastically greeted by the audience, some of whom decided to join the Labour Party at the end of the meeting.

By Wayne Jones

SOME OF THE VIEWS THAT'S NOT FIT TO PRINT

The London Evening Standard recently attacked Hayes and Harlington Labour Party for daring to exercise the right to choose its candidate. When Bob Labi, who is a member of the London Labour Party Executive, wrote to the Evening Standard, part of the letter was published.

We reproduce here in full the letter sent to the Standard with the sections they were not prepared to publish in *italics*.

It is not surprising that in your Editorial last Tuesday you once again attempted to intervene inside the Labour Party by throwing dirt at ordinary Party members. You after all only carrying out the instructions of your boss, Victor Matthews, Chairman of Excess Newspapers.

When last year the Sunday Telegraph asked Matthews whether his newspapers would support the Tories in the election he replied "We will support any party that stands for capitalism and private enterprise. So the answer is

yes." [5/3/78].

You attacked the 31 delegates who voted against Neville Sandelson as a 'clique'—yet may we ask how many people control the policy of the Evening Standard?

Who elected Victor Matthews? How many people appointed the Evening Standard's Editor?

Your Editorial is just one more piece of hypocrisy from the big business owned press. Enraged by the radicalisation taking place inside the Labour Party and Trade Unions the newspaper owners attempting to use their monopoly control of the press to defend big business.

No complaints have been made about 'cliques' in the Labour Party when right wing, pro-capitalist candidates were being selected. Only now, when the situation inside the Labour Party is changing, does a hue and cry about 'cliques' go up.

In reality the press is attempting to ensure that the candidates of its liking are

selected as Labour Party candidates and at the same time trying to stop the leftward march of ordinary Labour Party members.

Big business fears the radicalisation of the Labour Party, no longer will they have a 'tame' Labour Party led by the likes of George Brown and Reg Prentice.

But this press campaign will fail. Increasing their own experience will make working people support radical socialist policies, a process which the economic and social turmoil of the past years has already started inside the Labour Party and trade unions.

Newspaper articles cannot cut across the facts of life and the socialist conclusions the Labour Movement will draw from them.

Yours Sincerely
Bob Labi
Member, Greater London Labour Party Executive
(since 1971)

ELECTION ROUND-UP

A PROGRAMME TO FIGHT THE TORIES

CHESTER-LE-STREET

The newly opened Labour Club of Chester-le-Street CLP has had its first Militant Readers' Meeting. John Pickard spoke on the need to 'Fight the Tories with a Socialist Programme.'

John showed that after the defeat of the Labour government the Stock Exchange had risen to dizzy heights.

Big business are madly keen for the return of a Tory administration, which in return would pay its masters by increasing their profits, without regard to the consequences.

Thatcher was quoted 18 months ago as saying "If opportunity is to mean anything, it has to include the opportunity to be unequal". The Tory party is the party of privilege.

Crocodile tears over cuts in the NHS could not disguise what would be in store under the Tories. NHS, Education, Social Services cut to the bone—only if you had the money could you afford the necessities of life!

People should not be conned by promises to cut direct taxation as this would only

By Gordon Bell
&
Joe Brown

greatly benefit surtax payers and would be wiped out with increases in indirect taxation, i.e. higher prices all round.

The Tory party in office would mean a direct massive increase in the dole queues as cuts in public expenditure and their policy of closing uneconomical (their definition) firms bit deep.

It would also mean direct interference in the affairs of Trade Unions, as shown by their adoration of George Ward.

'Militant' has correctly criticised the Labour Government on many issues in the past. But Marxists will be the best fighters for the return of the Labour Government. We stand for the strengthening of



Grunwick's dispute—Tory union policy based on admiration for George Ward

the programme of the Labour Government, a programme which would boldly oppose the monopoly rule of big business. According to the 'Financial Times' just six companies accounted for over 25% of the total turnover of business capital in this country.

The total assets of the top 20 companies amounted to over £32 billion which were effectively controlled by only

284 directors! These and their Tory defenders were the enemy of the working class.

John outlined the socialist alternative of 'Militant' which was gaining more and more support within the Labour Party and which if adopted by the Movement as a whole would provide not only the means of winning the election, but put an end to the Tory system of inequality, hardship and misery.

He called for the introduction of the 35-hour week immediately, without loss of pay. A socially necessary programme of public works to provide much needed facilities and to combat unemployment, together with a massive extension in the social services. A minimum wage of £70 a week and adequate pensions for the elderly and sick. A ban on unnecessary overtime and

more holidays.

To pay for this programme of social reform he called for the nationalisation of the financial institutions and banks, together with the major monopolies who controlled and dominated our lives. These firms must be placed under public ownership with workers' control and management to ensure a socialist plan of production.

From their own mouths

"The (Labour) government would do nothing to alter the legal power and privileges of the trade unions. We say that, as history teaches, excessive power—in no matter whose hands—will always be abused, and should therefore be subject to legal restraint..."

"What do you think would have been the result if Lord Shaftesbury, instead of pushing through the Factory Acts had tried to negotiate a 'Concordat', a voluntary code about child labour with the mill owners and colliery owners of the last century?..."

"We have spelt out in the Manifesto the key points with which we must deal; picketing, the closed shop, and the secret ballot." Margaret Thatcher, adoption meeting, Finchley, 11 April.

"Here is a vast area for the reformist zeal of our party which has always believed that politics is about people." M Thatcher, 11 April.

"Labour's programme is more Marxist than that of the Italian Communist Party". Reg Prentice, Tory candidate for Daventry.

"Lambeth Council is creating the basis of a Marxist state in the heart of London." Hugh Rossi, Tory spokesman on Housing.

"This is not the time to be mealy-mouthed. Intervention (in industry) is destroying us." Sir Keith Joseph, 22 June 1974.

"There is no such thing as a government grant, it is a taxpayers' grant. There can be no reduction in public spending with out disappointment to some."

"There must be a shift in the burden of taxation to a tax on spending. There must be a package to cut direct taxation, particularly at the top rates, and capital gains and capital transfer taxes." John Biffen, Tory small businesses spokesman, 24 March 1979.

"Many managers are in favour of the closed shop" (cries of 'shame'). "Many people in industry welcome the protection of the unions" (massed shouts of 'rubbish'). A voice in the wilderness at Conservative Central Council meeting in Solihull, 24 March 1979.

Labour must fight for a minimum wage

The following resolution was carried at this CLP's General Committee meeting last week. The resolution has been sent to the NEC.

"This CLP calls upon HM Government, as an integral part of a Socialist programme to legislate forthwith for a guaranteed minimum wage based on a 35-hour week for all workers.

This minimum wage should be not less than £70 a week and should be linked to the cost of living."

Mrs Fairwood
Acting Secretary
Enfield Southgate CLP

The surest route to victory

"What did you think of the result last night? For once it was not football results being discussed in the canteen. It was the night after the vote of no confidence in the Labour government.

"I don't usually vote but I will this time—to keep her out!" declared a NUPE shop steward summing up the general feeling among those on "first break".

It is precisely this reservoir of support and loyalty from ordinary working people that Labour should mobilise as a basis for the "bold socialist challenge" Callaghan himself referred to in the debate.

This would be the surest route to victory: a challenge to the bosses' system, a Labour government with socialist policies!

By Leon Kaplan
Rotherham COHSE

'OLD PEOPLE WELL OFF' SAYS TORY

Thousands of old people have died in the past few months' bitter winter from hypothermia.

However, according to one Tory, Nottinghamshire County Councillor Sam Stuart, their problems are purely imaginary. "Far too often we are told that old people in this country are hard up," he said. "I think that those who say such things actually cause

old people hardship, because the old people believe it."

The Tory Councillors threw out a Labour motion to freeze the price of Meals-on-wheels. According to Sam Stuart, such an idea was political, personal and selfish publicity seeking mischievous motivation. Selfishness is obviously the last thing the Tories are guilty of.

THE CAUSE OF THE CRISIS

"The crisis in capitalism is worldwide, but it is particularly severe in Britain. That...", said Nick Brooks of Southampton Labour Party, "is the background to the problems facing the working class in this election."

Nick was speaking at a 'Militant' Readers' Meeting in Gosport entitled 'Labour to victory—on a socialist programme'.

Nigel Bond, the first speaker, from the CPSA showed how resistance had grown to the Labour government's attempts to 'police' the working class in the interests of big business through the pay policy.

First the Ford workers, then other sections of the working class were forced into struggle through declining living standards. The vilification of the workers by the Tory press is a mild foretaste of what can be expected under a Tory government.

Nick Brooks showed that these attacks are an indication of the deep economic crisis affecting capitalism in Britain, in particular. British capitalism's dec-

lining share of world markets in manufactured and semi-manufactured goods meant that Britain was becoming de-industrialised. The failure of the capitalist class to invest sufficient capital during the exceptional conditions of 'boom' has led to near-bankruptcy.

No longer able to re-build or even re-tool manufacturing industry as production stagnates and profit levels fall, the capitalist class start investing in non-wealth producing activities such as gambling on the stock exchange.

Even though capitalism is now totally parasitic, their thirst for profits is greater than ever. So they turn their attack on the working class, the producers of real wealth.

The policies of the Labour government had failed to solve the problems of the working class because they had not challenged the power of these monopolies. Now, he said, we have to fight for a Labour victory—and in the Labour Party for socialism.

By Dave Carr
Fareham LPYS

This is the story of a political baptism.

It is the story of a man who, four months ago, regarded himself as a moderate; voted Tory at the last election and believed the police were doing a 'grand job' in upholding law, order and democracy.

Someone who has been forced, the hard way, to radically alter his philosophies after being sacked from his job for going out on strike.

Until mid-December last year I was employed as a reporter with the 'Nottingham Evening Post'. My future, looked rosy.

A married man with a daughter who is now 19 months old, I lived in a modern company flat at a nominal rent and regarded myself as highly paid on a salary of £4,300.

Then came the seven-week NUJ strike. At the end of that time I and 27 colleagues found ourselves sacked—merely for obeying our union's national strike call.

The NEP, under the guidance of its fanatical managing director, Christopher Pole-Carew, was the only paper in the country which refused to take its striking journalists back—despite strong recommendations from their own union, the Newspaper Society.

Since then I have been threatened with eviction from my home, along with five other reporters.

I have also been arrested for picketing the NEP building. My experiences at the hands of our heroic boys in blue provide a salutary lesson for anyone who still believes in the impartiality of the

LEARNING THE HARD WAY

How journalist Peter Anderson found what the Tories really stand for



Peter Anderson being arrested on NUJ picket line

police.

Unfortunately, I cannot go into detail about my actual arrest, as the case is sub judice. Suffice it to say I have made some very interesting allegations in a statement.

While in the cells for 4½ hours, I gained first-hand insight into police terror tactics.

I refused to have my photograph taken and was told I had no choice. I still refused, and resisted all attempts to bully me into compliance. Even so, while handing over my possessions, I looked up to see a police cameraman ready to take a 'candid' shot of me, which, fortunately, I dodged.

Later, I refused to have my fingerprints taken—at which the officer in charge went up

the wall and said I would have to stay at the station all weekend—this was a Saturday—until they could get a court order forcing me to comply. City magistrates later threw out a police application to force me to have my 'dabs' taken.

But they also rejected a more important defence application to have the picketing cases heard by JPs from outside Nottingham.

Our lawyer's worry was that the local JPs would be swayed by prejudicial publicity on the picketing by the NEP. The worry was understandable; the NUJ's vice-president, Jake Eccleston, had been fined the maximum on obstruction charges. The magistrate, he was told, had considered sending him to prison for

what was a first offence.

Another concern was the fact that Pole-Carew is Nottinghamshire's High Sheriff, and several NEP employees, are themselves magistrates.

On 7 April I had another taste of police impartiality.

I was one of about 40 pickets who occupied the NEP's editorial floor for just over an hour. The occupation was peaceful and the police had to admit they could do nothing about it.

Pole-Carew came scurrying along after being summoned from his country home, and barged straight through us. "I'm not talking to these people", he told the police: "I want them out."

When told the police could not shift us, he set about gathering together his own

'Sheriff's posse' of bullyboys to do the dirty work for him—men from all over the firm, some out of a nearby pub.

We were prepared to leave the building without a struggle—we felt we had made our point. But Pole-Carew's contemptible little army waded into us with shocking aggression right from the word 'go'.

It was just like the Lord of the Manor unleashing a pack of hounds on a tramp at his gate. Our regional organiser, Mike Bower, was knocked to the floor, as were several others. Blood poured from his nose and he later needed hospital treatment.

Others were dragged along the floor as blows rained upon them. One girl was thrown down the stairs. Another lost her camera in the confusion.

Even Pole-Carew dirtied his hands, pushing and shoving people with obvious glee—one of them a dazed and bloodied Mike Bower.

As soon as the violence broke out, the police conveniently disappeared from the scene.

Despite the outcome, I thought the occupation was a valuable exercise. Not only did it embarrass the firm—'Mad Carew' in particular—but it also helped galvanise the pickets.

People came up to me afterwards and said that, after seeing the bean pole in action for the first time and realising what we were up against, they would be most certainly coming back to help us in our struggle.

No-one who has lived through what I have could fail to have changed.

In me, Pole-Carew and his fellow forces of reaction have activated a sleeping socialist who is determined to carry the Battle of Forman Street to its conclusion.

Hayes & Harlington re-selection row

On Sunday April 1st, the General Committee of the Hayes and Harlington Labour Party exercised their democratic right in the party by voting by 31 votes to 25 not to re-adopt the MP, Neville Sandelson as Labour candidate in the election.

This decision was not taken light-heartedly. The constituency Party have for a number of years wished to re-select a candidate in this safe Labour seat because Sandelson has totally failed to represent Labour Party policy as decided by Annual Conference, and the views and aspirations of the members of his local Party.

For example; he has spoken out against the 35-hour week and a £60 minimum wage and was involved in lobbying Labour MPs unsuccessfully to regain Newham North East's candidature for Reg Prentice.

However the Campaign Committee and Transport House have decided to back Neville Sandelson and declared the Party's vote null and void. This will not stop our fight for democratisation of the Labour Party, which we will conduct in the movement as a whole.

In the next few weeks we will be vigorously campaigning to return a Labour MP for the constituency. But the fight for socialist policies and representatives prepared to fight for them will go on.

By Martin Craxton

MILITANT PRE-ELECTION MEETINGS

LIVERPOOL Pre-election meeting. Sunday April 29th 7.30 pm. AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant. Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor 'Militant'), Terry Harrison (Prospective Labour candidate, European elections, Merseyside), Eddie Loyden (Labour candidate, Liverpool Garston), Josie Aitman (LPYS National Committee), Chairman: Tony Mulhearn (Labour candidate, Crosby).

BATH Militant Election Meeting. Speaker: Brian Ingham. Monday 30th April, 7.30 pm. Bath Labour and Trades Institute, Green Bank Road, Bath

EXETER Militant Election Meeting. Speaker: Clare Doyle. Monday 30th April, 7.30 pm. Labour Club, 26 Clifton Hill, Exeter

REDRUTH, Cornwall Militant Election Meeting. Speakers: Clare Doyle; Dave Hadyney (Senior shop steward, GMWU). Saturday 28th April, 7.30 pm. Redruth Community Centre, Foundry Row, Redruth, Cornwall

COVENTRY Militant Election Meeting 'Keep the Tories Out! Swansell pub, 7.30 pm. Thursday 26th April. Speaker: Dave Nellist (Vice chairman, Coventry South East LP)

ALL LONDON Militant pre-election meeting. Speakers: Sam Maddox (Gen. Sec. Bakers Union); Ted Grant (Militant Editorial Board); David White (Labour Party candidate, Croydon Central) and Bob Lee (Secretary, PNP Youth UK). Sunday April 29th, 6.30 pm. Unity House, Euston Road.

NEWTON ABBOT Militant Election meeting. Speaker: Clare Doyle. Friday 27th April, St Paul's Church Hall, Devon Square, Newton Abbot

PLYMOUTH Militant Election Meeting. Speaker: Clare Doyle. 7.30 pm. Sunday 29th April. Venue to be arranged.

GLOUCESTER Militant Election Meeting. Speaker: to be announced. United Services Club, College Green, Gloucester.

BLACKPOOL Election meeting Thursday April 26th 8.30 pm, Kings Arms, Talbot Road, nr Blackpool North station.

TEESIDE Meeting. Sunday April 29th, 7.30 pm, Cleveland Hotel, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough. Speaker to be announced

BIRMINGHAM Militant Public Meeting: 'The Tory Threat—Labour's Socialist Answer'. Speakers: Bill Mullins (Senior Steward, T&GWU, Rover, Solihull) and John Booth (Senior Steward, T&GWU, Bilston Steelworks). Sunday April 29th, 7.30 pm. The Grapes, Hill Street (back of New St Station), Birmingham

NEWCASTLE pre-election 'Militant' meeting. Thursday April 26th 8 pm. The Volunteer Job Shop, Adelaide Terrace, Benwell. Speakers to be announced.

ROTHERHAM Militant Readers' Meeting 'The Menace of Toryism'. Speaker: John Dale (Mansfield Labour Party, candidate in local elections). WEA Rooms (next to Ratcliffe's, the printers), Corporation Street, Rotherham. Monday April 30th 7.30 pm

PRESTON Election meeting. Sunday April 29th 7 pm. Speakers and venue to be announced.

LEICESTER Militant Public Meeting 'Keep the Tories out—Labour Must Win'. Speaker: Ted Grant (Militant Editorial Board). Sunday April 22nd, 7.30 pm, AUEW Hall, Vaughan Way, Leicester

GLASGOW Militant Readers' Meeting 'Labour to Power on a Socialist Programme! Speaker: Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant). Thursday April 26th, 7.30 pm, City Halls, Albion Street, Glasgow

NOTTINGHAM pre-election meeting. 'Can Labour beat the Tories?' Speaker: Rob Jones (Sheffield-Heeley Labour Party) Sunday April, 29th, 7.00 pm, International Community Centre, Mansfield Road, Nottingham

NOTTINGHAM 'After the Election—what now?' Speaker: Ted Grant. Tuesday 8th May, 7.30 pm, Portland Hotel, Cartington Street, Nottingham

CHESTER-LE-STREET Election Meeting. Speaker: Dave Cotterill (Gateshead CLP). Sunday April 29th, 8.00 pm, Chester-le-Street Labour Club, Old Railway Station

BRISTOL 'Militant' Public Meeting. 'Keep the Tories out'. Speaker: Brian Ingham ('Militant' Industrial Correspondent) At the Crown Tavern, Stapleton Road, Bristol. 7.30pm, Sunday 29th April.

LEEDS Pre-election meeting 'Keep the Tories Out!' Sunday April 29th, 7.30 pm. The Adelphi, Lower Briggate, Leeds. Speakers to be announced.

MANCHESTER Meeting 'Keep the Tories Out!'. Sunday April 29th, 7.30 pm, Star and Garter, Fairfield Street, Manchester. Speakers: Joe Marino, Bakers' Union EC, and a speaker from 'Militant' Editorial Board.

ROCHDALE Meeting. 'Who Runs the Country?' Sunday April 29th, 8.00 pm. Speaker: John Hunt (Ardwick CLP). The Two Ships Hotel, Hope Street, Rochdale

BRADFORD Pre-election rally. 'Keep the Tories Out'. Speaker: John Pickard (Militant Editorial Board). Sunday April 29th, 7.30 pm, D4 Lecture Theatre, Bradford University

BRIGHTON Meeting. 'Keep the Tories Out'. Speaker: Ray Apps (Brighton Kempton CLP). Monday April 30th, 8.00 pm, Wagner Hall, Regency Road, off West Street, Brighton

SPENNYMOOR Meeting Sunday April 29th, 7.30 pm, Steam Mill, Spennymoor

SOUTHAMPTON eve-of-poll 'Militant' meeting. 'Keep the Tories out'. Speaker: Peter Taaffe, Editor of 'Militant'. Wednesday May 2nd. Venue and time to be notified.

Brian Ingham, 'Militant' Industrial Editor will speak at the following 'Keep the Tories Out' 'Militant' meetings.

LLANELLI. Monday 23 April, 7.30 pm. YMCA, Stepney Street, Llanelli. Plus a local speaker.

PORT TALBOT. Tuesday 24 April, 7.30 pm. Venue to be announced.

RHONDDA. Wednesday 25 April, 7.30 pm. Llwynipia College of Further Education, Llwynipia, Rhondda. Plus Ian Isaacs (NUM).

SWANSEA. Thursday 26 April, 7.30 pm. AUEW Buildings, Orchard Street, Swansea. Plus a local speaker.

BRIDGEND. Monday 30 April, 7.30 pm. Dunraven Arms Hotel, Wyndham St, Bridgend.

LIVING IN THE MODERN ALCATRAZ

St Cuthbert's village, Gateshead—a modern Alcatraz. In "Planners' Dream, Residents' Nightmare" [*Militant*, 6 April], Dave Cotterill described the atrocious conditions in this estate, opened to great acclaim in 1970. This week, he gives one or two examples of the devastating effects on people's lives.

Robert White has lived in the village for two years with his wife and three children.

When they moved in during the summer the flat was spotless, and it is obvious that the family have tried to keep it that way. The winter changed all that, however—heavy rain caused flooding, the heating system caused condensation—and with it came the dampness and the fungus.

Robert described what has happened since:

"The council have visited dozens of times. I spent the whole of my summer holidays washing down the walls with disinfectant and then painted them all. Since then, they have been twice washed down and painted—once by me and once by the council. But still the mould returns. The advice of some officials was to open the windows to get rid of the condensation, but I already pay £12 a fortnight for electricity—imagine the heat we would need if the windows were open in the middle of winter."

What had the officials said? "Well, the housing manager came but he made

By Dave Cotterill
(Gateshead Labour Party)

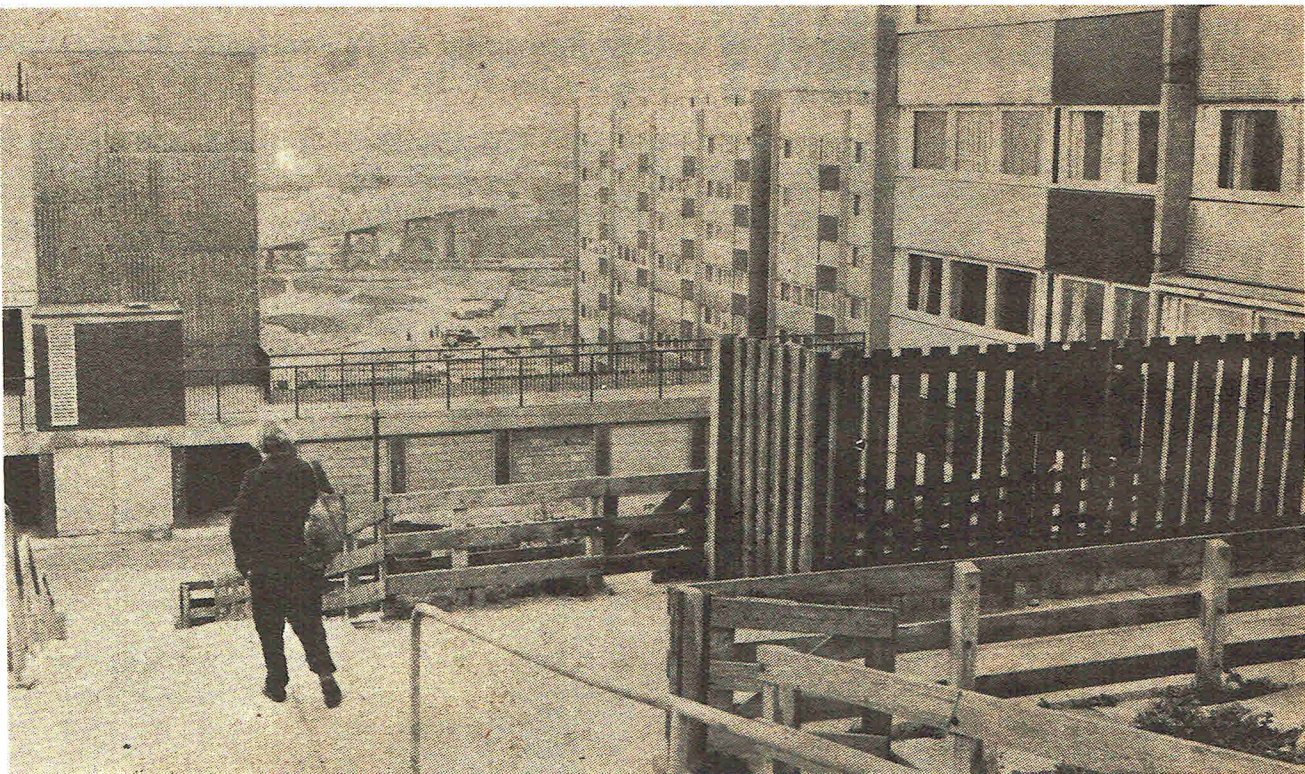
no comment. My wife made the point that it would be different if they had to live in the house for three months."

It seems unbelievable that housing officials could walk through a house covered in mould and fungus and not be prompted to take immediate action to remove the family from the house—particularly when there are three children in the house.

And it is in the bedrooms that some of the worst conditions exist. The children's room has had its ceiling repaired—but only with bare plaster-boards. Mould is on all the walls.

"The baby is a year old, and one day we found mould growing on the back of her pillow, so now my wife washes her bed-clothes every day," Robert told me. "Shaun, who is 8, has developed bronchial asthma since we moved in. When I take my clothes out of the locker at work I can smell the mould."

Such barbarous conditions



Bad planning and shoddy building—more like dungeons than modern housing

surely have more in common with medieval dungeons than modern day housing!

Terry moved into the village six years ago on a "temporary basis".

Like other residents, she too suffers from enormous electricity bills of £70 per quarter and £134 during the winter months. "Six hours to heat enough water for my husband and the children and then they had to bath in the same water."

But Terry also has an additional burden. Part of her spine is artificial, and she is having problems with failed bone grafts for which the doctors currently cannot do

anything. A house built on three stories with three flights of stairs obviously does not help her condition!

Her doctor has advised that she should have an 'A' priority in being moved out of the village. This she has had since 23rd August 1978, but Terry now feels: "I'll only get out if it's in a black box." Visits to the housing department only provoke angry and tearful confrontations, with Terry feeling "this high" she says, indicating a two-inch person.

Jamie Cook is a miracle child.

Last year, when he was two, he fell seven stories, about 80 feet, and actually lived.

The kitchen window catch

was broken and Jamie had climbed up and fallen out. Jamie's mother had reported the repair but no one had been sent out. After the accident, the council disputed that the damage had been reported, but they introduced a new card system for reporting repairs.

Jamie's mother says: "After the accident the council promised that I would be moved out—this was in April 1978. But the only offer I have been made was for a two-storey upstairs maisonette—like jumping out of the frying pan into the fire."

Ann has two children aged nine and six,

both of whom are deaf.

They have lived in the village 7 years. As the children grow older they want to go outdoors, but Ann is terried of the heights and the dangers in the village.

"I need a garden where I can keep an eye on the children, but this is impossible in the village."

The worry of this has obviously built up for Ann. Though they have been trying to move for a year, she told me that she had no hope of any success: "Once you are in the village, it's impossible to get out."

OPINION POLLS

The general election means a big fillip for the opinion polls.

The Tory press and television will report poll after poll—all claiming to forecast the outcome of the election.

What should we make of them?

Are they a reliable guide to the election result? What is the purpose of these expensive exercises?

Opinion polls are now big business. The polling organisations are firms like any other—though they have a rather unusual commodity to market—people's opinions, or rather their reports on people's opinions, which they sell to the media and to the parties.

Election polling; moreover, is usually a profitable addition to market research—and political and consumer surveys are often combined—for economy!

Opinion polls no doubt give some indication of the electorate's mood and voting

By Roy Bentley and Lynn Walsh

intentions. In most general elections since 1945 they correctly forecast the winning Party.

But there have always been wide discrepancies between the percentage leads given to either Party by different polls, and the margins of error in the result have been considerable.

In 1970, however, most of the polls predicted a Labour victory—and were confounded by a Tory government.

"On a 1,000 sample," *The Guardian* (31 March) poin-

ted out recently, "any figure is likely to be within a range of 3% plus or minus of the true figure, which means that 50% indicates a range of between 47 and 53. So a figure indicating a gap between the top parties could be out by plus or minus 6%."

These are admitted margins of error. But, more fundamentally, one has to have an extraordinary faith in sampling techniques and statistical methods to believe

scientific prediction.

In reality, however, the polls are used to give an apparently "objective", "factual" appearance to what is really nothing more than propaganda.

The press and the television pump out their message: e.g. "The Labour government is responsible for the economic mess", the pollsters then call and check on the effect: "Do you think Labour's policies have: (a) solved our economic

SCIENTIFIC PREDICTION - OR JUST ANOTHER KIND OF PROPAGANDA ?

that a sample of about 1,000 can give an accurate picture of the actual voting decisions throughout the various regions of a multi-million electorate.

All the obvious discrepancies and limitations, however, do not stop the press reporting the polls' findings as if they had the certainty of

problems; or (b) created more of an economic mess?"

If 80%—far from happy with their pay packets, rents, gas bills, etc. and cold night after night that it's all the fault of the Labour government—are inclined to agree with suggestion (b), this is taken as "proof" that the Labour government is indeed

to blame for all the problems.

The next evening, the predictable result of this poll is then reported on the box as "news", as a "fact"—to back up the continued attacks on Labour.

Does this seem like a caricature? But take the MORI poll published in the *Daily Express* on 6 February.

"Maggie Leaps Ahead" proclaimed the front-page headline. "With the country beset by strikes an exclusive MORI opinion poll shows the Tories in an astonishing 19% lead over Labour."

"Over 1,000 voters were asked (Q4): 'How would you vote if there were a general election tomorrow?'" reported the *Express*. The result: 55% Tory, 36% Labour.

But the actual survey—kindly supplied to *Militant* by MORI—showed that out of a total sample of 1,030, only 871 would answer on this point (which surely distorts the balance of the sample?).

And MORI's questionnaire—unlike the *Express*'s report—made it clear that people who would not answer the question quoted by the *Express* were then asked (Q5): "Which party are you most inclined to support?"

This is not the same thing, is it? Yet the answers to Q5 were lumped together with the answers to Q4 (in unknown proportions) to produce the figures giving the

Tories a 19 per cent lead.

There is no question of MORI being less competent or less conscientious than any other polling organisation: the distortions are built into the very concepts and techniques of opinion surveys.

"Swings"

The polls are also nearly always interpreted in terms of "swings". Yet experience shows—and this is confirmed by more thorough research—that relatively few voters actually change their Party allegiance.

The main factor which determines the outcome of election for Labour is simply: how many traditionally Labour voters actually turn out to vote, and how many stay at home because of disillusionment with the policies of Labour governments?

If Labour could arouse the enthusiasm of all its supporters, there would never be any doubt about Labour victory.

Next week: The samplers and the pollsters do their work.

WHEN THE HEATH GOVERNMENT GOT A BLOODY NOSE...

By Tim Moody



Miners' pickets battle with police outside Saltley coal depot during their 1972 strike

Legal fetters on the unions and tough measures against picketing form one of the main planks of the Tories' election platform.

Trade union power and strikes are a prime cause of Britain's industrial crisis, claim the Tories, and bold anti-union measures will therefore go a long way towards putting things right.

But are the Tories' memories so short? Have they forgotten Heath's bloody nose when he tried to take on the unions?

The Tory threat should not be lightly dismissed. New laws to undermine long-established trade union rights could seriously hamper the fight to defend workers' living standards.

Some of the Tories, moreover, have learnt a little from their defeat under Heath. They now have plans for a volunteer strike-breaking force, and for the large-scale use of the police and the army, to try to break the resistance of the organised workers.

But—as Heath found to his cost—Tory attacks on the unions would arouse trade unionists like nothing else—and provoke a mighty movement against the bosses and their political stooges.

The word 'Fair' has always featured prominently in Tory slogans. "A Fair Deal at Work", issued prior to the 1970 election, promised to safeguard the "rights of individual workers" and outlaw "unfair industrial practices."

When the Tories came to power, this document was rapidly translated into the now notorious Industrial Relations Act (IRA). "Fair" clearly meant "in the bosses' interest".

The IRA outlawed the closed shop and sympathetic strikes and many normal trade union practices. By obliging unions to register with a central Registrar, the Tories hoped to force the union leaders into policing their own members—or put their funds and their freedom of action at risk.

The new law and its codes of conduct were to be enforced by tribunals, crowned by the Industrial Court with all the powers of a High Court. As its president, Heath appointed Sir John Donaldson, a former student buddy of the prime minister during his leadership of the Conservative Students' Federation.

After the bitterest debate in

Parliament for many years—systematically curtailed by the Guillotine—the IRA became law.

When Heath had been asked on television (in September 1970) whether he would face a general strike, if necessary, to implement the IRA, he replied with a curt 'Yes'. Later he was forced to eat his words.

But Tory hopes to curb strikes were soon dashed. Together with the assault on workers' living standards, the

Within a few months of the Industrial Relations Act coming into effect early in 1972, there had been more strike-days lost than in the whole of the previous year, itself an all-time record since 1926.

IRA served to arouse and unite the working class in a way not seen since the 1920s.

Within a few months of the IRA coming into effect early in 1972, there had been more strike-days lost than in the whole of the previous year, itself an all-time record since 1926.

In the 1960s, the typical strike had lasted three days, involved perhaps a few hundred workers, and had been settled at a local level. The Tories' confrontation policies now made sure that mass, national strikes were once again the order of the day.

Even before the IRA came

into force, the Tories had managed to provoke strikes by dustmen, power-station workers, and the postmen. Then, in January 1972, Heath faced his first challenge from the miners.

Drawing on all their best traditions, the miners brilliantly organised flying pickets which strangled the power stations, hitting industry with serious power cuts. Despite all his fighting talk, Heath backed away from a show-down, and used the Wilberforce enquiry to concede all the miners' main demands.

But from now on, he promised, the IRA would bite...

The TUC called an official demonstration: up to 250,000 marched in London's biggest post-war demonstration. Two one-day political protest strikes called by rank-and-file leaders brought out hundreds of thousands of workers.

The TUC came out for 'non-co-operation'. At first, there was some wavering at the top over whether or not to register, and the General Council equivocated on whether trade unionists should attend the Industrial Court when summoned.

But the determined action of shop stewards and ordinary trade unionists, backed up by millions of trade unionists, ultimately ensured the defeat of Heath's reactionary union law.

"Fiat Justitia, ruat coelum," pontificated Lord Denning in one of the appeals arising from an IRA case: Justice must rule, even if the heavens fall. Well, because of Heath's intransigence in the face of overwhelming union power, the sky was about to fall.

The IRA's downfall was

precipitated by the dockers. Donaldson ordered the jailing of three docker stewards for contempt of court for refusing to call off their blacking of an un-registered container depot.

A great victory for the dockers and the whole labour movement, the release of the Pentonville Five, was a humiliating defeat for the Heath government.

The Tipstaff of the High Court, a legal pantomime character armed with a silver and ebony staff, was sent out to apprehend the defiant dockers.

Meanwhile, however, the ruling class, discussing things in their inner councils, had taken fright. All 42,000 dockers had stopped work, and many newspaper printers, miners and engineers were discussing whether to join them.

No government, of course, would dream of interfering with the due process of law. But lo and behold, to save Justitia, an hitherto esoteric legal gentleman leapt out of obscurity—The Official Solicitor. He persuaded the Court of Appeal that there was really not enough evidence of contempt against the three dockers.

Presumably, the learned Appeal Court judges neither read the newspapers nor watched the television—or they could not have failed to notice that thousands of dockers were blacking the

container depot—with the utmost contempt for Donaldson and the Industrial Court.

Nevertheless, the Tipstaff was called off.

Donaldson, however, appeared undeterred by this set-back. Appeal Court or not, he decided in July to commit five dockers for contempt, since the blacking of the London storage depot continued unabated. This time, the five trade union martyrs were immediately carted off to Pentonville.

The next day, all the national newspapers ceased publication. Throughout the country, factory committees decided to come out, or discussed when they should come out. Under the pressure of this massive, spontaneous demand for action, the TUC general council announced a 24-hour general strike.

Once again, however, the leading lights of the ruling

The Tories should beware. A new assault on the unions would be met with even greater resistance than under Heath. Organised workers will not be meeting attacks with folded arms.

class had decided to call a halt to Heath's confrontation policies. With unprecedented haste, the Judicial Committee of the House of Law Lords met and reversed a previous Appeal Court decision. The T&GWU, they ruled, not the five dockers, had to be held responsible—and the Pentonville five were soon at liberty.

Heath had come within a hair's breadth of the general strike he had declared he would brave in order to implement the IRA—and had retreated.

A great victory for the dockers and the whole labour movement, the release of the five dockers was a humiliating experience for Heath.

The dockers' stand, moreover, ensured that waverers in the TUC now came out firmly against registration and co-operation. Although it stayed on the statute book until repealed by the Labour government after 1974, the IRA remained largely a dead letter.

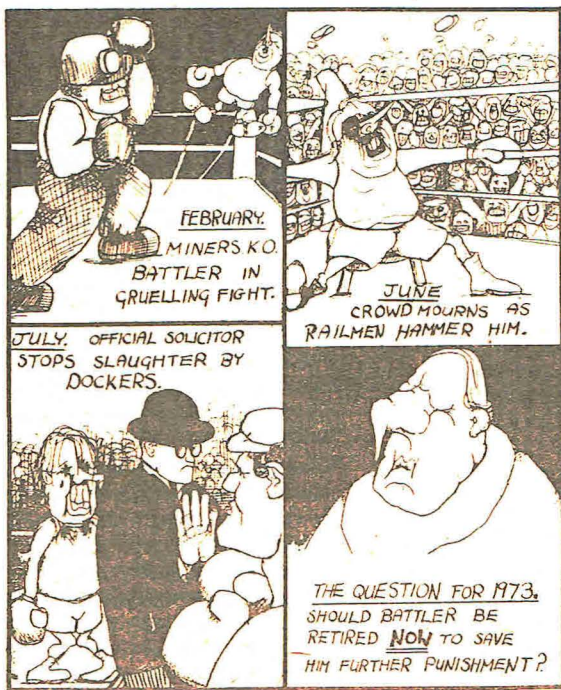
Labour activists are well aware of the threat to trade union rights—and all basic democratic rights—from a Thatcher government.

But the Tories, too, should beware.

A new assault on the unions would be met with an even stronger resistance than under Heath. The strength and confidence of the organised workers are undiminished. In fact, they are greater than ever before.

If this general election should produce a Tory government, trade unionists will certainly not be greeting it with folded arms.

..72 A bad year for Battling Ted..



Alan Gardner 1972.

... And why Thatcher must be stopped!

"Seldson man is coming back with Mrs Thatcher," promises 'The Economist'.

But Heath's attempted counter-revolution against the rights and conditions of working people pales beside the programme of Thatcher.

'The Economist' outlines some of the measures which it expects a Tory government to introduce.

"Theoretically, the Tories are committed to de-nationalising shipbuilding and aerospace." But it hastily adds: "But few believe there would

be private sector takers for anything but a sliver of either."

The capitalists don't want loss-making industries. They prefer the state to take them over and pay lavish over-compensation.

But profitable industries are a different kettle of fish. In relation to the British National Oil Corporation, 'The Economist' says: "Split off the regulatory bit and package BNOC's trading activities to float them back to the private sector."

With the Post Office, "the Tories would like to split it in two (post and telecommunications). They want to break its monopoly on tele-

communications"—to open it up to private profiteers.

The threat of Joseph to "rely on market forces," tight control of the money supply, and savage cuts in government spending could result in a wave of bankruptcies—with unemployment climbing above 2 million.

However, the attempt of Thatcher to turn back the wheel of history will reap the whirlwind of mass opposition as did the Heath government.

But a Tory government must be prevented from coming to power.

A fighting socialist programme is the only way to guarantee this.

Militant
ANALYSIS

LABOUR'S MAN

**THE MANIFESTO INCLUDES REFORMS WHICH W
ONCE AGAIN, IT LACKS THE SOCIALIST MEANS**

"This election comes at a time of change unparalleled since 1945....A Tory government would mean soaring prices and growing unemployment...would mean misery for millions of the most vulnerable in our community since their policy of cutting public expenditure can only mean a drastic reduction in all our social services".

With these words the Labour Election Manifesto 'The Labour Way is the Better Way', indicates the consequences of a Tory victory.

There can be no doubt that this is the most important election since the war. The arrival of Thatcher and her gang in power would mean the unleashing of a whole series of attacks on the labour movement and working people generally.

Already, despite the efforts of public relations men to put a cosmetic gloss on the Tories, the main essentials of the Tory policy are clear.

For instance, the London 'Evening Standard' reported that the Tories would cut 5% off education spending. Immediately "in jeopardy are new school buildings, nursery schools, small classes and free school milk" (6 April). The Tories also plan to make it harder to get unemployment and social security benefits.

But the centrepiece of the Tories' aim is to weaken the trade union movement. Hardly a day goes by without an attack on the unions. Tory spokesmen have confirmed again and again their determination to attack the closed shop, the right to picket and generally strengthen the bosses' hand.

The Tories try to justify their public spending cuts by claiming that the level of taxation is holding back the economy, when in fact big business pays hardly any tax at all! In 1976, for instance, the combined profits of the 20 largest industrial firms in Britain amounted to £4,523 million: yet their total tax bill was as little as £145 million. Hardly a great burden!

In practically all sectors, British capitalism is being outstripped by its rivals. In fields like shipbuilding where the British firms used completely to dominate their rivals, British industry has sunk to the bottom of the league.

The official aim for British Shipbuilders is to hold 3 3/4% of the

By Bob Labi
[Greater London
Labour Party Executive]

world market! The car industry is also being hammered by its overseas rivals; last month a record 55% of new cars sold in Britain were foreign built.

The Manifesto quite rightly speaks of industry "enfeebled by years of under-investment." The 'Militant' pamphlet 'The 35-hour Week' points out that "at the end of 1976 British Leyland had £8,505 assets for each of its 183,000 employees. The 11 Japanese vehicle companies had £42,020 assets on average for each of their 208,591 employees."

British workers—lowest wages in advanced capitalist world?

At the same time British workers have the lowest wages and living standards in the industrialised capitalist world. The 'Financial Times' (7 April) commented that it is "interesting to note the reason for Honda's interest in Leyland: despite inflation, and the recovery of sterling, **British wage rates are irresistibly low by European standards**" (our emphasis).

Unfortunately for the bosses, however, the growing strength of the trade unions and the militancy of the working class generally is threatening the basis of their competitiveness—cheap labour. The trade unions are formidable obstacle to the employers' attempts to hold down wages—and it is this which explains the onslaught on them being prepared by the Tories.

Not only in the traditional industries is British capitalism falling behind, however. In the fast-growing fields of numerically controlled machine tools and microprocessors British industry is not only behind the USA and Japan, but is being challenged by countries like Spain and eastern Europe in the less sophisticated



Labour's 1978 annual conference (above) decisively rejected wage restraint and called for radical measures. Ford workers (below) led the trade union battle against the 5% wage limit.

products.

"The average value of each tonne of machine tool equipment exported last year was £3,250, against £4,060 for each tonne imported...A walk around almost any factory highlights the widespread use of imported machine tools, particularly NC machines." ('Financial Times', 28 March)

This is the real background to the election, the dire crisis of British capitalism. And it is primarily the economic issues which will decide the outcome.

Canvassing, campaigning for Labour vote, everywhere the foremost questions raised are on the issues of living standards, prices, unemployment, social services and housing. These must be answered convincingly by the Labour Party if the election is to be won.

Only an energetic campaign which offers practical solutions to the day-to-day problems of workers will be able to mobilise the Labour vote, win new support, and ensure a Labour victory.

Unfortunately, as far as this is concerned, the Manifesto falls far short of what is required. "Elections", commented Peter Jenkins in the 'The Guardian' (10 April), "are not usually won by promising to cut people's real living standards. Yet that in effect is what both Labour and Conservatives are offering at this election as their answer to Britain's economic decline."

"Labour is pledged jointly with the TUC to reduce the annual rate of inflation to 5% by 1982. It is hard to see how that could be done



without trade union consent to a temporary reduction in real living standards; that is, to a period in which prices rise faster than take-home pay."

Such an approach, which accepts the crisis in capitalism as an excuse for adopting anti-working class measures, rather than a compelling reason for implementing socialist economic policies, can never win the enthusiastic support of workers.

The Labour Manifesto bases itself on the economy achieving "a rate of growth of 3% or more", a level barely achieved even in times of boom. All the current economic

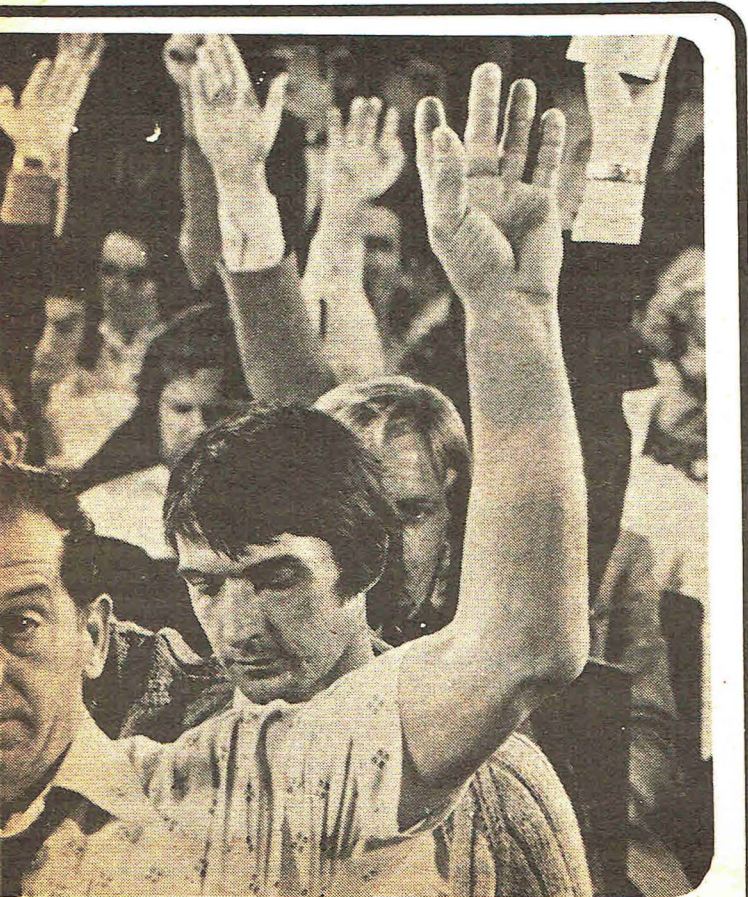
forecasts are for a slowdown in the economy during this year.

All radical measures pruned from draft

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, for instance, expects a growth rate of 2 1/4% this year, but if North Sea oil is excluded a growth of only 1 1/2%. Such is the low level of the economy that it expects manufacturing production to be still below the level of 1973 at the end of this year.

MANIFESTO

**WE ALL SUPPORT BUT,
OF ACHIEVING THEM.**



Photos:
Julian McKittrick
(Militant)

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res:
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In fact, since the autumn of 1974, only briefly—during the summer of 1978—has manufacturing production matched the output during the three-day week.

Investment is still below the peak reached in 1970, in spite of the massive handouts which are being given to the bosses to encourage them to invest.

In the light of these dismal facts, the Manifesto's claim that "over the past five years, the Labour government has laid the foundations of a stronger economy" is hardly credible. Responsibility for this lies not with "socialist policies", as the

Tories demagogically claim, but with the failure of the Labour government to implement thoroughgoing socialist measures. Rather it relied on capitalist measures.

The Manifesto itself points to the international nature of the crisis afflicting capitalism: "In the major industrial nations of Europe and America, 17 million people are out of work." But while saying that the "Labour government will pursue policies which give a high priority to the return to full employment," the Manifesto nowhere explains why the earlier promise of Labour's February 1974 election slogan, 'Back to Work with Labour', has not been realised.

The Labour government has tried to operate within the capitalist system. The capitalists forced the government to carry out policies of holding down wages and cutting public spending. This in turn inevitably resulted in the government losing support, even among traditional Labour workers.

The capitalist economists are quite clear as to the remedy required by big business: more cuts in public spending and a rigorous holding down of living standards—in order to boost profits.

This is precisely the fundamental programme of the Tory Party.

From the capitalist viewpoint, this is the only way in which the crisis can be solved. But for working people, such a policy spells disaster.

Yet the right-wing leadership of the Party has bent all its efforts towards ensuring that, if Labour is returned, it will continue the policies of capitalist crisis.

In a recent editorial, 'The Guardian' commented on the 'sharp job' carried out with the right wing's 'pruning shears':

"Ever since 1974 a network of committees has been working away on behalf of the Labour Party to try

to ensure that the next Labour government should be a great deal bolder and more socialist than the one which is now dying.

Over the past two days Mr Callaghan and his close associates have been engaged in a dedicated attempt to ensure that much of this work should count for nothing...

"Whatever party committees may dispose, whatever the NEC may decide, whatever may be acclaimed by conference at the annual seaside jamboree, Mr Callaghan is determined that the manifesto which goes before the electorate in the coming campaign should be heavily stamped with the mark of moderate social democratic politics.

"If the Left does not like it, that is a penalty which the Prime Minister will accept phlegmatically. They cannot have raging socialism and solid avuncular Jim as well.

"For a party of change and a party which prides itself on its democratic traditions, this is not a happy outcome".

Why were these reforms not carried out before?

These manoeuvres involved in the final formulation of the Manifesto will have caused anger and disappointment among Labour Party members.

A number of the reforms included in the 1974 Manifesto are, it is true, included in the new one. We would all support the proposals for improved pensions, better education, purging private beds from the NHS, and more nursery places.

But the new Manifesto provides no explanation of why these reforms were not carried out before: it still includes no fundamental socialist measures by which they could be put into effect.

The reforms which are promised, moreover, are mostly expressed very vaguely—in truth, they are hedged with escape clauses intended to provide excuses in advance for their later abandonment. For instance, on the vital issue of the 35-hour week, the Manifesto merely promises that a Labour government would "move towards" this in the 1980s.

We may be sure, in the event of Labour returning to office, big business—aided and abetted by the tops of the civil service—would use all their influence to ensure they get these reforms dropped.

As soon as the Labour government came into office in 1974 it was under the most enormous pressure from big business to abandon the reforms contained in the Manifesto. Firms like Pilkington's threatened to begin an investment strike in protest against any attempt by the government to implement its election pledges. Throughout the government's life, there was continual pressure exerted by the bosses to ensure that their power and wealth was left untouched.

Unprepared to challenge capitalism, the right-wing Labour leaders adopted one Tory economic measure after another—wage restraint, public spending cuts, cash limits, tight monetary controls. It has been

the mass disillusionment and opposition to these policies which has resulted in the majority Labour government become a minority through the loss of safe seats like Ashfield and Workington in by-elections.

Comparing the present Manifesto with that of the February 1974 general election, it is most notable for the absence of demands for nationalisation. The only clear pledge this time is to nationalise "commercial ports and cargo handling."

The pledge of 1974 that Labour "shall not confine the expansion of the public sector to the loss-making and subsidised industries" has disappeared, along with the commitment to take over "sections of pharmaceuticals, road haulage, construction, machine tools."

The main means of ensuring the Labour government's direction of the economy, according to the Manifesto, will be the National Enterprise Board and planning agreements.

There is, however, no examination of why, to date, there has been only a single planning agreement—with Chrysler, which did not prevent that firm from selling out to Citreón/Peugot without prior warning to the government or the unions!

The experience of successive Labour governments has been that short of public ownership, there is no effective way of influencing, let alone planning, the activities of vast corporations—who operate ultimately for only one reason: to provide their private owners with a profit.

No solution short of public ownership

At the same time, the right wing have succeeded in preventing the 1976 Party Conference decision to nationalise the banks and the 1977 call to abolish the House of Lords being included in the Manifesto. In fact, the right wing have succeeded in keeping out of the Manifesto any definite radical proposals.

The "abolition of the Lords... carried by six million votes to a piffling 91,000 at Party Conference in 1977," commented 'The Guardian', had been excluded because it was "not acceptable to the Leader of the Party." Most Labour Party members will be extremely angered at the contempt these manoeuvres show for ordinary Party members and for Party democracy.

The new Manifesto, does, however, repeat the pledge to introduce a wealth tax. It is indeed a scandal that under Labour the tax system has become even less progressive than before. Last year, less was paid in estate duty and capital gains tax than in the last full year of the Heath government!

But, again, if this measure were to be introduced, the capitalists would immediately refuse to invest, thus precipitating a further crisis in the economy. The proposals for a wealth tax, in fact, is symptomatic of the half measures proposed by reformism: while provoking the

wrath of big business, they do not provide any real means of controlling and planning production.

This weak Manifesto, if it is the basis of the campaign, threatens Labour's election prospects. Victory can only come if enthusiastic support is mobilised, and this will only happen if masses of people see that Labour is offering a real programme of change.

The Tories have always relied on a low poll to win, and a high turnout will only be achieved if Labour can mobilise the millions who hardly ever vote or who are inclined to stay at home out of disappointment.

It is not just a matter of including more radical policies into the Manifesto, however, but of having a programme capable of delivering the goods.

Basis of programme—nationalisation of monopolies

The basis of such a programme must be the nationalisation of the banks, insurance companies, finance houses, and the 200 or so giant monopolies which dominate the economy.

They should be taken under public ownership with only minimum compensation based on proven need. The industries taken over, unlike the nationalised industries in the past, must be run under democratic workers' control and production.

These fundamental measures would be the means of developing the productive resources of the country in the interests of all the people. There would be a democratic plan of production.

All the reforms promised in past Labour Manifestoes would at last be implemented—and many more!

Very rapidly, working hours would be dramatically reduced. Prices and rents would, for the first time, be really controlled in the interests of the workers. Living standards for all workers and retired workers would be immediately improved.

There would immediately be a crash programme of essential public works to provide much-needed and improved homes, schools, hospitals, and other social and recreational facilities.

This is the programme we need!

The policies of the Tories and big business stem from the needs of their system. What Labour has to do is to expose the bankruptcy of the Tory system, advance a bold alternative, and then show that it is determined to fight for the implementation of its policies.

There can be no doubt that many Labour supporters have been disappointed with their last Labour government. At the same time, many workers clearly understand the need to fight the Tories. They are aware of the attacks that a Thatcher government would unleash on the labour movement.

What they are looking for is a real class alternative to the Tories and a demonstration that a Labour government would act decisively in the interests of the working class.

**WHILE FIGHTING FOR A
LABOUR VICTORY. WE MUST
ALSO STEP UP THE FIGHT
FOR SOCIALIST POLICIES**



TEAMSTERS BATTLE AS PROFITS AND INFLATION RISE

In 1979 whole groups of American workers have moved into action. Newspapers have already called this year "the year of the picket line."

On the picket line at the moment are drivers from America's largest union, the Teamsters. They are fighting a national lock-out from the employers, and as this battle moved into its second week the resolve of the 300,000 drivers to win had been strengthened.

In March the rank and file had voted for strike action when the national agreement expired on 31st March.

The leadership of the union had timidly responded by calling for selective strikes. The employers offered a derisory 7% wage rise and when this was refused, retaliated with a national lock-out.

The fighting spirit of the workers has been reflected by

By Betty Traun
in New York

local union leaders. In Baltimore the local Teamsters' President, Joseph Townsley, stated:

"How can the Carter administration justify a seven per cent guideline for teamsters when the railroad employees just got 10 per cent? How can we accept only seven per cent for our people when inflation is going up 15 per cent a year?"

"They go home and find that it costs them so much

more to live than it used to. They go home and find they can't pay their bills."

Robert Lins, president of the Detroit Teamsters local, announced that he would not promote a cheap contract even if it is recommended by national president Frank Fitzsimmons.

"If negotiators come up with a seven per cent contract," Lins said, "then they'll have to sell it [to the union membership]...I'll go on vacation."

Just before the Teamsters' dispute broke out, the government's Department of Commerce released the figures that disclosed that US corporate monopoly had squeezed 26.4 per cent and more profit out of US workers and consumers in 1978 than in 1977.

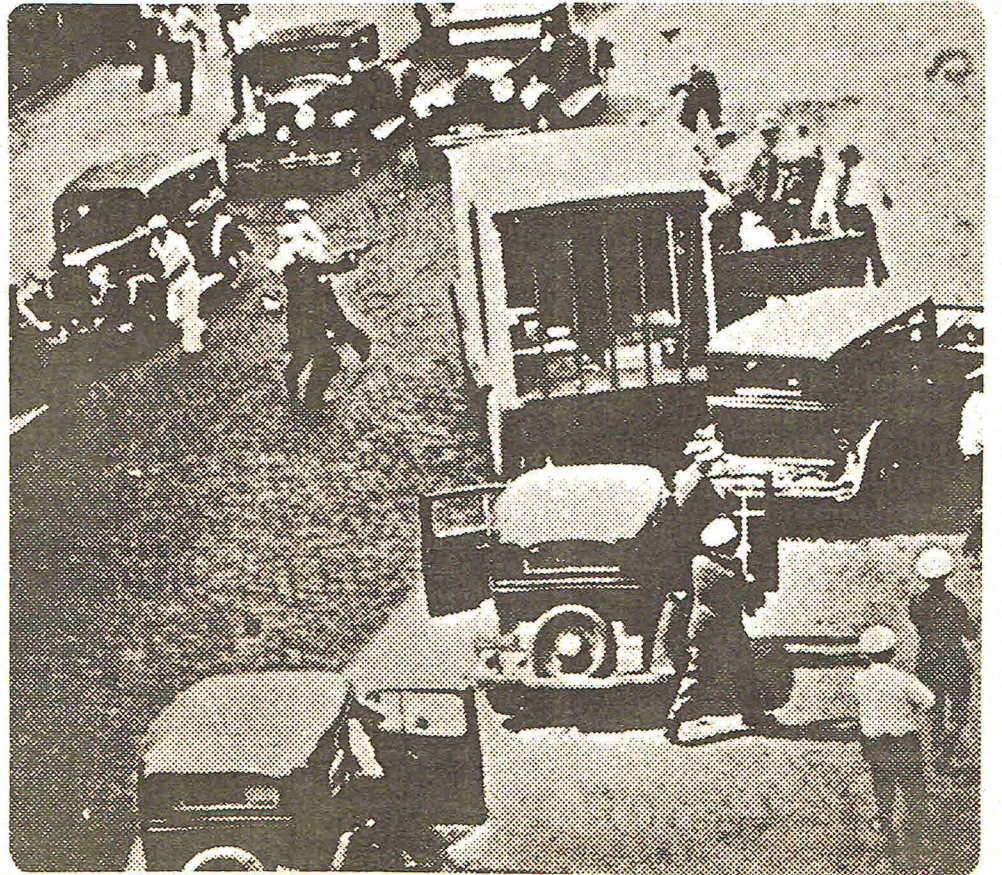
In the last 3 months of 1978 profits had jumped 9.7 per cent ahead of the third quarter of that year. If that rate continues, profits by the end of this year will reach the astronomical compound annual rate of 44.8 per cent!

At the same time, prices surged upward for the biggest gain in 4½ years. February's sharp advance was equivalent to a 15.4% compounded annual inflation rate—more than double the 7.5% rate which the Carter Administration has promised for 1979.

Consumer prices in February were 9.9 per cent above what they were in February of last year, and in the last three months have risen at an annual rate of 11.3 per cent and are rising even faster. The government's official Consumer Price Index for February rose to 207.1. This means that goods and services which cost \$100 (£50) in 1967 were priced at \$207.10 (£103.5) last month.

Labour leaders are angered at the profit leap. They feel the corporations are getting away with murder.

Frank Runnels, president of a Detroit United Auto



Workers in the USA have always had to face the bosses' law and police. In 1934, Teamster pickets in Minneapolis were fired on without warning, and one was killed.

Workers local says: "It has become very, very obvious where inflation is caused. I think it is just outrageous that we are living with such inflation and yet there is no action contemplated to curb these profits. This report [of the profits] is going to have a large impact on UAW contract negotiations. We are living in times when we have to run hard just to keep up."

He exploded big business' excuse for opposing a reduction to 35 hours a week with no cut in pay: "The corporations can no longer hide behind the claim that they cannot afford it," he says. Even George Meany, right-wing head of the AFL-CIO Trade Union Federation, says the profit report is the grossest demonstration of

profit-gouging since the opening days of the Korean War.

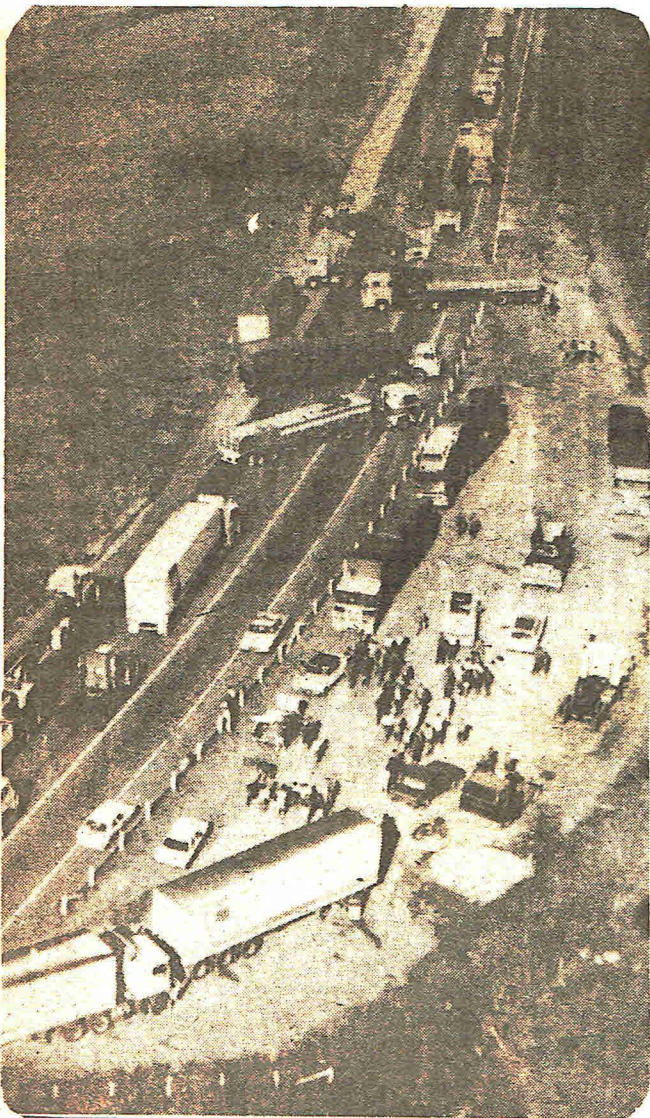
The report reinforces the determination of the truck drivers to fight Carter's 7% guidelines. The trucking industry hides behind those guidelines. At a Camp David meeting with his top advisers, President Carter brushed aside the profit figures, and ordered a "hard line stand" against the truck drivers.

Carter has threatened to break any nationwide truck strike. The Taff-Hartley Act can be invoked by the government if it considers (via the courts) that a strike is creating a national emergency or a threat to public safety. It was invoked against the coal miners in their heroic strike of 1977.

The Teamsters are on the

line. The outcome of the union negotiations is of crucial importance even outside of that union. The monopolies are determined to impose the same ruthless cuts on the rubber and auto workers whose contracts come up soon. So are all other workers affected, including the 80 million who are unorganised.

Curbing a Teamsters' wage rise would be a signal to the rubber and auto monopolies and all other corporations to go on the offensive. Therefore the Teamsters' cause is the cause of all workers. It is in the interest of all US workers to keep fullest solidarity with the teamsters as they stood behind the coal miners in their great strike of 1977.



AUSTRALIA

In Australia also lorry drivers have taken industrial action. Roads have been blockaded in four states, in protest against high road taxes. In New South Wales alone, over 7,000 lorries have blocked the main roads. [Photo above]

Spanish local elections: WORKERS' PARTIES WIN MAIN CITIES

The Spanish local elections, the first to be held since 1933, returned a big victory for the left, despite a high abstention rate of nearly 40%. The combined votes of the Socialists [PSOE] and Communists [PCE] were over a million more than those of the governing Centre Democrats [UCD] despite the fact that the left fought less seats.

All the major cities are now controlled by the left. In Madrid the PSOE and PCE won 52% of the vote compared to the UCD's 39%. In many of the workers' districts of Barcelona the workers' parties won over 80% of the votes.

But the failure of the PSOE among the different

nationalities in the recent general election was again reflected in these local elections. In the Basque country and Andalusia the PSOE lost ground. In the Basque country the PSOE was pushed into third place between the conservative nationalists [the PNV], and the Herri Batasuna, the radical nationalist movement.

In Andalusia the PSOE and PCE only have majorities in Cordoba and Malaga, but at the same time the Andalusian Socialist Party [PSA] did well enough to hold the balance of power in five of the eight southern provincial capitals.

Overall the elections were a further blow to the

capitalist UCD; even in Castille and Leon there was a swing to the left. They mark an increased polarisation of the classes with the likelihood of clashes between the government and the local councils, especially those controlled by the left or the nationalists.

The inability of the PSOE to gain an even bigger majority, because of its very low-key campaign, is leading to increasing friction inside the party in the run up to the Party Congress scheduled for May. This is being further fuelled by the economic situation and the provocative policies of the government.

For example, on the

night of the elections police attacked a crowd waiting for the results in Madrid, beating up many bystanders including a PSOE MP.

The elections have shown that even where there is no real campaign the workers' parties, the PSOE and PCE, have mass support. The two main workers' parties are now co-operating on a local basis.

The task is for the leaders of these parties to give a fighting lead against the Suarez government and struggle for a PSOE-PCE government committed to carrying out socialist policies.

By Bob Labi

CARIBBEAN

PRESSURE FROM BOTH MASSES AND IMPERIALISM MEANS: CARIBBEAN AT THE CROSSROADS

By Ronnie
Sookhdeo

The revolution in Grenada has sent reverberations throughout the whole of the Caribbean. It is a reflection of the explosive social situation that exists in the area. Many islands, already in the grip of the vicious cycle of endemic unemployment and rocketing inflation, held down by repressive regimes, could tread the same path as Grenada.

The last time the West Indies underwent such convulsions was in the period following the 5-fold oil increases and recession of 1973-74. That had dire consequences for the social and political policies of capitalist countries but became a nightmare for the workers in the impoverished islands.

Under pressure from the masses the leaders were compelled to carry out big reforms in their economies. It is a measure of the changes which have been wrought that the capitalist powers can now refer to countries like Guyana and Jamaica as 'socialist countries'. Indeed the leaders of these countries have declared themselves as 'Marxist'. Manley has gone so far as to say that "capitalism is over".

But at the same time the USA is injecting massive aid into the region to defuse the gains of the workers' organisations. This has led to a renewed call for the islands to abolish landlordism and capitalism. Thus a recent labour conference, with representatives from 18 islands, have pledged in the most emphatic manner a total eradication of the "evils of exploitation, hunger, illiteracy and to push for unity and solidarity on the Cuban model."

And as if to rub salt in the wounds of British and American Imperialism the conference was held in Guyana and chaired by Forbes Burnham the Prime Minister. It was Burnham their former stooge who presided over the expropriation of their assets—90% of the economy having been nationalised.

Guyana: facing a capitalist impasse

Burnham came to power with the connivance of the CIA in 1964 and has since used all manner of electoral frauds to stay in office. Undoubtedly most of the assets of Imperialism and native capitalism have been abolished in Guyana. But the racial divisions and the absence of a clear Marxist leadership capable of cementing unity amongst the masses, together with the absence of workers' democracy, has resulted in chaos in the country.

The example of Portugal has shown—that even where the bulk of the economy has been taken over by the state, without democratic control and a socialist plan of production the establishment of a workers' state cannot be assured. On the contrary, counter-revolution is provided with fertile ground on which to grow.

The 20-week strike of sugar workers graphically illustrated the dangers of not moving towards full-blooded socialism. The strike began after the government's rejection of a £50 million profit sharing scheme which they had earlier approved. The pay of the sugar workers (mostly of Indian origin) is half that of their counter-parts in the Caribbean.

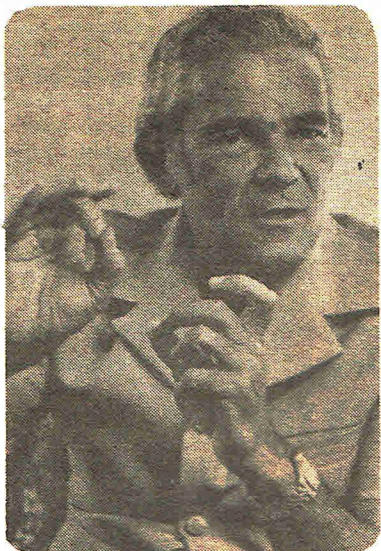
The Government responded by drafting in 6,000 strike breakers which in turn led to sympathy strikes by the bauxite workers. In the end the strikes cost the government upwards of \$200m. In the last year the economy has

been further put through the mill. Thus in a report to the International Monetary Fund in June the Government admitted that "Guyana's balance of payments had been under severe pressure since the latter part of 1975. Exports fell by nearly one-third between 1975 and 1977 but the levels of imports remained relatively high."

The IMF has exerted a stranglehold over the economy. The Government was forced to cut imports and adopt deflationary policies in order to cut the budget deficit and curb inflation. As a result the cost of living has risen spectacularly to over 80% in the last 7 years alone.

Unemployment is well over 40%. The price of sugar and rice have all doubled. Finally the slump of sugar prices on the world market has brought the regime to its knees.

In the last few months Burnham has paid frantic visits to the USSR and Germany and North Korea.



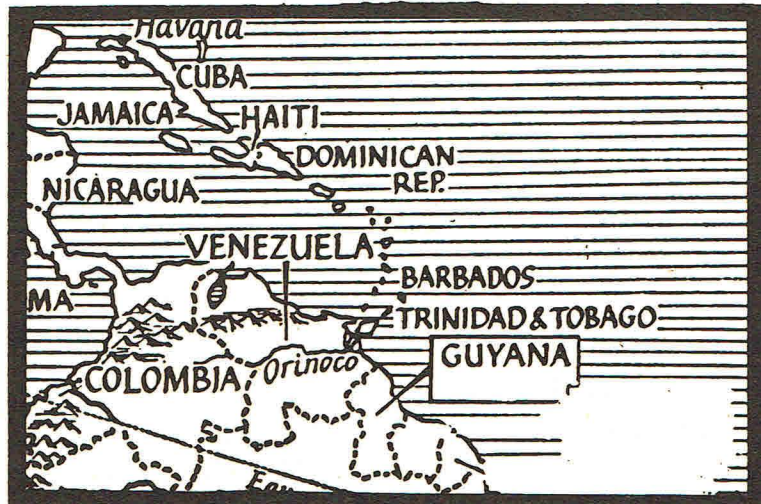
Jamaica's Manley, trying to balance between East and West

American Imperialism is now trying to tempt Burnham to abandon any moves towards a planned economy and instead open up the country to capitalism. They have already received such an undertaking from him. On 30th November last year, the 'Financial Times' acknowledged that if it were not for the support Burnham was receiving from a large number of foreign capitalists the situation would be perilous.

Jamaica: first a move to the left, now back to the right?

A similar crisis faces Jamaica. There Michael Manley, the Prime Minister, was swept into power in the 1972 elections—winning 37 out of the 53 seats.

Manley inherited a rotten and corrupt regime. Inflation was 30% and unemployment well over 25% despite the agreement the Government had with the USA and Canada which facilitated huge numbers of Jamaican citizens emigrating. Wages were a pittance. Plantation workers only averaged £1.30 for a gruelling 12-hour day.



Manley initiated reforms like the nationalisation of the electricity and Bus services but this not due to any coherent policy, rather it was a reaction to the chaos that prevailed.

increases in bauxite levy, which the government fought for in 1974 will still only bring in \$200 million and that is \$40 million less than the \$160 million earned last year. Such is the

Even where the bulk of the economy has been taken over by the state, without democratic control and a socialist plan of production the establishment of a workers' state cannot be assumed. On the contrary, counter-revolution is provided with fertile ground on which to grow.

In the same way land that was left unused by the plantation owners and absentee landlords were redistributed to Workers Co-operatives, because they were demanded and seized by the workers.

cost of remaining tied to the world capitalist market.

Unemployment at 45% and inflation at 47% are rampant. The Government has devalued the dollar four times in the last 13 months and



Outside Cuba, poverty is endemic throughout the region. Villagers in Haiti queue for food rations.

The Jamaican economy which was also devastated in the recent world recession is now wholly dependent, like Guyana, upon the IMF.

Sugar production was just 280,000 tons last year—the lowest for 30 years. Tourism, another pillar of the economy is expected to bring \$120 million compared to \$190 million earned last year. The partial

is under intense pressure from the IMF to cut back further on public expenditure.

In this situation the right wing within the ruling People's National Party has gone on the offensive against the left.

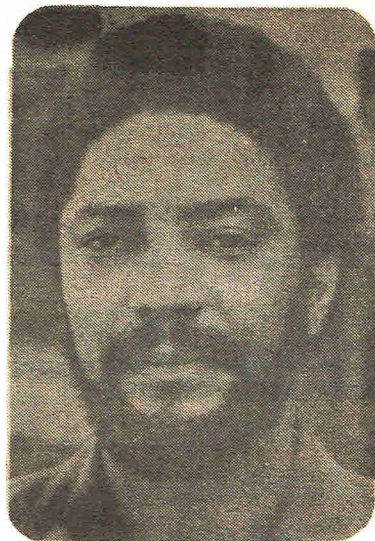
Many radicals have been expelled and the Jamaican Communist Party (Workers Liberation League) has

picked up some support. This in turn has provoked the recent attack on Trevor Munroe, a trade unionist and one of the leaders of the WLL. At the same time the right-wing Jamaican Labour Party has attempted to make a come-back.

What future for the small islands?

The Manley Government is at the cross-roads. There is no way forward for Jamaica on the basis of capitalism. Only a planned economy could eradicate the terrible poverty and misery of the Jamaican masses. But Manley is hesitant to take this road.

He is desperately manoeuvring between capitalism and the Stalinist states for aid and assistance to keep afloat. In the last week he has flown to Moscow requesting aid but such measures are only palliatives and the PNP will be forced to choose



Maurice Bishop, new leader of Grenada which road to take in the next period.

Without exception all the islands in the Caribbean are faced with similar problems. Such islands like Antigua, St Lucia, Dominica, St Vincent which only produce bananas and spices but have as much as 45% unemployment, will undergo a traumatic time in the coming period. By themselves they will be condemned to backwardness and impoverishment.

The only sure way out for these islands and for Jamaica and Guyana is to decisively break with world capitalism and establish a socialist federation. On that basis the problems facing the peoples of the Caribbean could be removed through planned and co-ordinated expansion of economic growth.

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LETTERS

Fascists breed on ignorance

Dear 'Militant'

When a National Front supporter manages to get himself nominated as a candidate for the Gay Liberals, as happened in the Edge Hill, Liverpool bye-election, it makes you wonder at the sort of people the National Front are appealing to.

Most National Front 'supporters' are unsure of what they are really supporting and this just goes to show yet again that they build their support on ignorance. So keep up the good work, because 'Militant' is our tool in the fight against ignorance. Forward to Socialism!

Derek McClelland
Edgbaston LPYS

"You haven't got a chance"

"I'm a station inspector at Clapham Common. I was doing late duty. My relief was due on at 1.00 am.

When he hadn't arrived at 1.10, I locked up. I walked down to the bus stop—it's about two minutes' walk.

As I walked down a car pulled up—a civilian car. Four big blokes got out. I thought it was the National Front and prepared to defend myself.

Then one of them shouted "Police." They said, "Get your hands against the wall." What for? No reply.

I showed them my tie, that I had a station inspector's uniform on; told them I had clocked off, and it's only two minutes' walk to the bus stop. What could I have done in that time? When they realised this they left quickly.

I then asked myself—what could have happened if I hadn't been able to prove where and what I'd come for? This happens all the time. Usually you haven't got a chance.

Send your views and comments on the issues that affect you to 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Skills rust away

Dear Comrades

At a meeting of my union branch recently, we were staggered to learn that the Brighton District, in Division 23, which covers Southampton, Portsmouth, Basingstoke etc., has the largest membership.

In the Brighton district not a factory hasn't suffered a drastic drop in the workforce in the last decade: Allen Wells down from 3,500 to 1,200; KTM down from 1,800 to 800.

This can be repeated in every other district and division of the AUEW and the engineering industry. The latest Militant International Review graphically illustrates everything that is being borne out at shop floor level.

Furthermore, slowly numerical controlled machines are making their appearance, as the latest journal of the AUEW illustrates. A factory in Portsmouth has seen its labour force drop from 140 to 90 with the advent of NC machinery.

The operations of the National Enterprise Board—taking money out of our pockets to subsidise the bosses—have been no more than a palliative in solving the crisis of investment in British industry.

Such measures are doomed to failure. As the MIR says, £100,000m is needed to put British capitalism back on an even keel. The skills of Britain are rusting away.

Every sworn-in member of the AUEW knows that the constitution of the union has the tools for an irreversible shift in the balance of power, as has Clause IV of the Labour Party's constitution.

Those ideas must be taken up and fought for in the union.

Yours fraternally
Mike Singleton
AUEW Brighton

ROYAL SCROUNGERS

Dear Comrades

While members of my union are currently engaged in strike action and suffering the abuse of the Tory press, it is refreshing to see that some sections of society are being allowed to break the 5% limit, and without a union to fight on their behalf.

An 8.9% increase in pay has just been awarded to the Royal Family.

In the last six months whole sections of workers have resorted to strike action to get a decent pay rise. This crowd of non-productive parasites pocket a pay rise of nearly twice the government's guidelines without the slightest hint of opposition. No talk about fuelling the fires of inflation or wasteful government spending, either.

The price is a cool £214,000. It brings the Queen's social security payments to over £2 million and Prince Philip to £98,000 per year, tax free! Spot the scroungers!

According to a Buckingham Palace spokesman, this isn't counted as a pay rise; it is just to cover increasing expenses. Next time the bus fares or train fares go up, can workers expect a pay rise?

Yours fraternally
Clive Walder
Hove LPYS and CPSA

ABOLISH THE 'SUS' LAWS

Dear Comrades

Following the excellent article on the notorious 'Sus' laws, last week, readers may be interested in another case, highlighted by John Pilger in the 'Daily Mirror' (April 6th).

A shy introverted 19-year old (who is very small due to a hormone deficiency) was arrested with a friend in Clapham, South London last summer because they had allegedly been "...hanging about cars".

The constable told them "If you plead guilty you'll get no more than a ten quid fine". Obviously nervous, they believed him.

The lad only told his mother on the day of his court appearance. He had no lawyer and the whole thing only lasted a few minutes with the magistrate saying nothing about bail, only that he was going to teach these young hooligans a lesson.

He had been picked up once before on 'Sus' but had

received a conditional discharge. This time he was sentenced to three weeks in a remand centre for merely 'hanging about' in a street. By the end, he was hysterical and had an asthma attack. His asthma pump was withheld on the orders of a policeman.

After his experience in the detention centre he now chain smokes. It affected his mother, in her early forties, so badly that her hair turned grey during those three weeks.

His probation officer regards his arrest and imprisonment as a "sick joke". It certainly is. This is just one more example of why we must strengthen the campaign to repeal the 'Sus' laws. If we don't succeed, many more people will suffer similar experiences in the name of 'law and order'.

Yours fraternally
Dave Edwards
Secretary, Chester LPYS

LPYS CAN WIN YOUTH FOR LABOUR

Dear Comrades

Mrs Thatcher represents what will be the most right-wing Tory government this century should she come to power on May 3rd. It is imperative that the three million young voters who come onto the register for the first time should be warned of the dangers that lie ahead if Thatcher is elected.

In Scotland there is an added dimension—the SNP. Over the last decade or so they have counted heavily on the youth vote.

Their cynical exploitation of the failures of capitalism has in the past won round some working class voters. The promise of something

"new", an "alternative to the two-party system, has won many more youngsters. The SNP specifically campaigns towards youth, and where Labour has made no effort to counter this onslaught the SNP invariably gets results.

Constituency parties throughout Scotland are preparing for the fight. It is still not too late for the LPYS in each constituency to ask for a youth leaflet. The LPYS could win round the thousands of new young voters with a class appeal to vote Labour.

Blame for the problems of high unemployment, low wages, slum housing and lack of youth facilities should be

placed squarely where it is due: with the bosses and their system. Every LPYS branch has at least one housing scheme in the area which could be flooded with leaflets appealing to youth to vote Labour.

Already, however, those who would silence the LPYS are moving in. With fake allegations that the YS will not campaign for the implementation of party policy they are insisting that YS members campaign exclusively in their party branches. This directly contradicts the advice given in countless circulars last year by the Labour Party National Agent, Reg Underhill.

Members of the LPYS

should point out the dangers of ignoring the youth vote. West Stirlingshire is a particularly vulnerable area, with Denis Canavan MP commanding a very slim majority over the SNP. The YS should be allowed to organise at least one public meeting, with a youth speaker and the local candidate.

One thing is crucial; the youth vote in Scotland should not be allowed to slip into the hands of the SNP or even the Tories.

Fraternally
Lewis Matheson
Kelvingrove LPYS
(personal capacity)

Tear Gas, Riot Shields, Police Attacks.....

BESIEGED IN HANDSWORTH

Photo: MILITANT

It all started in January.

Seven black youths were on their way home from a disco at the Oaklands Recreation Centre in Handsworth Birmingham. They were stopped by the police and asked several impertinent and searching questions.

"We could see through their intentions and we kept our cool and co-operated," said one of the youths. "Still searching for trouble they then picked on one of us who had a rod or walking stick in his hand and claimed that his intention was to use it to attack someone. He calmly answered that this was not his intention."

In mid-March three of the seven were leaving the Casino Recreation Centre in Lozells.

"Two police officers were passing in a panda car. They made a 'V' sign at us, and we

By a Handsworth PNP Youth member

returned it. They immediately turned back and with drawn batons attacked us.

"We tried to defend ourselves. Then four Irish men who saw what was happening came to our rescue. The police for once were outnumbered and overpowered."

Since then the police have stepped up their campaign of harassment. Many black youth have been stopped, harassed and even been arrested on various sus and assault on police charges.

A few days later, on 22nd March, over 50 police from Thornhill Road and other police stations, including members of the SPG, armed with guns, dogs, tear gas and riot shields, raided a house in Hutton Road, Handsworth.

They claimed that a youth wanted in connection with

assault on police officers in Lozells was seen entering the premises. The occupants living on the first floor, fed up with the intensified police harassment, barricaded the only door to the first floor with furniture.

A heated argument ensued between the youths and the police. The police then went into action—took the dogs out, put on their riot helmets and shields, focused two spotlights on the building and began clearing the street of onlookers. Maybe they didn't want any witnesses to their Gestapo-type activities.

Eventually an agreement was reached and a senior police officer was allowed to enter. No one who they were looking for was there.

But to cover their disgrace a youth was taken away on suspicion charges, released the same day, and has since been arrested with four others and charged with sus and



The Labour Party Young Socialists/PNP demonstration against police harassment and the 'sus' law, in South London, 7th April 1979

without his glasses.

Civil actions are being taken against the police, and in one case the evidence is so blatant that a report has already gone to the Director of Public Prosecutions as well as the Police Complaints Board.

But only through the organised labour movement, uniting black and white workers, can we expose and put an end to these systematic attacks on workers by the bosses' police.



Trade unionists lobby Jack Ashley MP about homeworkers' conditions [November 1978]
Photo: Lawrence Sparham (IFL)

WOMEN ARE DOUBLY EXPLOITED

Although women are supposed to be exempt from night work, a recent television programme, "A woman's place", showed that at least 48,000 women, mainly those with small children, do work at night.

A biscuit factory in London offered seven shifts, mainly to accommodate working mothers, with take-home pay of £34 for the nightshift.

One nightworker arrived home from work in time to get the rest of the family up and off to school before she snatched a couple of hours sleep—then it was off to the nursery school at noon to collect the youngest child. If she could persuade the youngest one to take a nap in the afternoon, she might manage another couple of hours sleep, but otherwise had to get through the rest of the day and night without further sleep.

Work like this must tell on the health of the mother, and relationships within the family inevitably suffer.

Cases like this make it quite clear why the labour movement should oppose night-work for women. It also highlights the need for free, full-time nursery schools and

By Jen Pickard
(Gateshead West CLP)

extended day-nurseries which combine nursery education and day-care).

During the war, when women's labour was needed in the factories, the means to provide nurseries and creches were found. However, many were later closed when capitalism decided 'a women's place in the home'.

But the home is far from sacrosanct as far as big business is concerned. Through home-working, a number of unscrupulous firms ruthlessly exploit women who are tied to their home by young children.

A recent survey by the Low Pay Unit revealed that half of the home-workers interviewed were paid less than 40p per hour and 20% were paid less than 10p an hour! Obviously, women don't do this sort of tedious work—like making Christmas decorations, sew-

ing (using their own machines), and addressing envelopes, for the job satisfaction, but to help stretch the weekly budget.

At rates of 10p an hour they must be working a full shift once the children are tucked up in bed to make any money at all.

The Homeworking Bill that was introduced into Parliament will not become law, and in any case, while it may have done something to improve the pay and conditions of home-workers, it would not have been able to stop this most blatant form of exploitation.

The trade union movement must take up this issue, and actively recruit such women workers into their ranks to give them the organisation and strength they need.

This, in turn, would strengthen the trade union movement itself, enabling it to campaign more vigorously for nursery facilities to free women from home-bound isolation and exploitation.



Your money can help us.... DEVELOP THE "MILITANT"

Last week's excellent total of £2,800 in response to our appeal shows the enthusiasm for Marxist ideas. Active workers understand it's necessary to put your money where your mouth is if you want to see the labour movement united behind a socialist programme.

During the run-up to the election, it's quite acceptable to initiate a half-hour conversation on politics at the bus stop, starting with the atrocious weather (under socialism we could seed the clouds, etc), and the deteriorating bus service—then going on to the reason for the withdrawal of government money from essential utilities, and leading to socialism as the only permanent solution.

You can then sell a copy of 'Militant' to the people in the queue and explain the need of the fighting fund for extras. (If it's a one-man service they'll have their change out anyway).

All election activities give opportunities for fund raising, including 'fares' for canvassers for the fighting fund, tea or coffee before you go out, extras on the increased sales of the 'Militant', and the 'après canvass' pint for the paper.

Again, raffles or 'books' on the result of the election, or even taking

photos of the canvass teams (surplus to the 'Militant') are a valuable addition to the tins and collectors' cards.

Meeting our target for cash in full is essential if we are to be able to expand and improve the 'Militant' to meet all the needs and demands of our growing readership.

We have plans, too, for more pamphlets on trade union issues, important political topics, and also historical and theoretical themes. But we will not be able to put them into effect unless we have the necessary resources.

The start of our second quarter this week saw over £500 received by the start of the holidays in addition to some—but not all—the cash that was 'on its way' last week.

After the holiday break, our chart with the area totals will be back as usual. If you can get your contribution in this week, your area might be able to overtake some of the others in the mean-time.

Two NUJ members from the Nottingham Evening Post picket, C Clark (Retford) and Kath (Barnsley) gave us £1 and £1.35 respectively. Tanners from S Heather (Birmingham) A Danylewycz (S London), and T Hudson (Tyneside) and fivers from I Harman (Banbury), H Lewis (Slough) and J Wilkin (Tyne-

side) and K Capstick (Yorkshire NUM) provide the sort of support that's vital.

Appeals at Readers' Meetings raised £41 less expenses in Glasgow, and £25 in Gosport, whilst groups of readers on Merseyside collected £7.50 (NGA members) £3.50 (Nalgo members) and £5.20 (Docks T&GWU and ACTSS). Donations of £1s included P Macmenemy (Walsall N), J Kreft, M Fletcher and A Horton (Birmingham), H Cox (Ware), B Cullen (Fareham), D Grace (Aberystwyth), and two London Natsopa members S Edwards and M Nauton.

Two uncommon but very civil Wimbledon Wombles sent us £7—if any other readers find green, blue (or brown) notes littering their pockets, let us recycle them for you!

N Long (student) donated the change from £5 from ordering pamphlets, and £9 came from a Tyneside trade unionist's expenses. Littlehampton readers did a sponsored walk, sold second-hand clothes, and drank for 'Militant'. We benefitted by £50!

In other parts of the country, other methods were used: for example, a Tyneside supporter sent us £15 which he said was the result of 'profit sharing at work'. (Do any other readers know where workers have similar schemes?)

Christine and Maggie's Italian Evening in Stockport netted £21.65 and £26 from Chester-le-Street and Washington including one amount of £18 and the rest from the Gannons, M Patterson and the 'Domino Kings'. No spots on them(?)

Thanks finally to N Derbyshire for collecting £20, party-goers Muswell Hill (9.50), Rotherham teacher (£4), Merseyside jumble sale (£15), and last but not least £2.30 from Irvine readers.

Comrades, now's the time to appeal to all Labour supporters who want to see real change to do something positive—work for a Labour win with a massive majority and support the "Militant's" fight for real socialist policies.

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

NEWCASTLE Marxist Discussion Group for students and unemployed. Friday afternoons in Newcastle University. For further details contact Roy Goodspeed. Tel: 748001

CHESTER-LE-STREET Marxist Discussion Group. Mondays starting at 8pm. For further details contact Eddie Lowerson, Chester-Le-Street Tel: 888146

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

MORRISTON Marxist Discussion Group meetings. Contact Swansea 33542 for further details.

SOUTH WALES Summer Camp—Spring Bank Holiday—has been cancelled. The organisers are very sorry to disappoint all looking forward to this event, but pressure of work, with the general election, doesn't allow us time to organise. We hope to organise another as soon as possible.

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One of Alan Hardman's most popular cartoons [Thatcher and the tiger] produced in five colours 15ins by 9ins. Buy one for home, Labour Club, trade union or shop stewards' room.

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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 Mount Olive Villas, Liverpool 15. Tel: 051-722 0928
LEICESTER May Day Meeting Monday 7th May, Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester. Speakers to be announced.

DORSET 'Militant' election rally. 'Keep the Tories out—socialist policies for Labour!' Retreat Hotel, Ashley Road, Poole, Dorset. Wednesday 25th April 8pm.

SHEFFIELD Militant Meeting 'After the Election: What Next?' Wednesday 9th May, 7.30 pm. Station Hotel, The Wicker, Sheffield. Speaker: Jon Ingham (National Vice-chairman, LPYS)

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UPW PAY BALLOT: CUT THE STRINGS-REJECT OFFER!

Five months ago, the Union of Post Office Workers' executive put forward our annual wage claim, due on 1st January 1979.

The claim was carried overwhelmingly at a Special Conference in December, and immediately put to the Post Office. It would have increased the wages bill for UPW members by 24.4%, but the increase in basic pay was to be a very modest 8%.

At the end of March the executive, after lengthy negotiations, accepted a compromise offer, equivalent to 12-13% on the wages bill, which UPW branches are now balloting on.

The offer includes the 8% increase backdated to 1st January, a reduction in incremental scales and consolidation of most of the previous pay supplements under government wage restraint.

These were a major part of



Determined Post Office workers picket UPW House

the original claim. But they are conceded only with major strings attached, as a condition to the whole offer.

The consolidation will only operate from the end of July, over half way through the life of this wage agreement. The union is also being called on

to sign so-called 'efficiency agreements', which involve the close monitoring of members' work; more mobility of labour, including Postmen doing Postmen Higher Grade's work; the introduction of many more part time workers and a reduction of overtime.

Because of our low wages, many of us are forced to work high levels of overtime to get decent take-home pay. An increase of 8% before tax will not go very far to compensate for lost overtime.

Although the union stresses that the efficiency agreements

won't actually alter work rates and conditions, the Post Office didn't demand this 'work measurement' for fun. With the prospect of a Tory government, attempting to slash public services provided by the Post Office, they may see this as a means towards

mass redundancies.

The original claim included demands for a reduction of three hours in the working week, increased annual holidays and an escalator clause to compensate for inflation. All of these have been lost in the lengthy negotiations.

The executive are trying to push through acceptance of the offer before the general election. They are implying that with the strong possibility of a Tory government, a wage freeze could be imminent.

If this happened, however, the UPW would have to fight with other trade unions to combat Thatcher's policies. The possibility of a Conservative government is no reason to accept an inadequate settlement.

Our members must reject the offer: we must fight for the original claim in full.

By a UPW member

BOSSSES' THREAT TO TYRE INDUSTRY

Fifth column at Fort Dunlop

Two hundred staff redundancies at Fort Dunlop—and "they're just the tip of the iceberg."

Fort Dunlop is the largest tyre factory in Europe and the main production centre of the largest tyre company in Europe—the Dunlop Empire. Sir Campbell Fraser of Dunlop must be the very first emperor to mount an offensive against his own fort from within.

The three thousand redundancies now being fought represent about one quarter of all its tyre workers, but who can say how far these urban guerrillas intend to go?

The Dunlop industrial machine used to be run on tyres, but with diversification they now represent only 41% of its business, and it's decreasing all the time. There's the hosing and belting, the sports division and the rest, but it's only the tyre division that's in the red.

Not that Dunlop make any attempt to produce evidence, so it is the workers they've sentenced to the dole queue: "they just produce statistics, but open the books they will not," complained David James.

They only look at the profits from tyre sales, not at the cost of research, development and ancillary services. Recently, a new machine to produce the 18/24 truck tyre has been put into production in Germany. But it was developed at Fort Dunlop, so that the cost of that research will be entered on the debit side of Dunlop's British tyre accounts. It's been the same story with the Denovoe tyre.

A brand new company has been set up—Dunlop International Projector Ltd—with the sole aim of selling off



Lobby of Dunlop HQ by tyre workers last month Photo: MILITANT

Dunlop technology, rather than retaining the Dunlop workforce to utilise it. "It's a hard pill to swallow when your technology and know-how goes straight to another company", was the bitter comment of Tom Lomas.

The company has set itself up as judge, jury and executioner over its employees, and has set 19 April as the fateful day when the axe falls on the Speke plant, and

the jobs at two other sites.

At Fort Dunlop, the staff unions are presenting a united force to the threat hanging over them: "It's the old slogan: An injury to one is an injury to all!" said David James. He explained that his branch did not accept any member being made redundant.

If a job goes, then the work that went with it will never be done by anyone else.

A good test of feelings of Fort Dunlop staff was the complete success of the one-day strike. Half of even the non-union members came out.

Nationalisation

Everyone agreed that the fight they are engaged in was not about Dunlop alone, but the whole future of the tyre industry. The state of the economy, the decline of the British motor industry, even the fact that radial tyres have a longer life than cross-ply, is hitting the tyre industry. "The general run down is creating our problems." Dunlop has already had the cheek to ask the government for financial support.

Some financial support they are offering their workers when they are throwing them out of work! The NEB was approached for £50 million, but when the board replied that it wanted to take equity shares, Dunlop dropped it. They were not prepared to tolerate even the mildest control over their affairs.

"The trouble is", said Arthur Brooks, "the company is holding a pistol to our heads: if they don't get the money without strings, there will be more closures".

So what about the nationalisation of Dunlop as a means to direct investment and maintain jobs? "I'd welcome it," was his immediate reply.

Jeremy Birch spoke to: David James (MATSA convenor), Tom Lomas (TASS Chairman), Arthur Brookes (ASTMS Chairman), all Fort Dunlop.

GAS WORKERS

On 2nd April gas workers in Hull took part in a one-day stoppage in support of the rest of the Yorkshire region's gas workers, who were all out, except in York, where picketing took place.

The stoppage was provoked by British Gas. They have refused to come up with a reasonable offer for manual workers, who have not had a wage increase since January 1978.

The gas workers have been badly organised in the past. But this is all changed now. This one-day strike has

proved to the employers what organised trade unionists can do.

In Yorkshire, and particularly in Hull, private contractors are only employed after full consultation with shop stewards, and only for limited periods.

If contractors were totally eliminated and more direct labour used, the workers' organisations would be considerably strengthened. This should be the aim of all gas workers.

Gordon Cattleton
GMWU, personal capacity

NO BACK PEDALLING

say Bristol busworkers

Jimmy Cheek, vice-chairman T&GWU 3/111 branch [in a personal capacity] spoke to Alan Anderson [Bristol SE Labour Party]

Our basic wage is £39.44 plus supplements, bonus and shift allowance. We work four different shifts on a rota basis between 4.00 am and 12.00 pm—cheap-rate overtime.

The industry is being run down and Transport Supply Grants are often misused. Staff are leaving because of low pay—many qualify for Family Income Supplement and rent rebates.

We need a substantial improvement in pay to regain what has been lost over the last 3-4 years and to offset higher rents, rates and prices.

The National Committee for the Omnibus Industry (NCOI) lodged a 6-point claim: for a "standard duty" of 8 hours, premium payments for anything over this; a substantial increase in basic rates, consolidation of supplements, time-and-a-half for Saturdays, a standardised 25% increase for one-man drivers over "crew" bus workers, and four weeks' annual holiday.

"Substantial" was not defined, as the NCOI was waiting for the outcome of the lorry and tanker drivers' claims.

It should be between 15 and 20%. The extra week's

holiday was promised 2 years ago, but phase 2 stopped that.

NBC offered us 6%! The conference on 2nd March (see 'Militant' 448) saw 100% rejection and support for a national one-day stoppage—the first time there has ever been such a response.

The report-back in Bristol, to over 600 busworkers, supported these decisions. The NBC's "improved" offer of 9.9% is totally inadequate, but it put off the stoppage.

Our leadership is now trying to back-peddle. Since 1st March, our settlement date, they have adopted a 'wait and see' policy. They think any stoppage will upset Labour's chances in the election.

But our delegate to recall conference is mandated to reject anything but the full claim. If I was there, I'd press for a stoppage on 3rd May—the government would soon come up with something then!

If 9.9% is accepted by conference, it will be totally unsatisfactory to most bus workers. It's been an uphill struggle, even under a Labour government, to maintain our standard of living. That's the main issue in the election.

The Labour government should be forced to adopt real socialist policies.

AUEW NATIONAL COMMITTEE UNITED WE WILL WIN

The AUEW National Committee meeting this week comes at a critical time. The Engineering Employers' Federation are preparing for a confrontation while the Tories scream for laws against the unions.

Over 500 resolutions have been submitted by members on important issues such as apprentice training, micro-processors and the re-selection of MPs. Hugh Scanlon's 'mistaken' casting of the union's vote at the Labour Party conference ensured defeat for this policy against the wishes of both the conference and our union's delegation.

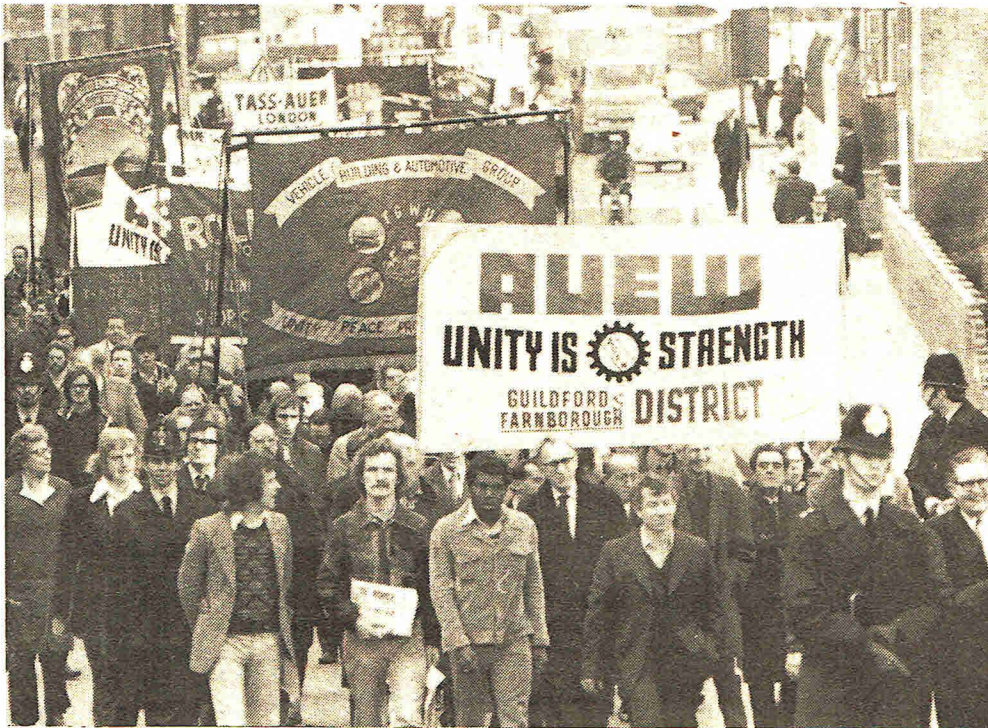
The main issues at this year's National Committee, however, will be wages, amalgamation and the re-election of a future Labour government.

A 1980 wage demand of at least £100 for a 35-hour week seems likely to be adopted by the Committee, in line with the overwhelming majority of the resolutions on wages and conditions. However, the breakdown of negotiations on the 1979 wage claim means that this debate can only take place within the context of a discussion on achieving our present demand of £80 for 35 hours.

Duffy has stated that if further discussions "prove abortive", the Confed will be recommending action. **Engineers will want to see those words translated into deeds. The AUEW is the main union in the Confed and it is up to us to show the lead.**

United action by engineering workers is vital. That is why the amalgamated union was created.

If the right wing have their way, that amalgamation will in practice, go into reverse at this meeting.



AUEW members marching against the fines imposed on the union under the last Tory government's Industrial Relations Act

They are seeking endorsement for their plan to incorporate other sections by a 'transfer of engagement'. In this way they hope to freeze out TASS, and thus stop the moves towards creating a combined shop-floor and white collar union.

The refusal of TASS to accept the election of all officials has played into the hand of the right wing in the AUEW who hope that they can scuttle the present amalgamation and go on to a merger with the EETPU and the creation of a giant union, which they imagine would be solidly right-wing.

TASS' insistence on retaining the appointment of full-time officials has been used as an excuse to move against the present amalgamation. But attempts to merge with the EETPU on the basis of its present undemocratic rule

book nevertheless cannot be excluded.

The National Committee must give firm instructions to the Executive on future amalgamation policy. We must ensure that the democratic structure of the AUEW, including the election of officials and the powers of the District Committees, remain intact.

But throughout the week, the threat of a Tory victory in the election will loom like a spectre over every debate.

The trade unions are the rock on which the Labour Party was built. The AUEW can play a key role in defeating Thatcher and her hatchet-men, by a campaign throughout the union and on the shop-floor for a Labour victory.

Resolution 449 from Division No 3 instructs the EC to use the full weight of the

union in pursuit of "a policy to ensure a return of a Labour government committed to implementing the socialist policies contained in their election manifesto."

Division 25, in resolution 386, call for the nationalisation of land, the building and drug industries, "the banks, insurance and financial institutions."

If this were taken up, boldly explaining the benefits it would mean for working people, ridding the health service, housing and industry of the profiteers and speculators, workers would rally to return a Labour government with a massive majority.

By Steve Davison

(AUEW deputy-convenor, Andertons, Bradford)

CIVIL SERVICE PAY CAMPAIGN MEMBERS VOTE ON LATEST OFFER

As anticipated in last week's 'Militant', the right wing majority of the CPSA's National Executive Committee are recommending acceptance of the latest pay offer at meetings of every branch of the union being organised on 23rd April.

Full implementation of PRU 'comparability' findings will result in rises of between 16.5% and 32% for CPSA members (the vast majority will get between 18 and 22%), implemented in stages between 1st April 1979 and 1st January 1980. Members will receive 9% plus £1 from 1st April plus 5% from 1st August and the balance from 1st January 1980.

Marginal improvements in proficiency payments, incremental scales and holiday, leave are also on offer.

Although many members, particularly those who have been involved in long-term selective strike action, will correctly vote against the

offer, the overwhelming majority of CPSA members will probably accept it. That does not mean that the settlement will be popular.

The leadership of the CPSA have shown they are unable or unwilling to organise adequate action to win the full claim. Many members will vote 'Yes' to the offer precisely because they lack confidence in the determination of the leadership to fight effectively for more.

Our original claim, for full implementation of PRU from 1st April 1979, was entirely justified. The PRU comparability system revealed how far civil servants had fallen behind during phases one, two and three of the Social Contract and showed that rises of between 16.5% and 32% were due.

Staging the deal means that civil service workers will be cheated of a large proportion of the rise they are due—PRU itself is a form of staging! And there is still no absolute guarantee that the August and January stages will be honoured by a Thatcher or even a Callaghan government.

This offer falls far short of what could have been won had the national leadership adopted a different strategy.

Members in all sections of the union showed by their magnificent response in two national one-day strikes that they were prepared to fight. Yet the leadership consistently refused to involve the DHSS and Employment members, two of the best organised and most militant sections, in anything other than minimal industrial action. 'Militant' supporters had called for this from the beginning.

Although we have not won the full claim, the present offer represents an advance for trade unionism in the civil service.

The mood amongst all nine civil service unions forced the leadership into action, and the campaign, despite restrictions, was enormously successful. This offer is undoubtedly better than some of the union leaders were initially willing to accept.

The members will face even sterner battles in the future. In the meantime, with this in

mind, in all unions they will be keeping a watchful and critical eye on their leaders.

Against this background the CPSA leadership elections at the conference in May take on an added importance.

Pat Byrne

(CPSA DHSS Section Executive, personal capacity)

STUC-Stop the Tories

The 82nd Conference of the Scottish TUC at Inverness this week takes place at a crucial time for workers in Scotland and south of the border. Due to the impending General Election the conference is being cut from five to three days.

One of the main debates will centre round the economy and unemployment, with the main composite calling for 'a major reduction in working time as an essential trade union response to technological developments' which 'should therefore be given a

high priority in collective bargaining'.

With Thatcher and her sidekicks ranting about the power of the unions, another important debate will be on trade union legislation. Composite 'M' calls for the repeal of part two of the Criminal Law Act, to protect trade unionists from discretionary use of the conspiracy laws.

The composite also calls for guaranteeing of pickets' rights—to stop vehicles to allow an adequate explanation of their case and to effectively operate without interference from the police

about limitation of numbers.

The Conference must pledge itself for an all-out fight against the reactionary policies of the Tories. Scottish trade unionists must campaign throughout the trade union movement for the return of a Labour government with an overwhelming majority, so there are no excuses for not implementing policies adopted at Labour Party, TUC and STUC conferences.

Pat Gallagher

(Delegate, East Kilbride Trades Council)

LUCAS MANAGEMENT NEED A TIME MACHINE

When Tony Benn arrived for a factory gate meeting at Lucas, Formans Road, Birmingham, he found that one section of the workforce had just walked out on strike.

It all started when management unilaterally imposed a new piece-rate value, at below average earnings, on workers in the new battery casting shop—in other words a wage cut. Not surprisingly, all 46 of them marched out on 26th March.

Two days later, the rest of the battery factory workers were informed that they would be laid off. But by April 3rd management accepted that the casting shop should stay on average earnings (and, therefore, responsibility for the dispute), and they returned to work.

In case anyone doubted their incompetence, however, management then placed an advert in the evening paper, on Wednesday 4th, instructing employees to clock in at 8.00 that morning.

Not only did the workers find travelling backwards through time beyond them; some of them didn't find out

that they were supposed to have returned until they called in for their wages the next Friday.

Then the company refused to negotiate compensation for the workers laid off, even for the Wednesday! When a work-to-rule was instituted, Lucas tore up national agreements and said they would only pay those involved for the units they produced, cancelling their guaranteed basic rate.

The whole battery factory had no alternative but to strike.

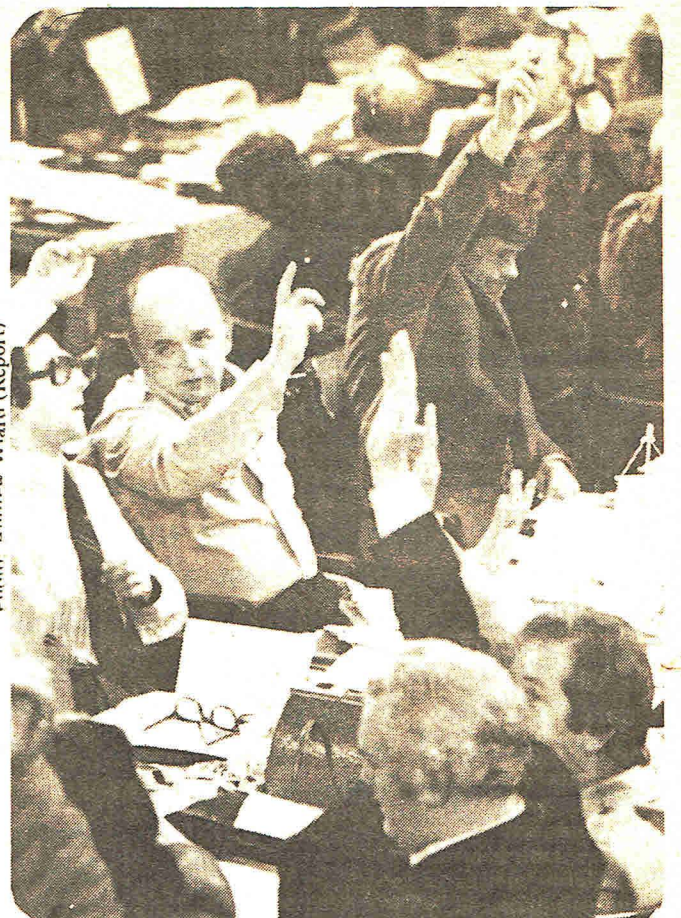
So far the company have offered just £10 to those who did not return to work on that fateful Wednesday, and £15 for those who did.

While this offer is unacceptable, management, in making it, are admitting their liability.

Now the workers are staying out for adequate payment for all the time the company has caused them to lose.

Jeremy Birch

(Selly Oak Labour Party)



Delegates to 1978 STUC conference voting in favour of a 35-hour week

Photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

SOCIALIST CANDIDATE STANDS IN DERRY

Derry Labour and Trade Union Party has decided to field Bill Webster for the general election in the Derry constituency.

By Dennis Tourish
 (Labour and Trade Union Group)

This general election will be fought mainly on basic class issues. In Northern Ireland, however, workers are being faced with the same old sectarian and/or Conservative Parties. There is no party of Labour to act as the voice of the trade union movement.

The Derry Party has therefore decided the time has come to take an independent Labour stand and fight on socialist policies.

The Party will particularly be campaigning on the basic economic issues. Bill Webster's manifesto

condemns the desperate poverty facing working people in the North: "Average wages are 10% to 15% lower than in Britain. Electricity and gas cost 27% to 30% more. Over 64,000 people are denied the right to work".

The Party will be outlining socialist policies to unite workers in struggle against these conditions, and to create a movement capable of eliminating them.

It will be taking up such issues as repression, recognising that "only the trade union movement can successfully oppose repression."

The other candidates represent all shades of bigotry and conservatism. The Official Unionists, the SDLP and the Official Republicans are firmly chained by their history to a sectarian appeal. Neither they nor the Alliance Party have fought for a socialist solution.

Derry is a sprawling constituency with some 93,000 electors. Our resources are slender, but we will be campaigning in the main areas—Derry City, Limavady and Coleraine. We have produced 50,000 manifestos and 2,000 election posters.

Working class alternative

The labour movement in Derry and throughout the North and South of Ireland is being canvassed for support. Open air meetings, factory gate meetings, and days-of-action are being organised, with the assistance of Labour and Trade Union Group members from other areas.

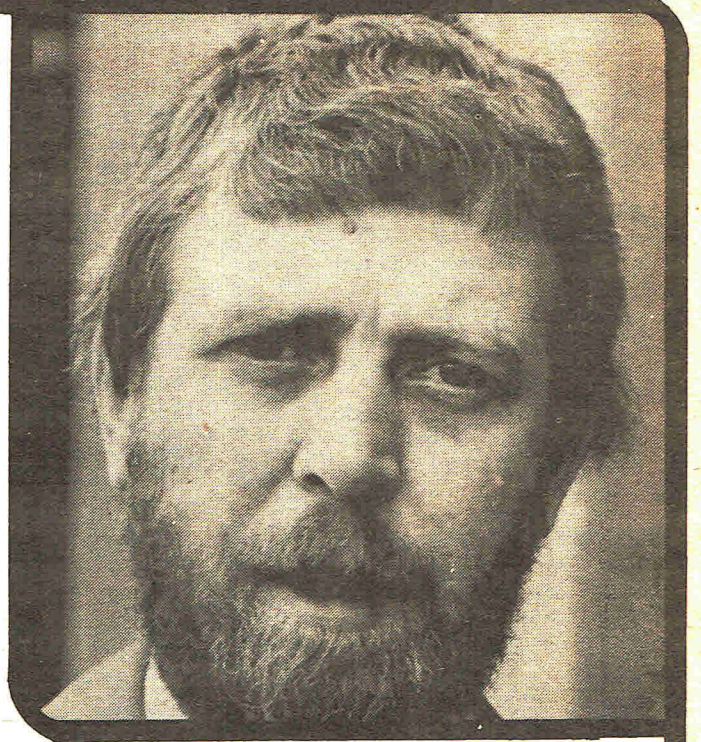
But this campaign needs money. The Derry Labour and Trade Union Party started out with only £15

in the bank, and has already plunged heavily into debt. Despite the burden facing the British labour movement at this time, we feel justified in asking for donations. The work of combatting sectarianism and poverty in Northern Ireland cannot wait or be set back through lack of funds.

All donations (which will be acknowledged) should be sent to: Gerry Lynch, 2 Claremont Street, Derry.

This campaign is part of a broader struggle to involve trade unionists in political activity. The decision to stand was taken because the trade union movement is not fielding any candidates, despite the need for such action.

However, despite the lack of an initiative from the official trade union movement, the annual conference of the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions did on 12 April pass a motion calling for trade unionists to vote for candidates who support trade union policies. Is this not an admission of the point made in Bill Webster's manifesto: "Most workers are seeking an alternative. That can be provided by the labour move-



Bill Webster has been an activist in the trade union and labour movement for the past 12 years. From 1970 to 1974 he was a full-time organiser in London for the General and Municipal Workers Union. He is Chairman of his union branch in Derry and an Executive Committee member of Derry Trades Union Council. Since 1977 he has been the Secretary of the Derry Labour and Trade Union Party.

ment?"

We will be continuing to campaign for the unions to form a party of labour, and

for that party and other sections of the movement to campaign on a firm socialist programme.

★ The Derry Labour and Trade Union Party is the only organisation which has upheld the united interests of workers in this constituency throughout the troubles—up to 1974 as the Derry Labour and Trade Union Party. It has fought against sectarianism, defended the unity of the trade union movement, assisted workers in struggle and put forward the socialist alternative. The Party is the local branch of the Labour and Trade Union Group.

IRELAND'S TORIES FACE MASS WORKERS' OPPOSITION

The current trade union campaign in the 26 counties for a wealth tax and increased taxation of company profits has brought to a head all the seething discontent of workers and their families against the government of Fianna Fail, Ireland's main Tory party.

Recently, 300,000 took part in a general strike (20 March). Next Tuesday, the Dublin Council of Trade Unions will decide whether to call a further one-day general strike for May Day.

Post Office workers have been on strike for over two months. Buses in Dublin and Cork are cut 50% because of action by maintenance staff.

Crane men in Dublin port struck in early April, practically halting coal deliveries, and seriously affecting petrol and diesel supplies.

On top of this the 1978 National Wage Agreement expires for most workers between March and May—so

By Finn Geaney
 (Dublin Council of Trade Unions, personal capacity)

an entire round of wage demands is now in the offing. A further National Wage Agreement has already been rejected at a special delegate of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

Post Office workers and busmen have been seeking over 30% and teachers discussing 40% wage claims. Yet Fianna Fail's budget strategy was based on a maximum 5% for 1979.

The Economic and Social Research Institute, in its latest 'Economic Commentary', has predicted that Ireland's inflation this year will reach 11.25%. Fianna Fail predicted 5%.

The Irish pound has al-

ready fallen to 96p sterling, thus raising the costs of some British goods in the shops. The ESRI also said that Gross National Product would rise by 3.25% in 1979—Fianna Fail's budget figure for growth was 6.5%.

This reactionary government is stumbling from one disaster to the next. But their basic aim is clear: to make the workers pay for the economic crisis.

At present they are out to make an example of public service workers by holding down state-sector wages. Cut-backs in public expenditure form the other prong of the attack. Food and gas subsidies are being removed, and local authority rents are being increased.

But it is not purely on economic issues that Fianna

Fail is incapable of showing any way forward. Their clumsy attempts, with a new Family Planning Bill, to restrict the availability of contraceptives has aroused the opposition, not only of the family planning groups, but of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the Irish Labour Party, which stand for the free availability of contraceptives.

On every issue, whether economic or cultural, it is the organisations of labour which are in the forefront of the struggle against Fianna Fail and the employers.

The Labour Party should co-ordinate and lead these various movements against Fianna Fail. The only alternative to Fianna Fail rule is a majority Labour government with socialist policies.

WEST STIRLINGSHIRE - MASS CANVASS

There will be a Youth Rally and mass canvass in West Stirlingshire Constituency on Saturday 21st April by LPYS members to ensure that this constituency with a present Labour majority of 367 is won by the Labour Party on May 3rd.

Speakers at the Youth

Rally will include Denis Canavan MP and Tony Saunois [Labour Party NEC].

The canvass will cover the mining villages in the constituency and anyone wishing to participate should meet on Saturday at the Bannockburn Miners' Welfare.

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