

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 484
4 January 1980

15p

SUPPORT THE STEEL MEN

See page 16

TORIES HELL-BENT ON DESTROYING WORKERS LIVING STANDARDS

IT'S THEM OR US



Photo: MILITANT

Thatcher promises worse to come

The Tory government and their big business backers have made a New Year's resolution: the rich will get richer, and the poor poorer.

So there is absolutely no doubt who her real friends are, Mrs Thatcher has put City tycoons

and Tory Party big-wigs high up on her New Year's Honours List.

She has added a touch

of ermine and a few snobbish handles to the £1,500,000 her government handed out to the exclusive top 7% of taxpayers in its first budget.

There is a peerage for Sir Kenneth Keith, who is vice president of the Engineering Employers' Federation and chairman of Rolls Royce [which acted as a spearhead for the engineering bosses with lockouts during the recent Confed dispute]. He is also a director of Times Newspapers Ltd. A real chamber of horrors for trade unionists.

Workers lobbying the 1979 TUC Conference. The labour movement must defend us the way the Tories defend the bosses!

By Roger
Shrives

Sir Marcus Sieff of Marks and Spencer, donator to Tory Party funds and winner of the Aims National Free Enterprise Award in 1978, is also elevated to join the ermined rabble in the Lords.

So too Sir Edwin McAlpine, whose son is Tory Party Treasurer, and whose firms, Robert McAlpine and Newarthill Ltd., are traditionally among the Tories' heftiest financial backers.

continued on
back page

HIT THE TARGET

Rush last minute cash and promises for the 1979 Fighting Fund to 'Militant' now. Deadline: 12 noon on Sunday, 6 January!

Counterfoils and cash for the Draw must be in by 12 noon on Saturday 5 January.

See page 13 for the latest Fighting Fund report.

'Militant' still needs every 'tenner', 'fiver', pound and penny our readers can spare.

What we don't get now, we can't spend on developing 'Militant' in 1980!

inside...

How the workers are robbed
pages 8-9



★ Northern Ireland—'silver fort'
page 7

★ Indian elections—page 11

ORGANISE MASS FIGHT BACK WITH SOCIALIST POLICIES!

A BAD YEAR FOR THE CHILD

1979 will no doubt turn out to be a record year for the oil companies' gigantic profits. But the 'Year of the Child' has seen no improvement in the position of millions of children condemned to live in a world dominated by landlords and capitalist profiteers. Unicef, the UN children's fund, itself admits this. Their 1979 report shows that 200 million children are under-nourished. Half of the 15 million under-fives who die each year are victims of malnutrition. Yet, in the so-called 'developing' world, only 10 out of every 85 children can ever expect to get any medical care.



Militant

ZIMBABWE

Right-wing MPs prepare for split from Labour

Losing the argument on policy within Labour's ranks, some right-wing MPs are now actively preparing to split the Party and desert.

In a recent lecture, Roy Jenkins made it clear that he would have no scruples about splitting from the Party.

Press comments left no doubt that he was advocating the formation of a new "social democratic" or "radical centre" party which would stand against the Labour Party.

Since then, however, the weekly magazine 'Now!' [21 December] and 'Financial Times' [27 December] have revealed that arrangements have been made for "private talks between Mr David Steel, the Liberal leader, Mr Roy Jenkins, and other leading social democrats," which are "expected to take place in the new year."

"The aim will be to establish whether there is enough common ground between the two groups to enable them to come to some kind of working agreement which could form the basis of a new centre grouping in British politics."

"Discreet approaches," revealed the FT, "have apparently been made to the Liberal Party by a number of individual MPs who fear they will not be selected again as Labour candidates because their local parties are controlled by the Left."

So these are the people so concerned about the well being of the Party and its future electoral success!

The real truth is that their over-riding concern is to preserve their own parliamentary positions.

Right-wing preparations for a split, moreover, are a frank confession that in the argument on policies within the Party they have already been defeated.

Other right-wingers like William Rodgers have publicly opposed the idea of a 'moderate' split away from the Labour Party.

"The call is premature,"

explained right-wing MP Bryan Magee ['Sunday Telegraph' 16 December]. "The Left cannot be allowed to take over the Labour Party without a fight, and only if that fight is lost does the creation of a new party become an option to be considered."

In private, the right are certainly considering this 'option'. If in the next year they are unable to reverse the conference decisions on party democracy and guarantee the domination of the parliamentary party and the leadership by the right, then they will split.

But, if they think there is a massive section of the electorate just waiting for the opportunity to throw its support behind a 'moderate', 'social-democratic', or 'radical' party, they are mistaken.

The capitalist class, using the media, may well try to bolster up a new centre party, both as a safety net to catch disenchanted Tory voters and as a way of undermining Labour.

But the fundamental class polarisation of society which is being produced by the dire crisis of British capitalism will leave no room for a centre party.

The Tory government has adopted a class-war programme in the interests of big business. The experience of this government and the effects of the crisis will produce a further radicalisation of the working class. More and more trade unionists will move into political action, into the Labour Party.

It is the beginnings of this process which have produced the swing to the left in both the Party and the trade unions. The moves towards democratisation will not be reversed by the manoeuvres of the right wing. Attempts to witch-hunt the Marxists will not succeed.

Workers are turning to the ideas of Marxism because they are convinced through their own experience that it is the programme and perspective of Marxism which offer a way forward for the working class through the socialist transformation of society.

Settlement leaves key questions unresolved

Imperialism is hoping that the Lancaster House agreement will begin to usher in a period of capitalist stability in Rhodesia. It is mistaken.

By Jim Christie

Whichever way one looks the future is stormy. The Lancaster House agreement did not settle the vital questions of who would exercise state power in Zimbabwe.

At the beginning of the conference the Patriotic Front asked nine questions of British imperialism. They included 'Whose army shall defend Zimbabwe?', 'Whose police force shall protect the people?', 'What will be the future of the people's stolen land?'

The questions were not answered.

In their memorandum, the Patriotic Front said that "Only by dealing with them [i.e. these questions] can we hope to leave here and return to freedom and the prospect of peace in Zimbabwe."

The Patriotic Front leaders were in the end prepared to leave the conference without settling the questions.

But the questions remain, and the masses will be pressing for a solution.

The underlying tension can be seen in what has occurred over the last few days.

First, there was the myster-

ious death of ZANU's military commander, Josiah Tongogara. This led to the cancellation of a meeting of the two African nationalist movements, ZANU and ZAPU, to plan a joint election campaign.

Instead, bowing to massive pressure from ZANU members inside Rhodesia, the ZANU leadership announced that they would conduct a separate election campaign.

Although there are some 'ethnic' factors involved in this decision, its main relevance was the pressure for a clear radical approach on the question of providing land and jobs.

At the Lancaster House agreement ZANU's leader, Mugabe, said that he "dare not" make concessions on land.

During the liberation struggle ZANU committed far more forces inside the country. This led to them being radicalised as the struggle progressed to a greater extent than ZAPU.



Mugabe signs Lancaster House agreement Photo: MILITANT

The decision to campaign separately was reportedly greeted with great enthusiasm by the 100,000 crowd at last weekend's rally.

It is against this background that the Lancaster House agreement will be tested and found wanting.

Working out a constitutional agreement is one thing, satisfying the aspirations of the Zimbabwean working people is another. There can be little doubt that if fair and free elections were held ZANU and ZAPU would win.

When some of the military commanders 'returned' publicly to Rhodesia on Boxing Day the crowds at the airport to greet them were, according to 'The Times', anything up to 100,000. 'Watch out bishop! The boys are back in town' read one placard.

If ZANU and ZAPU do not win the elections, the war will continue.

But if they win, they will be under enormous pressure both from the masses and from imperialism.

International capital and many African states would want such a government to take on a nationalist direction with only minor encroachments on the power of capitalism. Imperialism hopes that it can defuse the situation by gradually integrating the Patriotic Front and its forces into the capitalist state.

By large-scale aid international capitalism hopes to

solve the pressure on land by buying up inefficient white farmers, creating a middle-class African farming class and providing jobs in the city. They want to build a new 'Kenya'.

But these measures would not satisfy the widespread hunger for land and employment.

So along with the carrot comes the stick—the threat of increased South African involvement. It was the South African-backed raids into Mozambique, Angola, Zambia and Botswana which helped make the leaders of those countries pressurise the Patriotic Front to settle in London.

According to the 'Economist' (22 December) it was President Machel who forced Mugabe to accept the ceasefire, when the latter was planning to quit the conference to go and get support at the UN.

Caught between the forces of international capital, the local white elite and the South African ruling class, on the one side, and the aspirations of the Zimbabwean people, on the other, any new government will not be stable. The future of the country will be stormy until the social questions of jobs, peace and land, whose answers were postponed at the London Conference, are answered in favour of the Zimbabwean workers and rural population.



London LPYS demonstration against Tories, October 20th last year

Photo: MILITANT

4 WEEKS TO MOBILISE FOR ANTI-TORY DEMO

'Short Sharp Shock Treatment'—that's what Willie Whitelaw promised youth. Now we can see what he really meant—50,000 jobs in the steel industry, 25,000 in Leyland, and 40,000 in the civil service—all to go in the next few months.

But the loss of jobs doesn't stop there. The Wales TUC has estimated that steel closures will mean the loss of a further 18,000 jobs in coal mining and engineering in South Wales alone. All of this can be added to the 300,000 jobs which the Tories themselves admit will be lost through public spending cuts.

Areas like South Wales, Scotland, and Merseyside, are once again being haunted by a spectre—the threat of a return of the mass unemployment of the 1930s. Hardest hit of all by the prospect of two million unemployed by the end of 1980 will be working class youth.

Many factories and offices have stopped taking on new labour. Where are the school leavers meant to find work? That's a question that the Tories aren't prepared to answer. The Labour Party Young Socialists have got answers—socialist policies—to the problems faced by working class youth.

That's why we must ensure that in the next four weeks before the 'Youth Against the Tories' demonstration we really need to explain our ideas to young workers, and

draw them into the LPYS.

We have always pointed out that while unemployment affects the whole of the working class, it hits youth especially hard.

When unemployment as a whole rises by 50%, youth unemployment tends to double. The Manpower Services Commission has just produced a report (drawn up before the latest steel closures were announced) which predicts that unemployment will rise from 1,336,000 now to 1,908,000 by 1982—an increase of 43%.

Even more threatening are their estimates for unemployment for the under 19s—rising from 254,000 to 478,000 by 1982—an 88% increase. When we say that capitalism is trying to take youth back to the 1930s—we mean it.

Nearly half a million youth under the age of 19 out of work by 1982—that's the prospect that the Tories and their capitalist system offer to working class youth.

Rubbing salt into the wound, the Tories have already cut grants for 16-18 year old school students, forcing youth out to find work.

LPYS NATIONAL RALLY AGAINST THE TORIES

FEBRUARY 2nd.

Assemble 12.00 am, Porden Road [near Brixton Tube] London S.W.2. Send-off rally with speakers from local labour movement, including Ted Knight [Leader Labour Group, Lambeth Council], and John Bulaitis [LPYS NC member, London].

March through Brixton and Lambeth to rally at Central Hall Westminster, 2.30 pm-5.00 pm.

Speakers: Tony Benn MP

Eric Heffer MP

Dennis Skinner MP

Tony Saunois [LPYS rep on Labour's NEC]

Andy Bevan [Labour Party National Youth Officer] and others

Their latest penny-pinching act has been to draw up plans to cut supplementary benefit for school leavers between June and September. Tens of thousands of working class youth are now beginning to question what is going on.

It is becoming clearer day by day that something is wrong. The build up for work for the February 2nd 'Youth Against the Tories' demonstration provides us with an ideal opportunity to point out what is wrong—the capitalist system—and to put forward our clear socialist ideas to hundreds of thousands of working class youth.

We have only got four weeks to go! Every area should check now that they have got their transport booked, and every YS member has supplies of coach tickets to take along to trade union branch and Labour Party meetings. School students understand now only too well the prospect that capitalism offers them—we

must make sure they are given the opportunity to come on our demonstration!

Branches in several areas are organising weeks of action around the schools, leafletting several schools, followed by a YS public meeting aimed at school students. In the last few weeks of the campaign days of action should be organised in every town centre.

Iford South LPYS are using a day of action to raise money as well—they are organising a sponsored day of leafletting for January 26th with a target of 10,000 leaflets to be given out—fight the Tories, raise money, and build the LPYS branch at the same time!

If all YS branches use the next four weeks in intensive campaigning work it will be quite possible to double their membership, as well as making the demonstration a massive show of the anger of working class youth against the Tories!

Defence Fund - TU donations increase

As more and more workers hear of the libel action by John Golding MP against the Militant—the workers' paper—an increasing number of donations for the Defence Fund are coming in.

Looking at the source of the donations—local trade union branches and Labour parties as well as many individuals—it can be seen that

Golding's action has angered many rank-and-file labour and trade union activists.

The new year has marked an excellent response from trade union branches especially—the best coming from the Davy Manufacturing Joint Shop Stewards Committee, Sheffield, who roundly condemned Golding's action. They have sent £50, and passed a resolution condemning his action which they are sending to Golding's constituency, and the POEU and Confederation & En-

gineering Unions executives.

The T&GWU 10/54A branch also sent in £50 with the message "may your paper prosper with this small donation", and the Fire Brigades Union No 9 branch (Merseyside and Cheshire) donated £20.

The Metropolitan North West branch of the POEU sent £25 for the defence fund; no doubt angered, like many rank-and-file members of the POEU, that union funds may be used to pay for Golding's court costs.

Other union donations were £10 from the Kent Graphical Society (NGA) and

£10 from the T&GWU 01/1409-06 branch. There was also a 'tenner' individual donation from Dave Smith, West Essex area officer for NUPE. West Midland regional officer for NUPE Barry Shuttleworth gave £1.

Labour Party members have not held back either, and £15.65 was raised for the Defence Fund at the West Midlands Regional Labour Party conference. Similarly, members of Birmingham Labour party made individual donations totalling £15, and £1 was collected at the GMC of Totnes Labour Party.

Other donations included £1 from Vera Harvey (Totnes

LP), £2.50 from NUS members in Hull, £5 from Steve Roach (Swansea Labour Club), £2.30 raised by DT Maples (Newcastle Central LPYS) on the way home from a disco!

Militant supporter Chris Edwards donated a valuable Churchill Crown to the funds. The old union-baiter, Churchill, must be turning in his grave to know his smiling portrait is going towards defending a Marxist newspaper!

Besides these main contributions there have been hundreds of smaller donations to mention, but keep the money rolling in.

Newham ANTI-CUTS CONFERENCE PLANNED

'Newham Against Cuts', a campaigning body convened by West Ham and East Ham Trades Councils, Newham Co-operative Party, local Labour Parties, NUT and NALGO, held its first delegate conference on December 15.

Fifty-five delegates representing 26 labour movement organisations attended, along with local MPs, Ron Leighton (Newham NE) and Nigel Spearing (Newham South), who spelt out the terms of the Local Government Bill which Heseltine is pushing through parliament in an attempt to limit the ability of Labour local councils to breach the Tories' public expenditure cuts programme.

The Newham cuts conference agreed to establish a steering committee open to delegates from all wings of the local labour movement, including tenants' associations, to carry the campaign forward. The steering committee was given a mandate to co-ordinate local leafletting, public meetings, production of a regular newsletter and to link up with similar campaigns in other areas.

Specifically, the conference agreed to prepare for a 'Day of Action' involving mass leafletting and a demonstration and also to prepare for a much larger conference early in 1980 open to delegates from labour movement organisations and to every elected workplace representative in Newham.

This conference, which will be empowered to take resolutions and hammer out a clear policy, could be a major step forward in centralising and concentrating opposition to the cuts in a borough where public spending cuts affect employment with the four largest local employers; the local authority itself, Health Service, British Rail and London Transport.

The officers elected to press ahead with the work outlined at the conference on December 15 were: President, Andy Bevan (Newham NE CLP); Secretary, Caroline Sikorski (Newham NALGO) and Treasurer, Alan Haworth (Newham NE CLP). The first steering committee meeting is to be held on February 1st. One of its major tasks will be to build support for the campaign in local workplaces and in the local streets.

And remember, it is not just the money that is needed to defend the Militant: the backing of the organisations of the labour movement, with resolutions of support for Militant, is vital.

Copies of the Defence Campaign bulletins, with a full explanation of the issues involved, are available from 5 Cremer House, Deptford Church Street, London SE 8. Donations and resolutions should also be sent to the Defence Fund at this address.

London Militant Irish Monthly meeting - WORKERS UNITE!

"The Tories' recent 'initiative' of talks between different capitalist parties in Northern Ireland has been stillborn. The need is for a real initiative, from the organisations of the labour movement."

Peter Hadden from the steering committee of the Northern Ireland Labour and Trade Union Group aptly summed up the main theme of a highly successful meeting organised by Militant Irish Monthly in London.

By
Roger Shrivess

Speakers from the floor and the platform pointed out that 'Militant' had consistently fought for class unity in Northern Ireland, even during the darkest days of sectarian violence, to the scorn of many, even within the labour movement.

Now it is ten years since British troops were introduced into the streets of Northern Ireland; ten years of torture and repression, fake initiatives and minor concessions to the middle class. What had changed though for the workers in the North?

Nearly two thousand people have died violently, 100 of them during 1979. The social conditions which bred the

violence had deteriorated yet further, the unemployment rate has reached 13-14%. For both Catholic and Protestant workers, low wages are the norm. 56% of heads of household in the Catholic Falls area earned less than £25 a week in 1976. In the Protestant Shankill, the figure was 59%. Capitalist measures have failed.

The army tops have learned useful information on 'crowd control' methods (i.e. vicious repression, torture and imprisonment). Useful that is, for class conflicts both sides of the Irish Sea. But one speaker pointed out that 85% of those on active service in Northern Ireland try to get out.

Peter Hadden also stressed that the Provisionals were no nearer now to defeating British imperialism than in 1972. Their methods were in fact antagonising the working



Thousands of workers took part in a mass demonstration against the Fianna Fail in Dublin this year.

class, the only force able to unite Ireland.

Through all this period, trade unionism has grown in the North. Not one single strike has been broken by sectarianism. In a recent bakers strike, for instance, Protestant and Catholic bakery workers stood together on picket lines, facing attacks by the police.

Similarly, John Throne, a member of the Administrative Council of the Irish Labour Party drew attention to the gathering tempo of the class struggle in the South of Ireland. The Financial Times estimates there will be 25% unemployment there by 1985. Inflation is increasing and the rich man's government of Fianna Fail is trying to put the burden on the shoulders of the working class.

The workers' response has been overwhelming. Hundreds of thousands of workers have been mobilised in 1979 in local and national general strikes. The new Fianna Fail leader Haughey will make no difference in policies, and will be unable to stem the tide.

John pointed to the votes for the Labour Party in the Cork City by-election (up from 10% to 23%); to the beginnings of a campaign by Labour's youth in the south, and also to the excellent response to the Labour and Trade Union Group's Youth for Socialism campaign in the North.

Both North and South the class battles were hotting up, and growing closer together, with widespread active support for strikes each side of the border.

From the platform and the floor the lesson was drawn, to build up a united working class movement. Even the problem of repression can be solved by no other means, as the labour movement campaign to release Jimmy Kelly held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act proved.

Labour movement conference needed

If the union and the Labour Party leaders had given a class lead in the events of 1968/69 which initially took a clear class outline, the dark years of sectarian bitterness could have been avoided.

This time, the trade union and Labour Party leaders

must convene a conference of all labour movement activists to discuss the way forward, and lead a campaign against poverty, unemployment, repression and sectarianism.

Building class unity on the basis of socialist policies is the only way to save Ireland, North and South, from becoming an economic wasteland. It is the only guarantee that sectarianism will not again raise its ugly head. It is the only way possible to remove the troops from Northern Ireland, and lead to the uniting of Ireland on a socialist basis.

The willingness of Militant supporters in Britain to aid in that struggle was shown by the collection of £100 from the audience of 140 for the funds of Militant Irish Monthly.

Trade union youth against the Tories

NORTH-WEST YOUNG WORKERS CONFERENCE

Over 100 people attended the North West LPYS's Young Workers' conference, including many from trade unions such as the AUEW, NUM, FBU and Bakers' Union.

The morning session cent-

red around the Tory cuts, with Terry Fields of the Fire Brigades Executive speaking. Terry explained just what the callous attacks on the working class would mean. But the unions and Labour Party, he said, were not fulfilling their role and offering a properly organised leadership to the anti-cuts campaigns that are taking place throughout the country. It is therefore our duty to take part in the fightback and offer an alternative to both the Tories and the bankrupt policies of the right-wing Labour leaders.

Many points were raised

from the floor about the effects of Tory policy, and what sort of campaign the labour movement should take up, particularly Labour councils.

In the afternoon session, Jim Newlands, from the LPYS National Committee, spoke on the socialist way forward, condemning the misery and hardship which capitalism has caused by throwing thousands of people on the dole.

On top of this the Tories are attacking the living standards of working people. Only the policies of the LPYS

and 'Militant', he emphasised, could take us forward.

This provoked a response from the floor with many people explaining the need for socialist policies.

During the conference, a collection was made for the workers at Adamsons who have been on strike for 14 weeks, and a letter of support sent to the workers at Meccano.

By Dave Morgan

(Bury & Radcliffe LPYS)

STUC- LPYS SUPPORT GROWS

Delegates to the STUC Youth Advisory Conference in December unanimously voted in favour of pressing "for the social ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange" in order that the "resources of society [could] be planned to provide work for all, a decent living wage and civilised social services".

Although, because of compositing arrangements, the same resolution also referred to the Alternative Economic Strategy, Militant supporters were well received as they explained the need for control over the economy in order to create a socialist plan of production.

Virtually every discussion was marked by 'Militant' supporters taking up the issues with a Marxist perspective and putting forward a socialist programme as the real alternative to the capitalist crisis.

Growing support for these ideas was reflected in the elections to the Youth Advisory Committee, where only one vote prevented the election of two 'Militant' supporters. The strength and influence of the LPYS and 'Militant' is undoubtedly growing as events bear out our perspectives.

Significantly, it was 'Militant' supporters who successfully moved the only two emergency resolutions on the questions of defending union rights in the light of the Employment Bill and on support for the Meccano workers in Liverpool [a collection was also taken].

Over the next year, as LPYS members we must continue, and indeed step up, our work amongst fellow trade union youth, to ensure the continued growth in support for our ideas and programme.

By
Larry Flanagan

(Renfrew LPYS & NATTKE delegate)

YORKSHIRE YOUNG WORKERS CONFERENCE

"Young workers can't afford to sit back and allow the Tories to attack their living standards. We need to be at the forefront of the trade union and labour movement fight-back," said Paul Green, Yorkshire Regional Chairman of the Labour Party Young Socialists, opening their Young Workers' Conference in Leeds on Saturday (8 December).

Over 130 trade unionists and Young Socialists, representing 25 different trade unions attended the conference. Delegates included 13

from the Yorkshire Region of the National Union of Miners, and five from Yorkshire Imperial Metals in Leeds.

Andy Bevan, the Labour Party's National Youth Officer, graphically illustrated in his address the brutal logic of the profits system, where the capitalists can get a much higher rate of return (15%) from leaving their money in the bank than from investment in manufacturing industry (3%).

The run down of manufacturing industry was throwing thousands of workers onto the dole, and thousands of apprenticeships have been lost

200,000 in engineering alone since 1970.

In the afternoon session, in which Bob Cryer MP and Pat Wall (President of Bradford Trades Council) spoke, Phil Rees of the AUEW explained how, when working in engineering, he was so tired when he came home that he just fell asleep in a chair. Phil showed how most young workers were deprived of the opportunity to develop themselves because of the pressures on them at work.

This emphasised the dire need for a shorter working week.

One thing which clearly

LEFT and RIGHT

Forced to Exploit

Everyone knows Ian Smith's regime of apartheid was vicious and horrendous; forcing workers to endure poverty and repression. Smith even put pressure on the bosses....to make them profits!

The Sunday Times [Dec 16] explains, "The Lonrho mining company stranded in Rhodesia by UDI was forced by Ian Smith's government to open and develop six mines in order to sell gold to get much needed foreign exchange."

The Times goes on to say that they believe Lonrho's mining profits to be in the region of £40-£50 million a year. No wonder the Lonrho bosses didn't kick up too much fuss about being 'forced' to exploit the black workers, with profits like this at stake!

Prescriptions down

Since the Tories introduced increased prescription charges, there has been a substantial drop in the number of prescriptions dispensed. In September, there was a drop of two and a half thousand, compared to the amount the same time last year! And the Tories' comment on this? Dr Gerard Vaughan, the Health Minister said, "A short term drop in prescription numbers is to be expected." Vaughan didn't mention what was going to happen in the long term, but with increasing unemployment, rising prices and the bosses keeping down wages, the amount will drop even further as workers won't be able to afford much needed medicines. When workers say the Tories make them sick, they'll mean it quite literally!

Total Harmony

There are no dissidents in the Soviet Union-or so the ruling bureaucracy would have us believe. In the Soviet Weekly [Dec 15], Russian lawyer Valentin Ivanov explained that tales about dissidents were all anti-Soviet propaganda, and anyway, if people were put in jail they must have broken the law.

"...a state has the right to protect itself against espionage, terrorism and sabotage." The regular batches of intellectuals and artists fleeing the USSR-much to the glee of the capitalist press-can hardly be described as gun-toting terrorists. And what about the dissidents placed into mental homes? Ah, of course, Ivanov's explanation of this is easy "...they are people who, because of chronic mental disease or temporary mental derangement, cannot understand or control their actions."

THE OLD ONES ARE THE BEST!

One of the classic novels which points to the nature of capitalism is Robert Tressell's 'The Ragged Trousered Philanthropist'-if you haven't read this book yet, then make it your new year's resolution to do so.

Robert Tressell's tale is adapted from his own experience of a group of house painters before the First World War. Their attempts to survive whilst literally giving away the wealth they produce and their rights hand over fist illuminates the workings of the capitalist system perfectly.

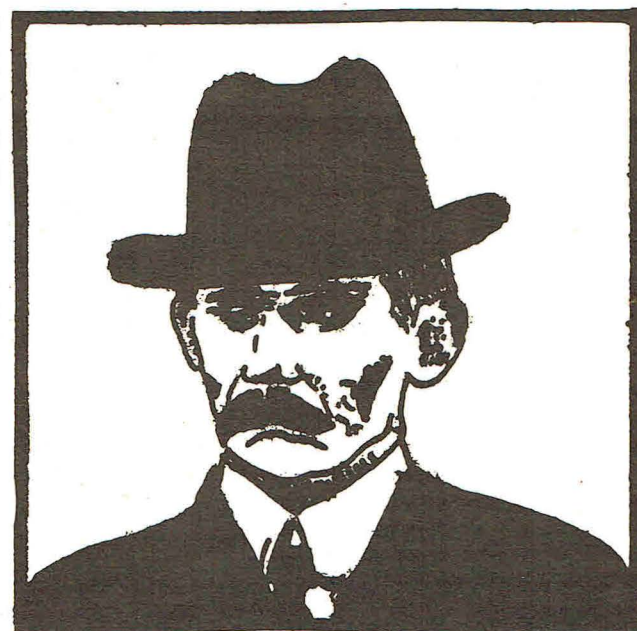
The fortunes of their workers, at home, at work and in leisure are told against the background of the light-hearted lectures on socialism conducted in the lunch breaks by Owen, one of the painters.

The efforts of the men to defend the system that persistently robs them, in reply to Owen, mirror exactly many of the myths about socialism still in circulation today—70 years after the book was written.

In an easy to read fashion the causes of poverty, of unemployment, of war, etc,

Chris Edwards reviews 'The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists' by Robert Tressell

Available from World Books 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. price £1.50 + 30p.



Robert Tressell

brilliantly portrayed over the events of a year in the town of Mugsborough.

There is full coverage of the by-election contest between Sir Ereball D'encloeland for the Tories, and Adam Sweater for the Liberals but the theme running throughout the book is the perspective of socialism outlined by Owen and later by some of his workmates.

'Ragged Trousers' is a novel and at the same time educational. It transfuses the misery of the working class of the day with the humour and happiness that springs up out of the gloom.

The tale it tells cannot be forgotten and the style in which it is written will make you want to read it again and again.

New Year Greetings

OLDHAM LPYS
greet workers
everywhere
Forward to socialism
in the '80s!

HERE'S TO A NEW
DECADE FOR
SOCIALISM!
Fraternal greetings
Newcastle Central
Labour Party
Young Socialists

COXFORD
BRANCH
Southampton
Labour Party
send socialist
greetings
to 'Militant' and the
workers' movement

Stop the
Tories!
Socialist
policies for
Labour!

LITTLEHAMPTON
LABOUR PARTY
sends socialist greetings to
all workers and urges them
to step up the fight to
put an end to the Tory cuts

Littlehampton LPYS
send fraternal Christmas
greetings to all comrades
in the labour and
trade union movement
Forward to a socialist Britain

End the Tory
nightmare!
Labour to power on
a socialist
programme!
Reading University
Labour Club

Royton and Wardle
Labour Party
Women's Section

Make the new
decade decisive in
the fight for
women's rights
and socialism!
Join your
Women's Section;
fight for socialism

Bootle LPYS send
fraternal greetings
to the labour movement
A new decade with bold
socialist policies

Coventry [South East]

Labour Party sends
comradely greetings
to all workers
and their families
for 1980.

Join us in fighting the
Tories with a policy of:

NO TO CUTS!
NO TO
RENT/RATE
INCREASES!
BRING DOWN
THE TORIES!
REINSTATE
LABOUR WITH A
SOCIALIST
PROGRAMME!

To join the Labour Party contact:
Dave Nellist (chairman)
Mohammed Iqbal (secretary)
c/o 30 Coundon Road, Coventry

Greater Manchester
LPYS Liaison
Committee
sends greetings
FORWARD TO A MASS
SOCIALIST LABOUR PARTY!

Brighouse LPYS

Greetings for the New Year
Success for the fight ahead

LABOUR STUDENTS CONFERENCE : FIGHTING LEADERSHIP NEEDED

"NOLS faces two paths; that in the academic seminar room, or that to the pit, the factory, the shop floor and the working class movement".

These words by Militant supporter Leon Kaplan [Manchester University Labour Club] at the hustings at the conference of the National Organisation of Labour Students vividly showed the polarisation between Militant and the majority "Clause Four" tendency in NOLS.

In a Conference dominated as never before by big University Labour Clubs, the "Clause 4" grouping retained the leadership positions within NOLS. Constitutional changes mean that despite Militant supporters receiving 40-45% of the votes, only one Militant supporter, Alan Watson [Newcastle Poly] was elected onto the National Committee.

There were fewer Further Education and Teacher training colleges Labour Clubs at this NOLS Conference than previously, showing the orientation of the NOLS leadership over the past five years towards the big universities and NUS, and away from working class students.

Despite this, more resolutions moved by 'Militant' supporters were passed at this Conference than since January 1975. If taken up and campaigned on, they could play a major part in transforming NOLS. Every Labour Club must ensure that the NOLS leadership act within the spirit of these resolutions.

The Conference was clearly split between the political ideas of 'Militant', based in the harsh realities of working class life; and the vague, muddled, student-based ideas

By Alan Watson

(NOLS
National Committee)

of "Clause 4".

The first political debate at Conference was on Micro-technology. Wendy Faulkner, moving the majority document, failed to examine the question in a class way, or link it to any socialist perspective. She said in her summing up that support for a socialist planned economy could be taken for granted at a Labour Students Conference—maybe that is why it was not mentioned in the document!

Alan Watson, moving the minority document, outlined the potential for mankind that micro-technology offered, but sharply posed the issue as a class question. Under capitalism, micro-technology offered greater oppression of the working class, with immediate prospects of 5 million unemployed. It could be harnessed to enormous benefit of the working class only under a socialist nationalised economy.

The majority document was carried; but an amendment from Sheffield University to the NC resolution was only defeated by 94 votes to 103.

A major decision of this Conference was to admit part-time students to membership of NOLS. This marks a great step forward, and can help to transform NOLS step forward for NOLS, and can help to transform NOLS into an organisation orientated towards working class students. Labour Clubs must ensure that the NEC approve this change when it comes up in February.

Labour Clubs must ensure that the NEC approve this change when it comes up in February.



Labour students vote at the national conference of NOLS

Photo: MILITANT

One of the most decisive debated was on NOLS' work in NUS. Alan Watson, (Newcastle Poly), moving a resolution, opposed NOLS dissolving itself into "broad based" alliances of widely different groups. He explained how, at NUS Conference the week before, the Vice-Chairman of NOLS had nominated a Liberal for the NUS Finance Committee.

He advocated that NOLS fight independently in NUS for socialist policies and stressed the support that could be built for Labour in NUS. The Conference rejected by 100 votes to 93 a composite which advocated NOLS being involved in a permanent political alliance with other groups.

Problems of students

The Newcastle Poly resolution was then passed by 97 votes to 94. Labour Clubs must now ensure that the NC follows the spirit of the resolution.

It was agreed that NOLS stand a 'partial' independent slate in NUS; although the candidates elected (by 100—92 votes), have in the past been enmeshed in the 'Left Alliance', with Liberals, and other 'progressives'. One candidate elected even admitted using his vote in the General Election on the Isle of Wight to vote Liberal!

The debate on Education & Overseas Students reflected the problems faced by students in the colleges, and anger

against the fee increases. Both resolutions on overseas students were passed; with the one from Bradford University and Imperial College calling on the NC to organise a campaign calling for reversal of the fee increases and abolition of all college fees; and to link this to the repeal of the 1971 Immigration Act and all other racist laws; and to an end to education cuts.

For a mass socialist NOLS

The debate on the General Election showed the dissatisfaction with the last Labour Government's record and the importance of the democratic changes taking place within the Party.

The resolution from Stirling University passed by Conference, called for a socialist campaign against the Tories, for a mass membership, democratic Labour Party, for the creation of factory branches, and for a Labour Government committed to socialist policies.

Included in the composite on Party democracy was the commitment that MPs should only receive the average wage plus legitimate expenses, and that the lifestyle of MPs should be closer to that of ordinary Labour Party supporters. This marks a major step forward for NOLS, as this demand has often been rejected in the past.

The debate on 'women' polarised the Conference. Sue Horne, moving the composite from Liverpool University, explained the horrors of class

society for working class women, and how women moving into activity became involved in the trade union movement.

She pointed out that whether a woman was called a 'houseperson' or a 'housewife', she still faced a life of drudgery. On one estate in Liverpool, 40% of the women were taking tranquillisers.

Socialism for working class women and their families living on a subsistence level, is not something for the dim and distant future, but a here and now necessity. She outlined how Militant supporters were involved in the day to day struggles facing women.

The 'Clause 4' group posed this issue from a middle class standpoint, looking at it from the feminist angle, that women were oppressed by men. One of their delegates said that women weren't interested in economic issues!

In the Conference Discussion Group, Militant supporters were accused of wanting to create a "socialist nirvana". But it is the failure of NOLS to fight on the day to day issues facing women that has meant there were only a handful of women delegates at the Conference.

As one delegate put it, the NOLS leadership are more interested in creating a "feminist nirvana in a sea of capitalism"; than fighting on the day to day issues.

A short debate on the economy, the cuts and youth unemployment also revealed the true political nature of some of the delegates. After applauding Kevin Ramage (LPYS fraternal delegate)

when he called for a national minimum wage and 35 hour week, Conference rejected a resolution from Trent Poly calling for these to be implemented.

In the debate on the cuts, Kevin Miles outlined why the Tories were implementing the cuts. He opposed Labour Councils using rate increases to try to offset the Tory cuts. Conference rejected this policy, but the consequences of this will be clear at next NOLS Conference!

The support for Militant at the Conference was shown by the attendance of about 100 at the Militant Readers' Meeting; where Bill Mullins (Senior Shop Steward, Rover Solihull) spoke. This was reflected financially, with £300 raised for the Fighting Fund; £30 for the Defence Campaign in a collection at the end of Conference, and over £180 worth of Marxist literature sold.

But with the continuation of the Clause 4 leadership for NOLS; the prospects for NOLS to change course and orientate towards the working class students and the labour movement must be in doubt if their past record is anything to go by.

Militant supporters must continue to build support amongst students and in Labour Clubs for the genuine ideas of Marxism; to build a mass Socialist NOLS in the future; the only way students can play a part in transforming society.

SOCIALIST GREETINGS FOR 1980 FROM WAVERTREE CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTY

CHURCH WARD
LABOUR PARTY
sends New Year
greetings to
Militant
and its readers

Fraternal greetings from
Childwall Labour Party
Calling on comrades to
resolve to stop Tory
onslaught in 1980

Greetings to all socialists
We call on all Labour
Groups to stand firm
against the Tory cuts
OLD SWAN
LABOUR PARTY

LIVERPOOL INTERNAL BRANCH of the POEU sends fraternal greetings to all trade unionists FIGHT THE TORY CUTS!

IPSWICH LABOUR PARTY
YOUNG SOCIALISTS
send fraternal New Year greetings
to all Militant readers

GARSTON
CONSTITUENCY
LABOUR PARTY
sends fraternal
greetings
Forward to socialism
in the 1980s

SEASON'S
GREETINGS TO
ALL READERS
FROM THE
LIVERPOOL
DISTRICT
LABOUR PARTY



BATTLE AGAINST THE 'SILVER FORT'

Throughout Northern Ireland's history the ruling class have stoked the fires of sectarianism in order to divide the working class.

In 1969, when this Frankenstein monster that they had created lurched out of control, British troops were sent in to stave off a civil war which could have jeopardised the long term rule of the capitalist class in Ireland.

In those ten years neither the capitalist class nor the forces of sectarianism have shown any way forward for the Northern Ireland working class. Capitalism has no solution — repression has been maintained, unemployment has increased, housing conditions deteriorated and standards of living have dropped dramatically.

Increasingly workers are turning away from the sectarians—support for the paramilitaries has collapsed, and the paramilitary parties are staggering from one political crisis to another, constantly splitting and forming factions.

The situation facing the workers of the Newhill estate in the Whiterock area of

By Bob Wade

Belfast, illustrates the present helplessness of workers in Northern Ireland faced with repression.

The Newhill estate is mainly an owner-occupier Roman Catholic area, which has been relatively untouched by the 'the troubles'. But it is on a high spot of Belfast and overlooks the Falls area—the powers that be decided it would be a fine spot for an army fort.

Late last year army officials marched onto the Newhill Industrial estate and said it had 14 days to close down, throwing the workers onto the dole. The industrial estate had already been decimated by the economic crisis of the profit system, and from employing 200 people it had dwindled to only two factories who employed a handful of people (until the army came that is!)

But the Whiterock area has 50% unemployment, so every single job lost means a catastrophe for the local people.

Reaction against the fort has been overwhelming, and a Newhill Action Committee has been set up, consisting entirely of local people. Members of the Committee explained what happened:

"The first thing we knew about it was convoys of unmarked lorries, but driven by soldiers, thundering through the estate, bringing materials to the site. A few of us housewives went along to see what was going on, but the army threatened us and told us to go away".

Protests against the fort have been 100%—a petition taken around the estate by the committee was signed by every family.

The presence of the army will mean much more repression; "They say internment has ended, but with this new fort it'll be 'open' internment—we've already got one fort to the south of the estate so we'll be virtually surrounded. There's an unofficial curfew—our kids are too frightened to go out at night, just on the estate, because of the soldiers.

"The soldiers are always picking on the kids—my son was coming home the other night and a soldier shouted something at him but he kept on walking. The soldier went after him and told him if he didn't stop when a soldier said something to him they'd shoot him."

The other day two Saracens were driving around the estate with union jacks hanging from them—it's as though

they want trouble."

The army of course claim they are fighting terrorism—as one father, Mr Hicks explained, it is just having the opposite effect; "What happens is the soldiers rough up the kids. The next thing you know your sons are in the Fianna, then the Provos, then they'll probably be in Long Kesh for ten years."

Campaign continues

The welfare of their children is obviously the main worry of parents on the Newhill estate—but the fort has other implications as well.

"When the fort's completed no doubt some one will try to blow it up—our homes will be in the middle of a pitched battle. Our houses have lost value overnight."

The Newhill families are now despairing—every course of action they have taken has led them up a blind alley. They held a peaceful demonstration outside the semi-constructed fort—the army's response was to fire plastic bullets into the crowd as they listened to various speakers. One youth was so badly beaten by the troops he spent

several days in hospital.

The committee visited the 'Peace People'—this failed to achieve anything as it will take more than prayers to stop the fort being built. The committee visited Huckle, secretary to Atkins, the Tory Northern Ireland Secretary;

"The first thing they asked us was if we had been manipulated by the Provos—it was a convenient way for them to sweep us under the carpet. Their whole attitude was that we were wasting our time protesting. The fort was going up under the 'Special Powers Act' and there was nothing we could do about it."

"They said it was going to be a 'silver fort'—the way they described it you'd think they were doing us a favour for letting us have this piece of architecture on our estate—it's a bloody ugly thing; it looks like Stalag 14."

"As far as they are concerned, because we come from a Roman Catholic area—we are nationalists, and therefore anti-army. But we are not nationalists or any other label they try to stick on us—we are ordinary people who are scared out of our wits at having our homes saturated with soldiers and all that they bring with them."



Members of the Newhill Action Committee formed to fight the fort

Photo: MILITANT

The campaign against the fort is still going on—but you won't read much about it from the media. Workers in Northern Ireland are cynical about media coverage, as it is well in the control of the state. On this issue, the BBC reported that the army were 'proposing' to build the fort when construction work had already begun!

For many Newhill families this is the last straw, and they are preparing to move out. The hopelessness of their situation illustrates all too well how workers are trampled underfoot by the capitalist state when they do not have a strong labour and trade union movement to safeguard their welfare.

This is small consolation for the people of Newhill but it is a vital lesson for the future for all the working people of Belfast.

Only a working class united around bold socialist policies can end the misery of the capitalist system, the horrors inflicted on them by the state forces, and the dangers of sectarianism, which only divide the working people further.

ILEA: STAND UP TO THE TORIES

On the casting vote of the chairman the Labour controlled Inner London Education Authority [ILEA] voted last month to cut over 4% [about £21,500,000 in real terms] from its spending next year. This capitulation to the Tory government's

By Nick Bradley

(Greater London Labour Party Executive, personal capacity)

demand for public spending cuts was in direct opposition to the decisions of the Greater London Labour Party Executive.

Only two Labour councillors, Ken Livingstone and Charlie Rossi voted against the cuts in the ILEA meeting. [The Tories opposed the Labour package because it did not go far enough!]

The cuts will mean reductions in jobs and services, and increased charges. For example, there will be 850 fewer teachers in primary and secondary schools, a cut of 86 posts from in-service training, and cutting of non-teaching staff in further and higher education colleges.

The price of school meals will increase by 5p next year, while at the same time, the quality is reduced. Free travel will end for school students living over three miles from their school. The list goes on.

On the day of ILEAs decision 5,000 teachers marched in protest at the cuts.

Other trade unions have already protested at ILEAs decision, NUPE lobbied the Labour Group meeting which decided on the cuts.

That ILEA Labour Group meeting was also attended by a delegation from the GLLP Executive which gave the reasons behind the executive's decision, by a 24 to 1 vote, to "call upon the ILEA Labour Group to refuse to comply with the government's demand for a 5% cut and instead maintain present levels of service and existing members of staff."

Labour movement opposition

The delegation was heard against a background of Labour Group members murmuring discontent which reached a crescendo when Bob Labi, the delegation's leader, reminded the councillors that they were coming up for re-selection next year.

However despite the views of the Labour Party and the trade unions the Group decided, with only four votes against to implement a 4.2% cut, after first asking the delegation to leave the meeting.

The night before the full

ILEA meeting the GLLP Executive met to consider the position. After hearing reports on the two positions from Bob Labi and Sir Ashley Bramall, ILEA's leader, the Executive decided by 23 votes to 12 to support groups fighting the ILEA cuts and to back any Labour councillor who broke the Labour whip to vote against the cuts.

At the ILEA Labour Group meeting the next day, just before the full meeting, Sir Ashley Bramall and other ILEA leaders threatened to resign if the cuts were defeated. Unfortunately this threat intimidated some councillors who had considered voting against the cuts and thus allowed the right wing to carry the day.

A battle has been lost but the war is far from over. These harsh cuts will hurt. They will meet opposition from the unions, parents, students and the wider labour movement. A determined resistance can still force the ILEA Labour Group to stand up to the Tories.

The Labour Party must continue its opposition to cuts and take the lead in organising resistance. Only this way can the Labour Party ensure that it distances itself from ILEA's decision and that the labour movement outside ILEA is not split when the

trade unions begin fighting these setbacks.

Fundamentally however it is, as Bob Labi pointed out to the GLLP Executive, a political question of whether leaders of Labour-controlled authorities are prepared to confront the Tories head on. The majority of ILEA Labour members are clearly not willing to fight the Tories, preferring to compromise, or else have no confidence that the labour movement can defeat the Tories.

A mass movement will not come from the council chamber, but a resolute stand by Labour authorities can act as the rallying point for building the kind of mobilisation

which can knock out the Tories' plans.

Only in this way can the Tories' spending cuts be blocked, the unity of the labour movement defended and the way prepared for the ousting of the Tory government.

Already many activists in the labour movement are drawing this conclusion and are also determined that the candidates for the 1981 ILEA and Greater London Council elections, which will be chosen next year, will be fighters prepared to take the battle to the Tories and provide a socialist leadership for the labour movement in Greater London.

FRATERNAL GREETINGS FROM MEMBERS OF THE LPYS NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Josie Aitman
Yasmin Barry
John Bulaitis
Rob Cadwgan
John Cantwell
Lawrence Coates
John Ingham
[Vice-Chairman]
Jim Newlands

Margaret Reavey
Kevin Ramage
[Chairman]
Tony Saunois
[LP NEC rep]
Nick Toms
and Dale Ackroyd
[NUSS NC]

- ★ Fight back against youth unemployment
- ★ For a 35-hour week now
- ★ Kick out the Tories
- ★ Labour to power on a socialist programme

How The Work

Who produces the wealth? And who gains most from its production? In a pamphlet written 73 years ago, John Wheatley adopted a novel method of giving the socialist explanation.

He wrote of an imaginary court case, with a coalmaster and a landowner and several others being charged with "having conspired together and robbed an old miner, Dick McGonnagle."

The pamphlet, 'How the Miners Are Robbed', had considerable impact before the First World War. Its basic class analysis remains for workers in private industry today. And the miners themselves are still being robbed.

In the following extracts from the pamphlet, the magistrate interrogates the witnesses. The first person to enter the witness box is the Coalmaster.

[Magistrate—M, Prisoner—P]



The price of coal: disaster at Seaham in the 1870s. One of the rescue teams goes down.

P: Oh, not at all, sir. They begged me to allow them to work.

M: But why beg leave to use your colliery? Why not make one for themselves, as they had done for you?...But perhaps you make them some allowance for working in your colliery and keeping it in order?

P: Oh yes, sir. I pay them according to the amount of coal they produce.

M: Well, that seems fair. Then I suppose those men will soon become very rich? They will have the value of the coal they produce, and the allowance you make to them for keeping your colliery in order?

P: Oh no, sir. The coal they produce is mine.

M: What! They turn over the product of their labour to you? Don't they require the value of this coal themselves?

P: Oh yes, sir. But it is my coal, having been produced in my colliery.

M: My dear sir, you amuse me. Those men sank the pit, put the colliery in working order, and dug the coal. Where is your claim?

P: I gave them permission to do these things, sir.

M: You permitted them to sink the pit, and then you took the pit; you permitted them to erect the plant, and then you took the plant; you permitted them to dig the coal, and then you took the coal. Is that it?

P: Yes, sir; but I paid them for doing these things.

M: How did you get money to pay them seing you do no work?

P: I inherited ten thousand pounds from my father, and I used some of this until the men produced the coal.

M: How did your father earn that money?

P: In the same way, sir, as I have converted that ten thousand pounds into a million.

M: How have you done that?

P: By selling the coal.

M: Did the men employ you to sell the coal?

P: Oh no, sir; the coal was mine.

M: Really, your claim seemed so impertinent that I had not taken it seriously. Did you pay over to the miners the amount you received for the coal, less your salary?

P: No, sir. I merely paid them the least amount I could get men to work for.

M: I must say this is puzzling. Why do these men require to work for you?

P: Because, sir, they can't work without machinery which costs money. We rich men having the money, and therefore the machinery, and those men requiring to work or starve, they must accept our terms.

M: Surely the State could provide all the capital required in opening up mines; why should the people require to make terms with you?

P: Oh, quite easily sir, but the State is ruled by Parliament, which is composed of men like me. They are not such fools as to injure themselves.

M: I did not think there were such stupid people in the world as you describe those working men to be. How much coal does a miner produce in a day?



The Coalmaster

M: What is your name?

P: Frederick Michael Thomas Andrew Sucker, sir.

M: You have a great many names.

P: I protest, sir.

M: I did not ask your occupation. I desire to know how you came to be possessed of so many names?

P: I can't answer your question, sir.

M: Ah! That sounds suspicious. Now will you kindly tell us how much wealth you possess?

P (Proudly): One million pounds, sir.

M: You must be an extremely able

man. How did you come to have a million pounds?

P: I made it, sir.

M: Ah! do you plead guilty to manufacturing coin?

P (indignantly): No, sir.

M: Than will you please tell us what you mean by saying you made it?

P: I earned it in business, sir.

M: How long have you been in business?

P: Twenty years, sir.

M: You must be a very capable worker to have earned such a huge sum in such a short time?

P (indignantly): I don't work, sir.

M: Ah! this is very interesting. You don't work and yet you have told us that in twenty years you have earned one million pounds?

P: I own a colliery, sir.

M: What is a colliery?

P: A shaft sunk perhaps a hundred fathoms in the earth; also various buildings and machinery for the production of coal.

M: Did you sink the shaft?

P: No, sir. I got men to do it.

M: Did you manufacture the machinery and erect the buildings?

P: No, sir. I am not a workman. I got others to work.

M: This is an extraordinary case. You say other men erected the buildings, and manufactured the machinery, and sunk the shaft and yet you own the colliery? Have the workmen no share in it?

P: No, sir. I am the sole owner.

M: I confess I can't understand. Do you mean to tell me that those men put a colliery in full working order, and then handed it over to you without retaining even a share of it for themselves?

P: Certainly, sir.

M: They must have been very rich and generous, or very foolish! Were they rich men?

P: Oh no, sir.

M: Had they many collieries?

P: Oh, none at all, sir. They were merely workmen.

M: What you mean by merely workmen?

P: Merely people who work for others.

M: Surely they must be generous people. Don't they require collieries themselves?

P: They do, sir.

M: And they own no collieries?

P: No, sir; but I allow them to work in mine.

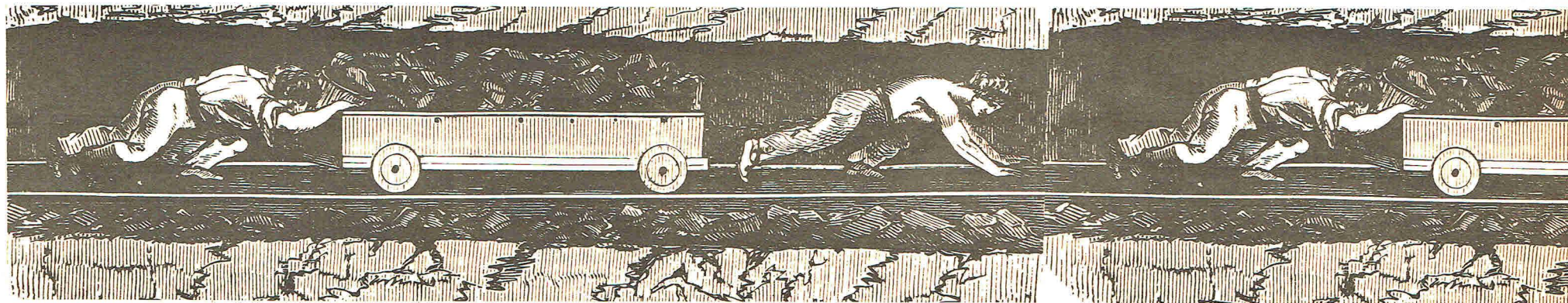
M: That is very kind of you, but of course not nearly so kind as their act in giving the colliery to you. Do you find you don't require the whole colliery yourself, that you can allow others also to use it?

P: Oh, you don't understand sir. I don't work in my colliery. I allow the workmen to do so.

M: Oh, I see. After those men handed over the colliery to you, you found you had no use for it, and so returned it to them to save them erecting another?

P: Oh no, no, sir. The colliery is still mine, but they work in it.

M: Really, this is very confusing. You own a pit which you did not sink, and plant which you did not manufacture nor erect. You do not work in this colliery because you do not want to work. Those who do not want to work own no colliery, and yet they gave one to you. Did you beg of them to come and work in your colliery, as you had no use for it?



Miners Are Robbed

P: About three tons, sir.
M: At what price do you sell this coal?
P: At ten shillings per ton, sir.
M: Now, if you will kindly tell us how much per day the miner gets for the three tons of coal which you sell at thirty shillings, we shall be able to judge how you treat him.
P: He receives about five shillings, sir.
M: Are you serious?
P: Oh yes, sir.
M: What becomes of the remainder?
P: A small portion goes to maintaining oncost men and covering depreciation of machinery. The Duke gets a good slice as rents and royalties. The remainder is my profit.
M: What are rents and royalties?
P: A sum charged by the Duke for allowing people to use the land.
M: What! But never mind, I will examine him presently. Is this how you have come to possess a million pounds and this old man is in poverty? You have been selling his coal and holding on to most of his money.
 Your father robbed his father in like manner. With the proceeds of that robbery, and the fact that it left him penniless, you have been enabled to rob this man. Were it allowed to continue, your son would be richer than you were, and his son would be as poor as he was.
 Therefore the power of your family to make slaves of his family would increase with each generation. Fortunately, this case may end your outrageous scheme.

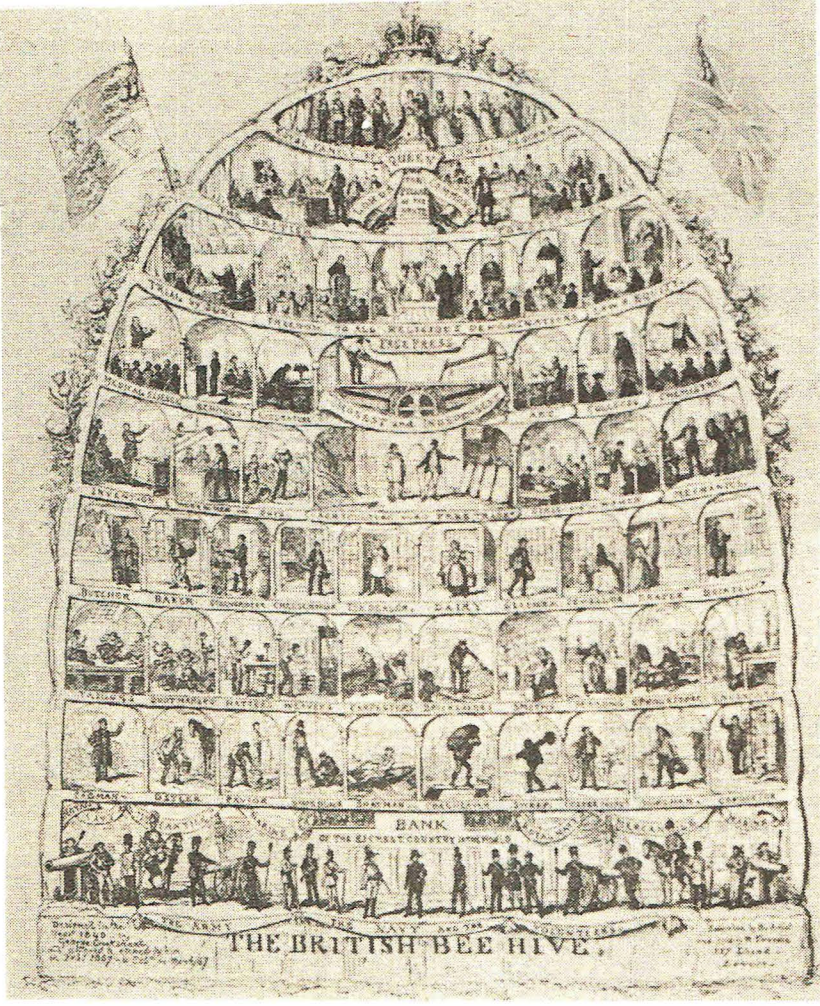
Stand down until I have examined the others.

When prisoner Sucker had again taken his place between the two constables in the dock, a middle-aged man of stout build and a ruddy, well-fed, well-watered appearance, entered the witness box to be examined.

In answer to the Magistrate's first question, he said his name was:

The Duke of Hamilton

M: Come, come, I asked your name, not your occupation!
P: That is my title, sir.
M: Your title may be a number when this case is finished. I must warn you not to trifle with this Court. What is your name?
P: I don't use any name, your honour.
M: Do you work?
P: Oh no, sir.
M: What! Are you too a loafer?
P: No, sir. I don't require to work.
M: No successful robber does. Why don't you require to work?
P: I'm a wealthy man, sir.
M: How did you come to be wealthy seeing you don't work, and that wealth is the product of labour?
P: I inherited my wealth, sir.
M: Did your father work for it?
P: No, sir; he too was a wealthy man.
M: Did your grandfather, or your great-grandfather, or any of the family ever do any work?



The British Beehive: how the ruling class liked to portray society in the 19th century. What has changed?

P: No, sir.
M: How did they get wealth?
P: Oh, just as I get mine, sir.
M: How is that?
P: By allowing people to use my land.
M: How did you get land? Did you create it?
P: Oh no, sir. I believe God created it.
M: Did he create it for your ancestors?
P: I can't say, sir.
M: Surely you must know if He created it specially for your ancestors, or whether the land was here before your ancestors got possession of it?
P: It was always there, sir. My family got possession of it only at the time of Robert the Bruce.
M: What right had they to take possession of the land?
P: It was given to them by Robert the Bruce.
M: But Bruce did not create the land, nor was it his to give away. He had no right to do so, and you have no moral or legal claim to it. Don't you work on this land?
P: Oh no, sir. I've already explained I don't require to work. I allow thousands of others to do so.
M: Why don't they work on their own land?
P: They have none, sir.
M: What! Do you claim all the land in the district?
P: Yes, sir.
M: And must those men use your land or starve?
P: Certainly, sir.
M: I hope you don't act as the other prisoner does with his machinery. Is your permission granted on condition

that they hand over to you a share of what they produce?
P: Oh yes, sir.
M: Do they do so?
P: Certainly, sir. They must do so or starve.
M (soliloquising): I now see the need for an Eternal Hell. What share of miner's coal do you claim?
P: I usually obtain in Royalty on each man's work a sum equal to half what he gets for working.
M: That means when a miner produces three tons of coal he gives you one?
P: Yes, sir.
M: If there be twenty thousand miners working on your land, each man must give you every third hutch he fills?
P: Yes, sir.
M: So that again assuming you have twenty thousand miners working on your land, it takes ten thousand of them to earn as much as you draw?
P: Yes, sir.
M: And these ten thousand men must risk their lives in the bowels of the earth while you may be enjoying yourself anywhere?
P: Yes, sir.
M: What sort of men are they?
P: Hard-headed, intelligent men, sir.
 (Loud laughter in Court, which was instantly suppressed.)
M: Why don't they take over the land themselves—nationalise it? Then you could no longer rob them of one third of what they produced?
P: Oh, that would never do, sir. That would be Socialism. They prefer to continue paying royalty to me.
M: But even to take advantage of

their simplicity is a terrible crime. Are you not ashamed to do so?
P: Certainly not, sir. It is within the law.
M: Who made the laws?
P: The class to which I belong, and they made no mistakes, sir.
M: If they have not, you make one if you think that this Court will judge your class by the laws they made. Why a community should permit itself to be infested by characters like you passes my comprehension. Please take your place in the dock until I have heard the evidence against you.
 The first witness called was the complainer, Dick McGonnagle.

Old Dick's Evidence

M: What age are you, Dick?
D: Fifty-two, your honour.
M: Dear me! you look eighty at least!
D: I've had to work very hard, your honour.
M: How long have you worked in the mines?
D: 40 years, your honour.
M: Have you worked regularly?
D: On an average five days a week, your honour.
M: How much coal do you produce each day?
D: About three tons, your honour.
M: Dear me! You should be a very wealthy man. In 40 years you must have produced something like 30,000 tons?
D: I am not good at figures, your honour.
M: I am told that this coal is sold at ten shillings per ton?
D: I don't know, your honour.
 (Council explained that it would be proved the prisoners divided it amongst them, and even robbed the old man afterwards, of that part of the small share he had received.)
M: Then I suppose you are not aware that the market price of the coal you have produced would be £15,000?
D: I was not aware of that, your honour.
M: What wages have you received?
D: On an average, 25 shillings a week.
M: Great heavens! That means you have been swindled out of nearly £12,500!
 What became of that £12,500 of which you have been robbed?
D: I don't know, your honour.
 (Council explained that it would be

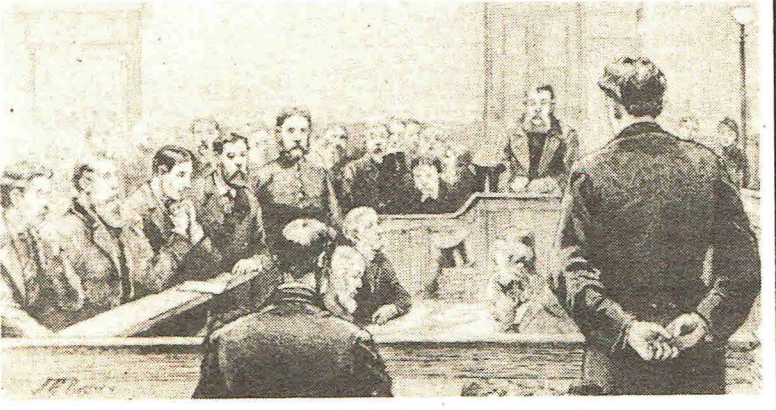
proved the prisoners divided it amongst them, and even robbed the old man afterwards of part of the small share he had received.)
M: Are you still employed in the mines?
D: Yes, your honour.
M: Don't you find it difficult even to walk to the pit?
D: Yes, your honour. I must now leave half an hour earlier than formerly, as I have to rest for breath at every 100 yards.
M: How do you get to the coal-face after descending the pit?
D: A young man wheels me in a hutch, your honour.
M: And dumps you down there to dig your coal?
D: Yes, your honour.
M: And when you have dug it these men steal it from you?
D: Yes, your honour.
M: Have your fellow-workmen ever stolen from you?
D: Only once, your honour. A man 'pinned' a hutch of mine, and he was hunted from the pit. This man called the Duke has 'pinched' every third hutch I have filled for 40 years, and I think he should be hunted.

(After hearing evidence from a 'Socialist' against the prisoners and from a Clergyman in their defence) the Magistrate rose to deliver judgement.

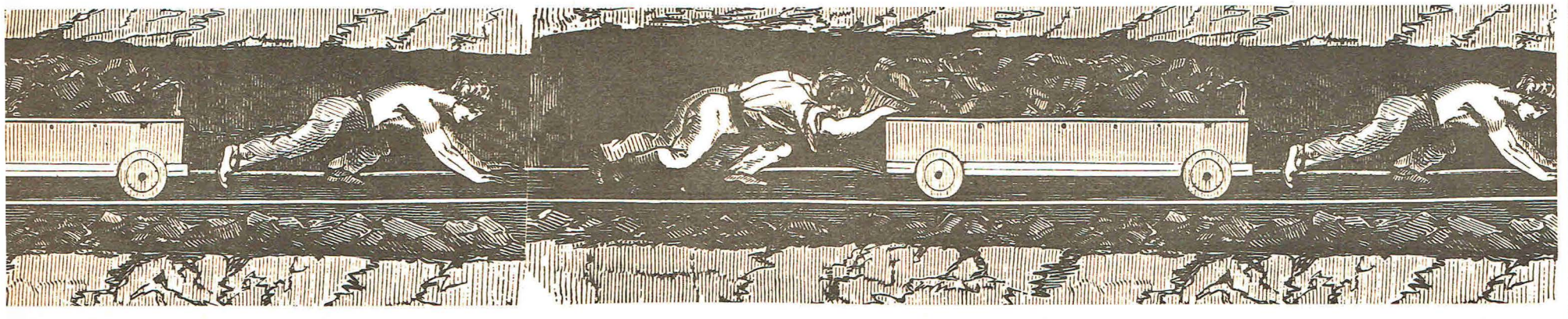
He said he had no difficulty in finding the prisoners guilty. They had admitted their guilt. He felt, however, that no punishment which that Court could condemn them to would be sufficient for such terrible crimes.
 He would, therefore, send them to the Lowest Court for punishment, and ordered that they be taken there at once.

Court Officer: Where is the Lowest Court, your honour.
Magistrate: I forget exactly. Ask the clergyman.

A full transcript of the case is available: 'How the Miners are Robbed' by John Wheatley. 20p [plus 10p post and packing]. From World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.



In real life it's workers who are tried in the bosses' courts, not vice versa. Above: trade union and socialist leaders appear at Bow Street Police Court in 1886, including H M Hyndman [second from left], John Burns [fourth from left].





POLAND - WALKING ON A VOLCANO

No longer underground. Polish workers are now beginning to openly organise against the ruling clique.

Last year saw the public formation of an opposition political party, which openly proclaimed that its goal was a change of regime.

Shortly before this, a charter of workers rights was launched with a whole series of linked economic and political demands. Discontent in Poland has grown as the economy has run into crisis. And the ruling bureaucracy now admit that they cannot take society forward.

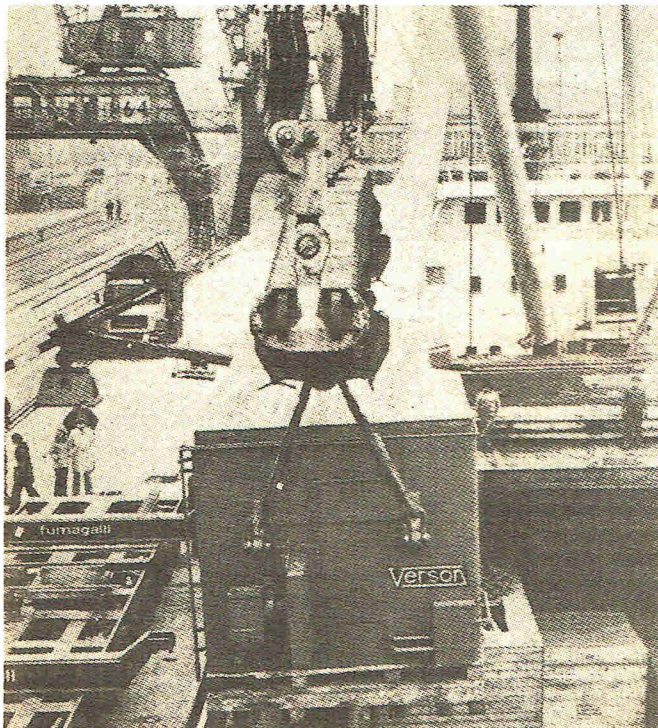
Prime Minister Gierek's New Year message to Polish people was that "the days of leisure or spectacular successes were over." Many Polish workers must be ruefully reflecting on who has been enjoying leisure in the recent period.

Even in the past when there was expansion on the basis of a nationalised economy and plan, most of the gains were taken by the ruling clique. Now Gierek admits that growth has slowed down to 2.6% in 1979 and the future is bleak.

Sections of the bureaucracy admit that the reasons for this are basically political. In a report to the 'Communist' Party a group of 50 Party officials said that Poland was facing "an acute crisis which has embraced basic fields of social, political and economic life."

The reasons for the crisis "are not of an economic nature but (concern) the way of conducting policy and wielding power." In other words it is the fault of the bureaucratic system itself.

And as Poland enters the 80's, workers publicly proclaim the need for change, and reject the idea that it can come through the official channels of the 'Communist' Party and official 'Trade Unions'.



In a desperate attempt to improve its economic position, Poland has expanded its trade with the west [above]. But with 50% of trade with Western Capitalism, it has imported inflation, a deadly virus for a planned economy.

By Jim
Chrystie

Openly they call for workers to set up their own independent organisations. Last year over 100 worker activists defied the regime and demanded a Charter of Workers Rights.

They denounced the fact that: "social inequalities and injustices are becoming more profound, workers are denied their fundamental right of defence, which is the right to strike, society has to shoulder the cost of every mistake of the authorities, including the cost of the current crisis."

Sliding Scale of Wages

They raised basic economic demands: "pay should rise at least in line with the cost of living, a minimum living wage and a 40-hour working week without reduction of wages".

And they linked this with demands for the end of privileges for the bureaucracy. "There must be an end to the granting of privileges to groups connected with the government (police, party functionaries): special allowances of goods greatly in demand, such as housing, plots of land, building materials, cars, special medical care, luxury holiday bonuses, special pension rights etc."

Their bitterness towards the bureaucracy is only matched by their determination to rely solely on their own strength as workers.

"Only independent trade unions having support among the workers whom they represent, have any chance of opposing the authorities. Only they will represent a force with which the authorities must reckon and with which they can deal on equal terms."

They recognise the difficulties they face, but are confident of the future.

"Evidence that the workers can force the authorities and management to make concessions is provided by the great showdowns of 1956, 1970 and 1976 and by individual strikes. For several months now, we have felt the effects of the crisis on our own skin.

"Deliveries and transport get worse and worse, wages are going down, prices are going up, in big plants the working hours are getting longer and are taking up the 'free Saturdays', there are more and more stoppages.

"If we ourselves do not now make a start at defending our own interests, our situation will go from bad to worse."

The ruling bureaucracy cannot dismiss this Charter as the work of unknowns or a few dissident intellectuals with no popular support. All the signatures to the Charter openly gave their names and they were overwhelmingly working-class activists, with a history of struggle, especially the 1976 strikes, which laid the basis for the discussions which produced the Charter. And when the bureaucracy moved for example against one of the signatories, Edmund Zadrozynski, they found he had considerable support.

242 people in his town of Grudziadz immediately signed a protest letter to Poland's President. Later, 876 people sent a further letter detailing the economic problems and asking for any reply to their complaints to be sent not to the local deputy, but to Edmund Zadrozynski.

Political Party Formed

In a country which in the past has tried to repress any public protest, the above letters were signed by nearly one in every 500 inhabitants of the town.

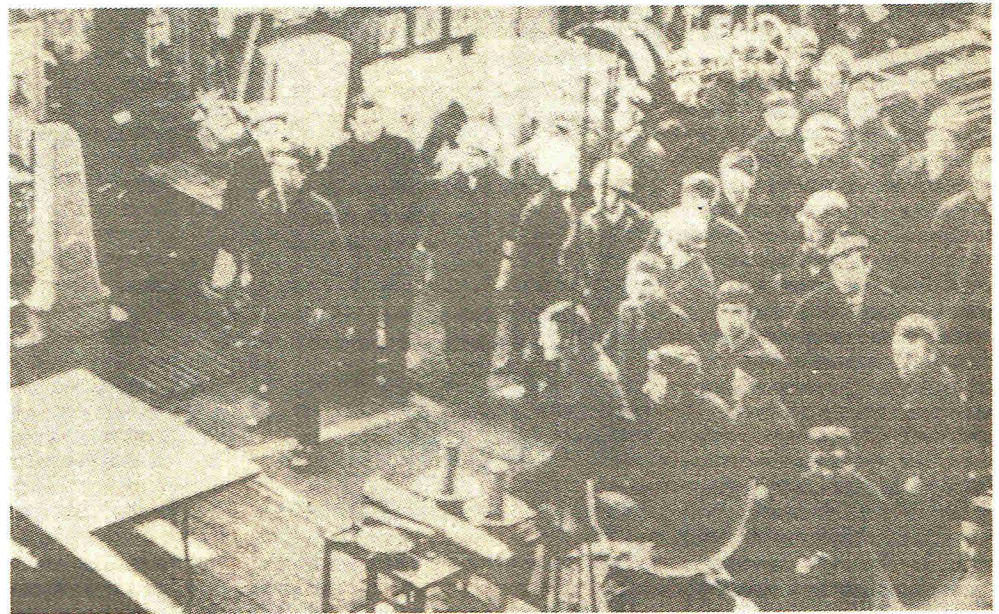
Such is the weakness of the Polish bureaucracy that they were unable to prevent the announcement in August of an opposition political party, the Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN). The announcement came after a demonstration of several thousand people in Warsaw to mark the 40th anniversary of the German invasion of Poland.

The KPN incorporates a variety of political views, all united around the demand of an independent Poland. This clearly stems from the hatred of the Soviet bureaucracy and its dominance over Poland.

The formation of an open, public organisation declaring itself to be a political party

The picture [right] shows a queue for meat in a Polish supermarket.

[Below] Polish shipyard workers strike meeting.



in opposition to the ruling party is an event almost without precedent in the history of Eastern Europe since the late 1940's. Following its creation some of its members were detained by the police for 48 hours, but all appear to have been released subsequently.

In an interview, (published in 'Labour Focus on Eastern Europe' vol 3 no 4) party spokesman Leszek Moczulski explained that the KPN's aims were different from those of existing human rights organisations:

"A political party is something very different: it must seek to come to power in order to transform reality in accordance with its programme. If we want to build a third Republic, then we obviously have to change the regime in this country."

Moczulski went on to explain that as its name implied, the KPN incorporated a variety of views. In his view though, there was no chance of going back to capitalism. The struggle was to build democracy upon the existing nationalised economy.

'Build a true Socialist system'

Moczulski stated: "Some groups belonging to the Confederation—above all, the Joint movement of Polish Socialists, rooted mainly in the workers of Nowa, Huta, Katowice, Lublin and more recently, Lodz—believe that it is necessary to build a true

socialist system involving very advanced socialisation of the means of production, but also a system of workers self management, or rather control by the associated producers over the means of production."

"Other groups, holding that statization of the economy leads straight to totalitarianism, envisage a broad field for private initiative."

"Personally, I start out from under the facts: the Polish economy is today under state ownership, if we leave aside agriculture. Even if someone wanted to reprivatise it, there are no owners to whom it could be given back."

"But even if it were decided to reintroduce a private economy, this could not be followed through in practice. In Poland, there are no social forces and no capital that could create a capitalist sector of any significance alongside that huge state sector whose reprivatisation would certainly not be sought."

It is the danger that the political and social unrest now bubbling in Poland will

grow into a movement which threatens to bring about workers democracy and remove the privileges and power of the ruling clique which scares Gierek and the bureaucracy.

It is not certain that the KPN or the Workers Charter will grow into such mass movements. The ambiguity of the different class positions of members of the KPN will limit the party's appeal.

A clear programme of political revolution would be a surer base for combatting the bureaucracy.

But whatever the immediate future of the KPN and Workers Charter, they are indicative of the political crisis gripping Poland. The impasse facing society has led to the mushrooming of opposition groups.

The bureaucracy will mix repression when it can, with allowing movements to surface if they have no alternative.

In the 1970's Poland saw revolts. The new decade could well witness political revolution.

Militant International Pamphlet
USSR and E. Europe:

"Bureaucratism or
Workers Power"

by R. Silverman and E. Grant 30p

"Lenin and Trotsky: what they stood for"
by A. Woods and E. Grant £1.50

Add 10% for P&P
from World Books,

1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8

INDIA IRAN

INDIA-ELECTIONS REFLECT SOCIETY'S IMPASSE

Voting is currently taking place in a General Election in what the capitalists like to boast as "the world's biggest democracy". And just as India's social and economic problems are not a local peculiarity but only represent the crisis of capitalism writ large so too these elections only too glaringly expose the hollowness of capitalist "democracy" as a whole.

By Roger Silverman

The once-monolithic Congress Party ruled India for thirty years, until its overthrow after imposing a hated state of emergency. The Janata Party, hastily scrambled together as a capitalist alternative, held together for only 2½ years. Finally, the Lok Dal which took over in July, had to resign after only a month in office! That is an index of the growing turmoil in society.

All three of these major capitalist parties (Congress, Janata and Lok Dal) are

making the same promises as usual at election time: civil liberties, an end to poverty, firm measures against communal violence, and other fine phrases. But the antics of these corrupt cynics, have only worsened the sufferings of the masses during the decades when under various labels they have been in power. Now they provoke widespread scorn and apathy amongst the electorate who have heard their promises before.

The capitalist politicians seem to be playing musical chairs at a Mad Hatter's Tea Party. The party of Hindu pogroms, the Jana Sangh, (calling itself Janata) is masquerading behind the facade of its pet harijan (untouchable), the rich landowner Jagjivan Ram: a picture as grotesque as the Nazis having a Jew as their leader!

Ram, who at the last possible minute, deserted Congress for Janata, and is now stuck in the unsavoury company of the Jana Sangh, is trying to negotiate an alliance with Mrs Gandhi's camp.

To take one example, the present Finance Minister Bahuguna, having originally defected from Congress to Janata, then joined Charan Singh's Lok Dal. Now he has come back full circle to Mrs Gandhi. She in her turn

having originally incited Charan Singh to bring down the Janata Government, with promises of support to the man she jailed and who in turn tried to jail her, has abandoned him....The permutations are endless.

The rats who jumped overboard from the Congress Party's sinking ship three years ago, are now desperately crawling back on to the largest fragment of its floating wreckage.

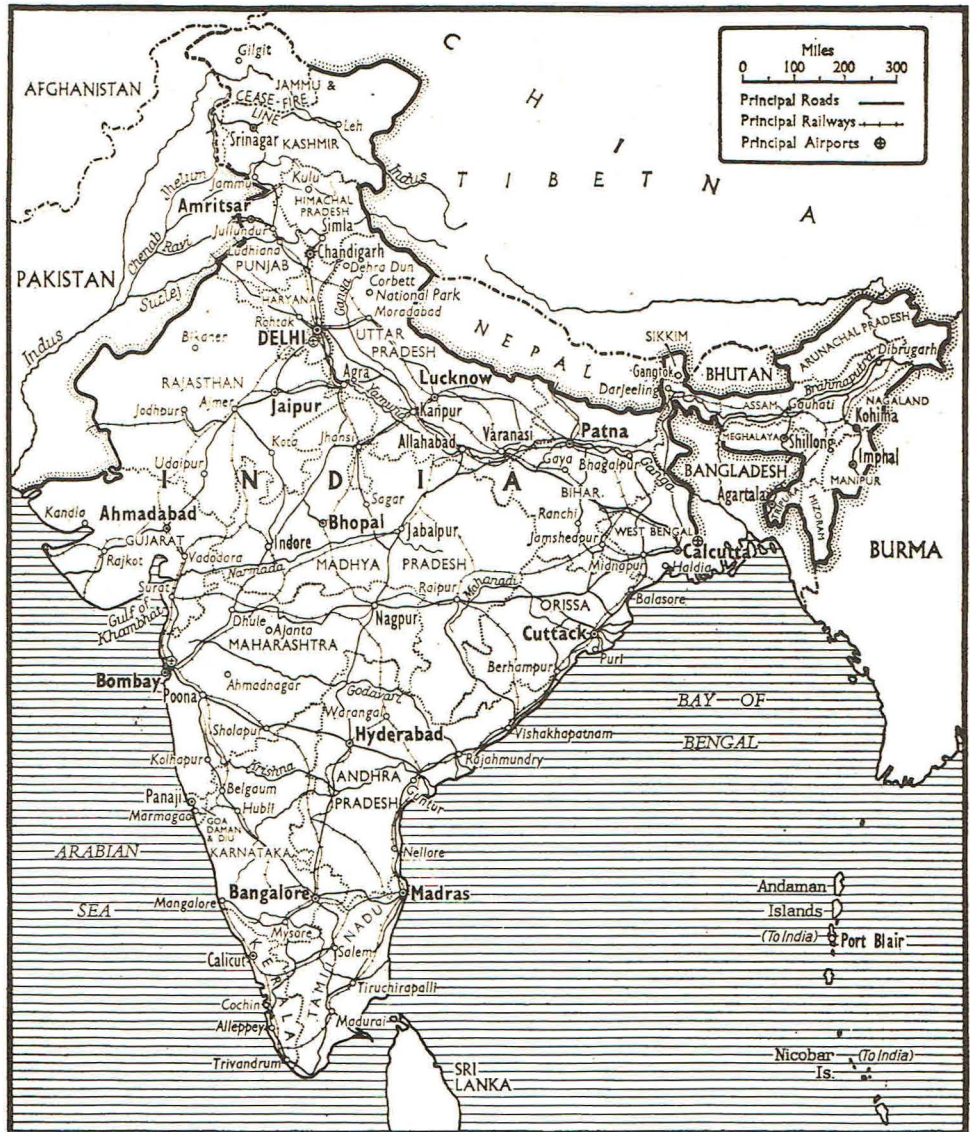
The two Communist Parties have lost tremendous opportunities, through their slavish dependence on false schemas, seeking phantom "progressive" capitalist politicians, and in the midst of unprecedented class struggles tying themselves to the coat tails of one or other capitalist party. But both have been caught unprepared by the political crisis.

The CPI, trying to atone for its subservience to Mrs Gandhi during the emergency, had given its support to the rival Congress Party which expelled Indira Gandhi. The CPI (Marxist), for its part, trying vainly to resist the growing influence of the Jana Sangh, had supported Charan Singh's faction.

Communist co-operation

But both the official Congress and Singh's Lok Dal have collapsed! Thus, the logic of events has pushed the leaderships of the two CPs, despite themselves, into a certain degree of mutual co-operation, against the two major capitalist parties. Splits have taken place in both CPs, and the veteran CPI leader Dange, articulating Moscow's desire for a new accommodation with Mrs Gandhi, has been expelled. The impression, however faint, of a united front of workers' parties fighting against the capitalist parties, will boost the workers' confidence still further.

All that the elections will achieve is to plunge India



deeper into chaos. The most likely result is a hung parliament, making a new succession of weak shifting coalitions inevitable.

But even if the Indira Congress or any other party does emerge with an overall majority, it will immediately begin to fragment into warring factions, just as its two main predecessors, who both had large parliamentary majorities. What brought down, first Congress and then Janata, was not parliamentary intrigues but impossible social pressures, and above all the heroic fighting spirit of the workers of town and country who stood up to the bullets of both regimes.

Despite the millions of rupees flooding into Mrs Gandhi's coffers from Big Business, there is no possibility for the time being of a new emergency. Significantly, Mrs Gandhi admitted recently

that "if you put the lid on the small explosions which occur, there is likely to be a bigger explosion you cannot control".

Army and Police reliable?

This is not mere electioneering. She speaks from bitter experience. And if the Emergency was unviable in 1977, then today it is doubly so, with the class struggle reaching unprecedented intensity and scale. The police recently fought a bitter and sometimes violent struggle throughout India for wage increases and union recognition.

Now that their pay is higher than that of the soldiers, the question is openly debated: how long before the Army follows suit? These are hardly

ideal conditions in which to impose a military/police dictatorship!

But if over the turbulent years ahead, no coherent conscious Marxist expression is given by the leaders of the workers' parties to the real needs and aspirations of the workers of town and country, then the prospect lies ahead eventually of civil war, a brutal police state, and the disintegration of India.

MILITANT PAMPHLET

'Is India On The Brink?'

By Roger Silverman

10p (plus 10p P&P) from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London, E8 3PN

MULLAHS STRUGGLE TO CONSOLIDATE POWER

The seizure of the United States Embassy and diplomats in Tehran can only be fully explained against the background of the continuing turmoil in Iran. The Iranian revolution did not come to an end with the final collapse of the Shah's regime in February last year. On the contrary, that insurrection was seen by the masses as opening the way for an improvement in their position.

By Bob Labi

The workers, peasants and oppressed nationalities have seized hold of this opportunity to press home their demands. Since February there has been wave upon wave of struggles by the masses. But given the comp-

lete absence of a revolutionary leadership these movements have not led to the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' democracy.

While Khomeini and his unelected Central Islamic Revolutionary Council are the real government of Iran, they do not have effective control of the country. In some of the areas of the national minorities, like Kurdistan and Azerbaijan, Khomeini has either partially or completely lost control.

At the same time Khomeini is under enormous pressure from the movements in the towns—over jobs, wages, housing and control over industry and in the country side, where

the peasants are in many areas attempting to take over the land. Khomeini, who is striving to establish a theocratic dictatorship, has been forced by these movements to make concessions and take radical measures against capitalism.

But these actions have often been accompanied by repressive blows such as the law against 'industrial agitation' and the suppression of opposition newspapers and leftist groups. Khomeini, who has no clear conceptions of what policies to take, is desperately attempting to maintain his position by this type of manoeuvring to contain the revolutionary movement.

Gradually Khomeini's support has ebbed away as the masses' high expectations that the Shah's fall would lead to a dramatic improvement in their lives have been dashed. This has forced Khomeini to take drastic measures to maintain the mullahs' position, and the

seizure of the US Embassy is a prime example.

Only four days after the downfall of the Bakhtiar government in February a small group invaded the US Embassy in Tehran and took several diplomats hostage. Within hours Khomeini sent members of the Islamic militia to free the hostages. Why then did Khomeini take a completely opposite approach when the Embassy was occupied for a second time in November?

The clear answer is that Khomeini used the Iranian masses' enormous hatred towards American Imperialism and the Shah, which found a focus in the Embassy seizure, as a means of rallying support. This it was hoped, would divert the masses' attentions away from their immediate problems and ensure massive backing for the December referendum on the second draft of the constitution.

While the Embassy occupation may have rallied

support for Khomeini, this will not last, as once again the masses feel their daily problems coming to the fore. The situation in Iran will not be stabilised, even for a short time, until the question of Iran's social character has been decided and the issue of the national minorities resolved.

Despite the enormous strength of the revolutionary movement in Iran, it cannot be discounted that there will be a counter-revolution which would instal a new repressive regime defending capitalism. The absence of a revolutionary leadership means that there is the ever present possibility that Khomeini or another mullah or military leader could lead to an attack on the working class, peasantry and minorities.

At the same time the Embassy seizure has given reaction, the chauvanists and militarists in the the USA and throughout the world a field day. This has helped lay the political basis inside the USA

for new military interventions by US Imperialism not just in Iran but elsewhere in the world. Therefore it cannot be ruled out that US Imperialism would not try to intervene in Iran and possibly in other oil producing states as well to forestall the implementation of further anti-capitalist measures.

It seems likely at present that Khomeini will be prepared to let the hostages go, not willing to face an actual attack from US Imperialism, while of course using the threat of such an attack to unify the masses around him. But that will not save his position for ever as increasing numbers of Iranian workers draw the conclusion from their experiences of the need for an independent workers party, armed with a Marxist programme, which can lead the Iranian masses in the struggle against capitalism and oppression.

LETTERS

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

out of the mouths of babes....

Dear Comrades,
Last Saturday Brighton LPYS had a day of action outside the local market. We took along our children who helped give out leaflets and sell 'Militant'.

We sold 30 in four hours partly, I think due to the conversation my three year old daughter had with the five year old daughter of another YS member.

Tessa [5]: "What these people want to do is get rid of capitalism".

Carly [3]: "Yes it's all the fault of that Maggot Thatcher. Do you know what? She wants all the children to be run over on their way to school and she doesn't want little children to go to school."

This conversation went on for some time at the entrance to the market and quite a few people stopped to listen. Next time we have a public meeting I think we'll get them to speak.

Yours fraternally
Val North
Brighton LPYS

We know about factory robots

Dear Comrades,

I work in a factory that produces vehicle suspension springs. Due to the process this involves dealing with heated metals on semi-automated machines. The work is strenuous to say the least.

Recently there has been a discussion on why jobs at our factory have not been filled, despite wages higher than the national average and a high level of unemployment in the area.

I decided to tackle a foreman, whose own department was short staffed. I asked him what he thought were the reasons.

His reply was that the work is "soul-destroying". He added that the work involves a high concentration of monotonous repetitive work in intense heat. "Workers with an intelligent mind(!) would either become processed or leave in a short period." No amount of wages could compensate for the conditions the workers had to accustom themselves to.

Looking around I grasped exactly what he meant.

Up and down the country thousands of workers face this existence, bound by the shackles of production. To many of these workers micro technology is nothing new; they know what a factory robot means.

PS The article on the micro-chip ('Militant' 482) was excellent.

Best wishes
Peter Gunn
Salford LPYS and
ASTMS-staff section

Explaining the 'isms'

Dear Militant,

I have been buying your paper for several months now and although unable to read all of the contents, have found what I have read to be very clearly written.

However, although I appreciate the fact that you probably have limited space and time and that you do publish additional pamphlets on various issues, might it be possible to have an 'education column' from time to time?

By that I mean information on what Marxism, Trotskyism, dialectical materialism, Bonapartism etc. are, and

their relevance to today; what a true communist society could be like and lessons we can learn from mistakes made by so-called communist countries. I feel many people believe a communist society can only be the kind of society we see in Russia, China etc.

I did once see a column along these lines in the Irish Militant and feel it would be very helpful to people who have little idea what these 'isms' are.

Fraternally,
Marion Cox
Hove, Sussex

LESSONS FROM 'THE TIMES'

Dear Comrades

I was pleased to see the return of 'The Times', not only because otherwise there would have been a catastrophic increase in the number of journalists and printers unemployed, but also because no other paper shows us more clearly the views and thinking of the ruling class.

Under the title 'An Alternative Government', 'The Times' of 23/11 shows their fears for the future, and the lengths they are prepared to go to: struggle, turn, twist and change the rules, to avoid 'a failure of democracy'.

Hoping that the Thatcher government 'will succeed', they threaten that Thatcher's failure would bring 'a real risk' of a Labour government

commanding 'no real public confidence', committed to an extremist manifesto which would then be carried out.

After an attack on Labour's NEC and a sideswipe at supporters of 'Militant', who, 'The Times' says, have developed much influence in the trade unions and Labour Party (with the usual stories of packed meetings etc. peddled by the press and their friends), these spokesmen of big business really get down to it: "The obvious way to remove the danger is to change to a system of proportional representation ... If Britain had any of the normal forms of proportional representation there would be no danger of a Marxist government being formed."

YOUR FRIENDLY BUILDING SOCIETY —A NOOSE ROUND OUR NECKS

Dear Comrades,

I have just come home after a hard day at the office. Actually it's been a hard week at the office and I think it's going to get worse.

The 'office' is a large branch of a large building society. Following the recent announcement of the interest rate increases all borrowers were informed of the new monthly payments for their mortgages, with effect from January. Large numbers of people have been contacting the office asking to extend the term of their mortgage to reduce the size of the increase.

The society's reply to this request was that NO mortgage terms would be extended as this would lead to 'administrative problems'. The problems of the people trying to make the payments don't seem to concern them.

The increase in interest rates is just one of the policies being implemented by the Tories in a vain attempt to preserve a decaying capitalist system. Those policies are crippling the working class.

The labour movement must fight back, with a clear socialist programme including the demand for the nationalisation, under workers' control and management, of the banks, insurance companies and the building societies.

PS Please don't print my name as this letter would cause an adverse reaction from my employers in the unlikely event that they may actually read it.

Yours fraternally
A member of
Liverpool Wavertree LPYS

Crippling the council

Dear Comrades,

We have five spanking new building society offices in this small town. Now a sixth is to come.

We must break the stranglehold of the money-lenders, when we come to power. It would amaze the general public if they knew the extent local authorities are in debt, and what they are paying out in interest charges—it's crippling.

Yours fraternally
Cllr. Fred P. Bailey
Bideford, N. Devon

Freedom and fire hoses:- tory style

Dear Comrades,

At the first 'open' Federation of Conservative Students (FCS) meeting this term at Newcastle University on December 7th, we were privileged to have Mr Mark Carlisle (secretary of state for education) to entertain us.

Although billed as a 'public meeting', admittance was by student union card only—since when have students constituted the general public as a whole? This may partially explain the low attendance (the hall was less than a third full).

Certain members of the Socialist Workers Party and others were refused entry—due to not having student union cards. The Tory reaction to these half a dozen people, including a seven year old child who were chanting

"Tories out" outside the meeting, was to turn the powerful fire hoses on them.

Inside the meeting, Carlisle defended the education cuts and dismissed the hardship that will be caused to working class families as an 'unfortunate consequence', while he defended independent and public schools as necessary to maintaining 'standards in education'.

This event only confirmed our views on the brutality and callousness of the FCS and the Tory government—freedom and a decent life for them, and only them.

Yours fraternally
Steve Sanderson
Newcastle University
Labour Club

More Militant

Dear Comrades,

I am writing to stress the importance of fighting the Tory proposed cuts from the grass roots rank and file of the labour movement. Many Labour Party members would like to be more 'militant' but lack opportunities to fight the cuts on an organised basis locally.

This I would like to see happening in Thamesmead/Abbey Wood area since there seems very little militant activity here. So let's get together and start hitting the Tories where it really hurts, winning the people against them.

Yours fraternally
Mick Shrapnell
Woolwich Labour Party

Abortion and the cuts

Dear Militant

It is totally misleading to counterpose abortion on demand to better conditions, facilities and rights for mothers (Elizabeth Earley's letter Militant 482).

We in feminist groups and in the labour movement are desperately concerned that maternity grants are so small, that NHS services are so inadequate and that Tory policies to cut nursery provision and many service jobs (where many women are employed) are forcing women back into the home. But we are also convinced that if socialism means better control over one's own life, then control over one's own body and fertility is an absolutely fundamental right for women.

IN NO WAY was the 1967 Abortion Act intended to put an end to bad social conditions. If abortion were a 'back door cut' then the DHSS would be rapidly setting up day-care clinics (where abortions are carried out safely and cheaply) not, as in fact has happened, refusing licences to clinics since the second reading of the Corrie bill!

If the decision to have an abortion is in women's hands only, then abortion cannot be open to abuse for social or economic reasons.

I also believe that it is important to see abortion rights not only as a class issue. Of course upper income group women can always pay for illegal abortions when poor women cannot. But pressures to have an unwanted child, to put up with an unsupportive husband, to adhere to the traditional female role, are great at all levels of society.

Abortion rights must be fought for for all women; there must be real choice for women in our society—to have a child and be given the proper support to care for it, or not to have a child if a woman so wishes.

Yours fraternally,
Helen Seymour
Leeds NAC & LARC
NW Leeds CLP

anti-working class actions of that government, I have seen our party growing in the last two years, not in support of Jim Callaghan, but to fight his policies, and to fight for the interests of working people.

There is one example given by Mrs Thatcher that the next leadership of the Labour Party could take heed of—be loyal to your class. That is the minimum we require of our leadership.

Yes, comrades, it's nice to have 'The Times' back.

Fraternally
Ann Jones
General Secretary of
Brighton, Hove & District
Trades Union Council
(personal capacity)

Since the Tory Party is opposed to such a change, and the Liberal Party can't get a majority in parliament to do it, the reason behind Roy Jenkins' suggestion for a centre party now become clear. Jenkins has kept out of the fight in the Labour Party over the last few years. With Shirley Williams reduced to acting as a cut-price Michael Parkinson and the right wing of the Parliamentary Labour Party praying for a messiah, it doesn't take a Marxist to calculate that Jenkins' return to Britain will coincide with a push for such a party.

As one who remembers my CLP dying in the late '60s when party members were sick of Wilson's policies and could no longer stomach the

YOUR LAST CHANCE

**Record total reached!
Another £11,500 to
pass target by the
week-end.**

1980 promises to be a year in which the Thatcher government will stop at nothing to attack the working class, and especially the organisations which defend workers' living standards and rights — the trade union movement.

Right from the word go, we need to be able to report the news and analysis that we need to defeat the Tories.

Part of that attack is profiteering. In 1979, gold, for example, has more than doubled in price from just over \$200 per ounce to \$515 per ounce! And if we wanted to buy a personalised number plate for our editor, the very thing—PT 111—was advertised in last week's 'Sunday Times', a snip at £3,000. However, we have to spend more money on such vital items as extra paper, ink, electricity, transport, wages, and all the 101 components of printing, in order to provide our readers with a better and faster service.

Our Christmas present this year received so far include £50 from J&J Creswick (Chester), £43.75 from John Golding, a West London supporter who works in a bar, £32 union expenses from a Newcastle reader, A Docherty, £25 from W Shepperd (London), £21 from G McDonald (N London) and £20 from M Hutson (Wokingham) and expenses R Sidebottom (Oldham).

Other presents of £10 or over were from P Cairns (Newcastle), Stockport teach-

By
Steve Cawley

er, S Jeffries (York), A Stripp (Nottigham student), W Coombes (Bristol), B&C Butterworth (Chingford), N London, C Essery (Sheffield), from Banbury supporters, and R Hartill (Bristol). Between £5 and £10 came from Telford supporters, T Smith (Coventry), J&H Wobey (Hackney), Spennymoor students.

We've had far too many fivers to mention each comrade, which is of course as it should be.

Thanks to M Thomas (Newport, Gwent), D Patchett (Coventry), C Warren, Althea, D Chaloner (FBU EC) all from N London and J Greer (EETPU, Edinburgh), D Beecroft and E Hill (Yorkshire) and J Fitzmaurice (student, Birkenhead).

Contributions smaller than a fiver are still as welcome, particularly if our readers make it a regular commitment. Since our last issue contributions received included those from Coventry readers G Hill and M Iqbal (T&GWU, Talbot), S Vose and B Costello (NGA) from Liverpool, M Rodriguez and B McCaffrey (T&GWU) from Birkenhead, E Carpenter (W Yorks NALGO), J Dunn (NUM, Clay Cross), B Hand-side (Portsmouth), B Tuck (Dorchester) Mr & Mrs Robbins (retired, Bristol), students G Taylor (Swansea) and S Morgan (Reading), G Ivers (UCATT, Dundee), T Beattie and B Hamilton (Dalkeith), M Starr, C House, H Higgins and A Lane (all Bristol), London readers J Magee (Uxbridge), C Fleet

Build Militant

Area		Received
Eastern	4,700	3,622
Hants & IOW	3,100	2,940
Humberside	2,000	1,598
London North	9,500	8,615
London South	3,900	3,924
Manchester & Dist	4,500	3,169
Merseyside	5,000	3,826
Midlands East	3,300	2,845
Midlands West	9,000	7,371
Northern	5,500	4,505
Scotland East	2,900	1,717
Scotland West	4,500	2,633
South East	4,500	4,695
South West	3,100	2,582
Wales East	2,600	1,936
Wales West	3,400	2,320
Yorkshire	6,800	4,457
Others	6,700	10,722
Total	85,000	73,477

TARGET FOR THE YEAR - £85,000

**THIS WEEK
£5,343**

(CPSA) and Harold (Bow), and a number of other supporters in Leeds, Nottingham, Sheffield, Rotherham, Coventry and Edinburgh.

The biggest single amount this week was the magnificent £500 raised at a Militant Readers' Meeting in SE Wales. Also in three figures was the £166.57 received so far from readers and supporters at NOLS Conference, and there's quite a few IOUs to come!

Money has also finally arrived from returned deposits from the cancelled LPYS National Conference—£31.50 donated by the LPYS members concerned. Regular sums as usual have come from trade unionists on Merseyside, and £15 was the result of a sweep at Robb Caledon, Dundee.

A collection at the LPYS Young Workers Conference in Bristol left us £13.15 better off, and trade unionists in Peterborough, Stirling, Gatehead and Oxford sent us their expenses re-imbursed, totalling £32.

Donations from two meetings in Nottingham came to over £40, and £25 in Cardiff.

A collection at Islington LPYS came to £10.27, and another £40 has reached us from discussion groups and meetings in various places, including High Wycombe, Kings Lynn, Newcastle students and Southport.

Seasonal events have again been profitable as well as highly enjoyable: The larger

contributions were the West Midlands 500 Club draw (£175), Tyneside Xmas Bazaar (£150), West London Bazaar (£131.41), sales of calendars, cartoon books etc (have you got one yet? If not, see your Militant seller), £132 with much, much more to come.

A very successful London Folk Evening with Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger raised £117, and a series of happenings in Bracknell £63.55. A SE Wales bazaar made us another £60 clear.

Paisley readers who sold an old three-piece suite got £50 for it! Any more valuable specimens around, comrades?

The final tally of all the Christmas and New Year socials is obviously not in yet, but we've had £20 from Newcastle, and from Glasgow, £16.70 from Oxford and £41.27 from yet another successful West London curry evening.

Sales of badges were £17 and scrap metal £22, courtesy of a Peterborough supporter. Catalogue shopping on a commission basis for us was worth another £55, so far as agents in Falkirk and Liverpool were concerned. Sponsored walks in Leeds and Sheffield raised nearly £20, and £22 came from a sponsored swim at Cleethorpes (It's not even warm enough there in July).

The extras on the change when selling the paper amounted to £81.88 since our last issue—every 5p mounts up, and it mounts up even faster if it's the change from a quid!

£20 was a day's pay from a W London supporter, £19 came from sale of pamphlets in Oxford, £13 from teas, coffees, drinks and sandwiches in various places, and a Gwent supporter R Burns used a Militant Collectors Card to raise a total of £8.18

in donations from readers and friends.

Finally, of course, the Militant New Year Raffle has to be included next week. Readers and supporters are reminded that the draw takes place in London on 5 January and all stubs should reach us by then (with the money to be included).

If every reader determines to give us a really useful Christmas present and persuades one or two other comrades to do the same we will achieve the target. Send your contribution off straight away!

If you can get a firm promise of money waiting to be collected and forwarded to us, ring us before the dead-line for the 1979 target—12 noon on Sunday, 6 January, with details so that we can include it.

A Happy New Year to all our supporters!

On to socialist prosperity in the 1980s!

Millbrook Branch Labour Party (Southampton) sends fraternal greetings to 'Militant' and its supporters everywhere, in the fight for a socialist society

PERRY BARR LABOUR PARTY

Fraternal greetings for the New Year—for the return of a socialist Labour government

ads

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

MILITANT MEETINGS

THANET Marxist Discussion Group. Every 2nd Tuesday in month. Tuesday January 8th 7.30 pm. 30 Chichester Road, Ramsgate. 'Do wage rises cause inflation?' Further details: John Nicholson, tel. Thanet. 291293

SOUTH WALES MILITANT INDUSTRIAL MEETINGS

'Crisis in Steel: Stop the Tory Wreckers!'

Speakers will include Brian Ingham (Militant Editorial Board), Mike Williams (Shop steward, Bryngwyn works, Gorseinon).

LLANELLI—Thursday January 10th 7.30 pm, YMCA.

SWANSEA—Dyfnavor School, Monday January 14th.

PORT TALBOT—British Rail Social Club (behind railway station), Tuesday January 15th, 7.30 pm.

TYNESIDE Militant Rally '1980s—A Decade of Social Revolution!'

Speaker: Keith Dickenson (Militant Editorial Board) at Durrant Hall, Ellison Place (opposite YMCA) on Friday January 25th, 7.30 pm—9.30 pm.

BLACKPOOL Militant Discussion Meeting.

'Transitional Programme'. Sunday January 20th 7.30 pm. Contact Kev Taylor, Blackpool 52279.

CLASSIFIED

SOCIALIST SONGBOOK (New printing). Only 40p Single copies post paid 50p. Bulk orders for 30p each plus postage. From Bryan Beckingham 62 Haverstock Rd Bristol

To Steve & Theresa Appleton, a boy, Matthew Leon. Born December 4th. Already he's clenching his fist.

STRATHCLYDE regional draw 16 December: 1st 86 + 846; 2nd 1 + 18

Merseyside Anti-Cuts Committee [organised by Liverpool Trades Council and District Labour Party] NATIONAL CONFERENCE AGAINST THE CUTS

Delegates from all trade union, Labour Party and labour movement organisations welcome
Saturday March 22nd, 11.00 am-4.00 pm
St Georges Hall, Liverpool
Credentials from joint secs. T Harrison/A Dodswell
70 Victoria Street, Liverpool 1
Tel: 051-236 2015 or 051-236 1778
Delegation fee 50p
Speakers from labour and trade union movement to be announced

As members of the Woolton Wards East and West [Garston CLP] we would like to express our sorrow at the sad loss of comrade Doris Holt, who died this year.

When Doris lived in this area, she proved herself a class fighter, taking the ideas of Marxism to the local labour movement. We send our condolences to her family.

WOOLTON WARDS EAST & WEST LABOUR PARTIES

THE PRICE OF COAL

For some, coal means warmth, comfort and life over the coming months. For others like the miners, it means possible death and the realisation of just how dangerous their job is.

The real price of coal was paid yet again, just after 8.15 a.m. on Sunday 9th December, when two miners were killed and five seriously injured at Kinsley Drift Mine, Yorkshire's newest pit. It was only opened in August, on the site of the old Hemsworth Colliery, five miles south of Pontefract.

The two men who died were carrying out maintenance work at the bottom of the 1-in-4 gradient that carries the man-riding and coal-trams to the bottom of the drift. A man-riding train was being winched from the surface and was about 400 yards from the men, when

By Anthony Tynan
(South Wales Area NUM)

three coal-trams in front of it, loaded with steel girders, suddenly gathered speed.

The coal-trams tore through a steel safety girder at the bottom of the drift, ploughing into one of the men and killing him instantly. The other miner was killed when steel girders fell on him, and a third man working on maintenance was rushed to Pindersfield hospital in Wakefield. Four others who were on the man-riding train were also injured.

This is the second major accident involving runaway traffic in Yorkshire. In November 1978 at Bentley Colliery, near Doncaster, seven

miners were killed and three injured when a runaway train crashed.

The NCB, the NUM and the Mines Inspectorate will be carrying out their own investigations into the cause of the accident. But how many 'investigations' do we need before miners can go down a pit without fearing for their lives?

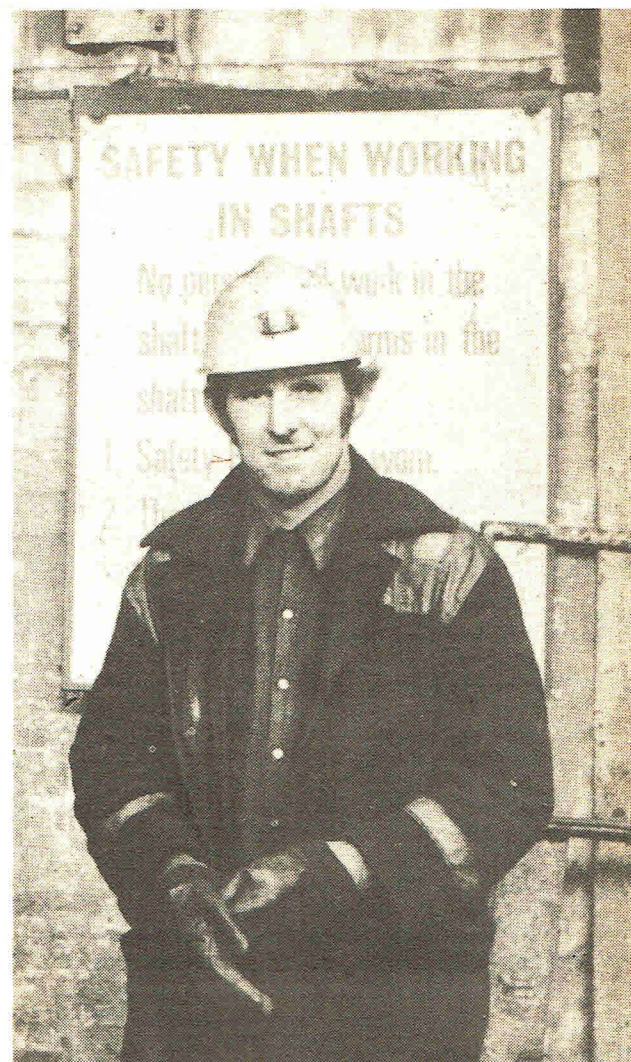
The transport system has a special 'trapped track' design which should have made it virtually impossible for the trams to be derailed. The design and supply of the equipment is in the hands of the UMM [Universal Mining Machinery], one of the mining supply multi-nationals.

It is hard to see how the Inspectorate and the Coal Board, however well-intentioned, can get to the bottom of the problem and ensure any changes necessary, when final decisions rest solely in

the hands of profit-hungry private industry. Only when health and safety are fully under the control of the miners themselves will it be possible to eliminate these types of accidents.

All supply, distribution and contracting work must, alongside the collieries, be taken over, under democratic workers' control and management, and the people making the actual decisions must be accountable to the rank and file.

This way every miner could be taught first aid, health and safety rules and regulations and how to recognise any danger-signals, all during working hours and on full pay. This will ensure that every miner has a chance to learn, and that the miners themselves will have an interest in participating in the running of the pits.



Well meaning investigations are not enough—only workers' control can provide better safety at work

Liverpool- Union solidarity to beat the cuts

City Council night watchmen in Liverpool have recently returned to work after a four-week strike.

The strike started because 70 watchmen who retired early in November had not been replaced. Private firms had been brought in to do work normally done by council watchmen.

The 47 watchmen who took strike action work in various depots: cleansing, engineers, housing, social services, and

parks. Manual staff from these departments were approached to work overtime to provide cover in place of some of the watchmen.

The strikers were demanding the replacement of the 70 who had retired, and an end to private security firms doing council employees' work.

A meeting was called with union representatives of all departments, all unionised private security firms, and NALGO, the local government clerical workers' union.

All pledged full support for the strike and security cover at the 47 sites was immediately blacked.

The social services department introduced a non-unionised firm to break the strike. Scabs were escorted through picket lines by the police.

NALGO members at the Treasury were asked to black any payments to this scab firm. They agreed to do this

as soon as the GMWU made the strike official, but that did not happen.

A resolution was sent from the Merseyside anti-cuts committee (representing trade unions, community groups and the District Labour Party) to the Labour group of councillors, calling for the "replacement of the 70 watchmen, and an end to private firms doing work normally done by city council employees." Although the Labour Party has chairmanship of committees, they do not have an overall majority on the council.

After four weeks, a compromise was reached. A number of watchmen were taken on, guarantees were given that private firms would not be used again and a working party was set up under the chairmanship of a Labour councillor.

This is to examine the city council's security arrangements with a view to expanding the security force and

eliminating outside contractors. The watchmen have indicated that they will strike again if the working party does not deliver the goods.

Although the aims of the strike have not yet been fully achieved, one thing has emerged—the need for support from other unions, particularly the white-collar unions, and the value of a well-organised cuts committee which includes the Labour Party.

Through united co-ordinated action of both a trade union and political nature, fights against cuts can be won, even when the trade union involved does not give official recognition to a struggle which it claims to support.

By
Ian Lowes
(GMWU Convenor,
Liverpool)

Union recognition now!

Scarborough hotel workers have launched a campaign to win union recognition from their employers. They are seeking the support of unions which hold their conferences in the east coast resort.

Leading the campaign is Bro. Roy Douthwaite, head hall porter at the Crown Hotel and secretary of the local branch of the General and Municipal Workers Union.

Scarborough has now lost a second major conference because of the row over union recognition in major hotels. The TUC Women's Congress due to have been held next April, has abandoned Scarborough in favour of Brighton. This comes close on the heels of a decision by the

Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions to move its conference to Blackpool.

The G&MWU has so far met with blanket opposition to trade union recognition in Scarborough. Mr David Pick, owner of the Crown, says that only six of more than sixty staff are union members.

It is high time that all hotel and catering workers nationwide had union representation. Too many, for too long have and are still working under disgraceful conditions.

Trade unions should set an example—starting with Scarborough, by taking their conferences to other towns where equality and fair representation are not dirty words.

Working in the Union

Bob Wylie [East Kilbride CLP]
and two Macdonalds' workers examine
the threat of redundancy

The employers at Macdonalds Tools, East Kilbride, have succeeded in reducing the workforce on the shopfloor by thirty. Only 70 or so are left.

The fact that they were able to do this so easily, with hardly any resistance on the part of the workers here, has raised a number of important questions in our minds. We would like to use the columns of the 'Militant' to open up a discussion on the vital issue of how to fight redundancies.

We hope that other workers facing the same difficulties as ourselves (and there are plenty of them!) will write in about their own experience and the lessons they have drawn from it.

Macdonalds make pneumatic drills, scabbling equipment for road building and repairs, and a range of chipping hammers for use in the shipbuilding industry.

The fall in the American

market for these goods together with the Tory cuts in public expenditure and the crisis in the shipbuilding industry have resulted in a falling way of demand.

On 14 November management told the shop stewards' committee that unless the workforce was pruned by thirty, the factory would have to close. They wanted a list of volunteers as early as noon on the following Monday. They obviously wanted to rush things through.

Acceptance of redundancy payments

We held a meeting on the Friday. Two proposals were put forward, one calling for a fight to keep the jobs, and another in favour of accepting the redundancies.

There was no shortage of volunteers either! Many of the factory's best militants were amongst those who went.

The general feeling of the men was that a fight was not likely to be successful anyway,

and that possibly after several weeks of struggle, they would lose their jobs and the 'offer'.

Many of the men were calculating how much money they would get if they volunteered. The vote went overwhelmingly (8 to 1) in favour of accepting the redundancies.

This is perfectly understandable. Thirty thousand jobs have been lost in Scotland over the past year. The list of actual and threatened redundancies is enormous: Prestcolds—900, Massey Ferguson—1,500, Singers—3,000, Chrysler—1,250, Collins—600.

This is the demoralising atmosphere that has conditioned the response of the Macdonalds workers. So far as we know, only the shipyard workers at Robb Caledon succeeded in scuttling the employers' plans to throw them out of a job. At Collins, the defeat of the Chrysler workers has had an important bearing on their attitude to the loss of jobs.

By Monday the 19th the

thirty men had gone. We cannot help but feel at the mercy of events. The sales of the 'Militant' slumped from 23 to 7. This week we're back up to ten, but many of the regular buyers have gone.

Crack-down

We insisted that the redundancies should be the occasion for the bosses to violate any of our hard won agreements. There may be less of us now but we're not going to see everything we've won thrown away.

They are definitely having a crackdown on us. Tea breaks are now scrutinised so that none of us can take more than our ten minutes' respite. The general manager watches what time we go out at the end of the day.

The threat of further redundancies, or even closure, has been used to persuade us not to fight for our full wage claim of £20 across the board. Instead we have accepted 10% with a productivity deal

for 7%. Generally it seems that the employers have the upper hand at the moment.

With the advantage of hindsight, we can see that a number of mistakes were made on our part. We were not prepared for such a sudden move by the employers. We should have tried to prepare ourselves for this kind of situation a long time in advance.

When the bosses claimed they were 'in difficulties' we should have demanded that the workforce should have access to the company books. Where have all the profits gone to, after all?

We should have had more discussion about what it actually means when you take redundancy money. The worker who is selling the job may not want it, but there are hundreds of thousands of workers who do! In two or three days, and in the prevailing atmosphere, we could not hammer this home.

How exactly have other trade unionists who read 'Militant' tried to overcome the enthusiasm of many

workers to accept redundancy money? This is a problem, especially when large sums of money are offered, much more than any of us could ever have as savings in the bank.

Also, some workers are confident enough to take the money thinking that they can find another job.

Working in a factory is not our idea of fun, and undoubtedly many of the most ardent trade unionists think too little of their bosses to want to actually fight for the privilege of being 'at their service'. But why is it often the most militant of us who are the first to accept redundancy?

Should we argue for nationalisation? Is it feasible under the present government?

Another question at the back of some minds must be this: if we can't get our fellow workers to fight for jobs, will they fight to overthrow the entire system? We hope this article will provoke some discussion in the pages of this paper, to the benefit of us all.

MECCANO- SIT-IN MUST CONTINUE

Airfix management have given the Meccano workforce six points to consider.

Basically, in return for the statutory 90 days notice, management want full access to the plant. They say they don't want to move the machinery, just the £2½m worth of Dinky and Meccano products that the workforce are controlling through the sit-in.

This is the main negotiating point, in their fight to keep the factory open.

They would be fools to give this up! Removal of the machinery would also give them the opportunity to open up production elsewhere.

Even the Tory industry minister had described Airfix management as being like eighteenth century mill owners.

The Meccano unions are asking for 90 days notice of redundancy, during which full consultation would take place. This would be without any strings. At a recent mass meeting of 600 workers only one voted against this course of action.

The unions are also demanding a public enquiry into the running of the Airfix Group. John Lynch (JSSC Secretary) said, "Over the past two years the Airfix Group has had in the region of £2½m to £3m of tax payers' money. I pay tax and I would like to know where it has gone."

Any problems faced by management were due to their own failure to invest in new machinery.

Little investment has taken place at Meccano. John, who has worked there for 12 years explains, "I worked in the machine shop. This is the



Meccano workers—"In one department there has only been one new machine put in in the twelve years I've been there"

Terry Harrison spoke to John Lynch, secretary of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee, and other Meccano workers

heart of the factory, where raw materials are turned into the finished component. In that period there has been one new machine in my department."

Liverpool has one of the

highest levels of youth unemployment in the country.

I spoke to two young labourers at Meccano. Both had been promised apprenticeships which are as rare as jobs on Merseyside. Dave Saunders, on leaving school with 5 'O' levels, had applied for 50 jobs before being taken on at Meccano.

He told me, "I was hoping to get an apprenticeship with the fitters. It has been dragging on for months. I was supposed to start after Christmas."

"The personnel man must have known Meccano was

going to finish up when I saw him—I was given nothing in writing to prove I had been given an apprenticeship.

Mark Fitzpatrick is in the same boat. "I've worked for Meccano for four months. I hoped to start an apprenticeship after Christmas. I had a job as a painter, on the Job Creation Scheme, before I came."

"Meccano took me on as a labourer. They gave me an interview a couple of weeks ago for an apprenticeship. I've got nothing in writing. The fight to keep the plant open is worthwhile."

must take up the gauntlet, organising a continuation of their campaign against the cuts.

The impact of the campaign so far has been indisputably effective in some areas. Originally the government intended to cut well over 100,000 jobs. They have sheered away from confronting some of the most militant areas of the union at this stage—DHSS, Customs & Excise and the National Savings Bank in Glasgow, which have all been heavily involved in industrial action over the past few months.

Undoubtedly though, they will round on these areas if this latest cuts plan proceeds unhindered. Soames made this clear in his parliamentary statement, and since the announcement Thatcher has already sounded warnings of more and worse to come.

Both CPSA and the SCPS will need to adjust their industrial action strategy to fight the particular cuts now being unveiled. Both unions will be putting pressure on the TUC general council to organise more vigorous opposition to the cuts, in particular by organising a national day of action as promised at Congress in September.

By

Kevin Roddy
(CPSA NEC, personal capacity)

MORE CUTS TO COME IN CIVIL SERVICE

The cuts in civil service manpower announced by the government in December mean that another 39,000 jobs—on top of the 20,000 already axed by Thatcher's boot-boys—are to be chopped.

These cuts will have a serious impact not only on individuals in the civil service but also on the services provided to the public.

Some 2,500 are to go on the unemployment benefit side of the service whilst the Manpower Services Commission, which is responsible for finding people jobs and training, is to lose 3,400 posts.

The qualifying period of employment to claim 'unfair dismissal' is to be changed, cutting over 100 jobs at ACAS and 260 posts are to go from the Health & Safety Executive.

It is not just a question of the Tories hitting at their

favourite targets like the unemployed. They are providing a gravy train for their friends and allies in 'private' enterprise, replacing civil servants with contract labour.

The Public Services Agency of the Department of the Environment is to lose 4,730 jobs as a result of this. Heavy Vehicle inspection work is to be 'privatised' away from the Department of Transport, chopping 1,050 jobs so that 'spiv' firms can be handed lucrative contracts, carrying out what will inevitably be second-rate inspections and thereby allowing many more unsafe heavy vehicles on our roads.

In the Ministry of Defence, where the unions have argued for years against the number of relatively well-paid service personnel who do jobs which could be 'civilianised', 7,500 jobs are to go. Most of these will be as a result of hiving off cleaning and catering work to the private sector.

There are also plans to oblige weekly-paid staff to accept monthly wages, thus saving staff in pay offices.

Inevitably some civil servants will be declared redundant if these cuts go ahead. As almost his last act before relinquishing responsibility for the civil servants and going off to Zimbabwe, Lord Soames flatly refused to give a 'no redundancy' pledge to civil service unions (he'll undoubtedly be more sympathetic to white Rhodesian generals, judges and the like). The civil service unions

SHEFFIELD - LPYS STEEL MEETING

In the last issue of 'Militant' (483) there was a report of the victimisation and eventual sacking of two Sheffield steel workers, Joe Herbertson and Brian Molyneux.

BSC management timed this action just before Christmas in the hope that it would go unnoticed. As usual they were wrong and the men have been on strike at Stocksbridge ever since.

A public meeting was organised by the local Labour Party Young Socialists, at which the two men were invited to speak. Brian Molyneux and two other steel workers from the area outlined the problems and struggles which will face the steel industry in the near future.

The two men were sacked because of various 'misdemeanours' dredged up from the dim and distant past.

The Tory government are out to remove any supposed 'commercially non-viable' parts of British industry and at the same time hope to make an example of the steel industry in order to demoralise the rest of the working class.

To do this the opponents of steel closures and supporters of workers' rights have to be weeded out. This is the reason for the sackings of the two workers.

Members of the local Trades Council, Labour Party and LPYS branches learnt of the ways in which management are feigning re-investment to placate the workforce. However the steel workers are not mindless robots (more use to the capitalists as they do not fight back) and they can see through the Tory lies supported by their spokesmen in the gutter press.

The speakers warned any complacent workers that the cuts in steel production would affect all industries, resulting in widespread redundancies.

Following a discussion on the 2% wage offer, which would in fact, with inflation,

mean at least an 18% wage cut, the steel workers turned to discuss the national strike on January 2nd (the first since the General Strike in 1926).

Brian Molyneux stated that the steel unions were not as strong as most people thought. Many attempts have been made to democratise and reform his own union, the ISTC; Brian is the secretary of the Liaison Committee for Constitutional Reform which has produced a pamphlet called 'Steel Workers and Reform'.

Other steel workers said that the right wing union leaders also cause some problems. The national strike has not been organised as well as it should have been and some steel workers will regard it as one extra day tagged onto the Christmas holidays.

To balance these problems, Brian Molyneux pointed out that they were obtaining support from unions throughout the country, including the NUR and that steel workers were quickly learning how to organise themselves, with strike committees being set up.

By the end of the meeting we concluded that:

—this Tory government is the most reactionary since the war.

—the steel unions must be run democratically if workers are to win their battles against the Tories.

—The heads of nationalised industries should be replaced by democratically elected workers' control.

—As much support as possible, financial and otherwise, must be generated for the national strike.

The meeting was very successful and all those present learnt a great deal about the steel industry. We showed our appreciation by collecting £11 for the steel workers' strike committee.

By Simon Kaplan

(Rother Valley LPYS South Yorkshire)

BAKERY WORKERS MUST NOT LOSE

By

Keith Albison

(Bakery, Food & Allied Workers Union, in personal capacity)

Just twelve months after the national strike which demonstrated and tested their strength, bakery workers are still being forced to use their organised power to defend workers' basic rights, as trade unionists who will not be bullied and pushed about at management's arbitrary whim.

Three weeks ago Val Dunn, an active member of the Bakers' Union, started work at Almonds Bakery in Manchester, as a part-time morning cleaner, after twelve months out of work.

Following the normal practice, she was on a month's trial pending medical results and references. But on Friday afternoon of her first week she received a letter at home, asking her to return to the bakery. She went back to discover that she was being sacked!

The reason given was that her previous employers, Man-

cedure.

The issue is now before the joint union/management council in London, but Val is still not being paid and the work to rule continues.

This must not be allowed to drag out, leaving the Almonds' workers battling on in isolation. The big bakers seem to think that they can return to the days when they picked and chose who they would employ on a daily basis, throwing out trade union activists and anyone else whose face doesn't fit. Our union cannot survive if we let them get away with this.

Almonds is part of the Rank Hovis McDougal group. Frank Booth, the secretary of the Bakers' Union branch there, wants the union executive to take up this dispute within the whole of RHM, spreading the work-to-rule on a national basis if necessary.

We must not neglect this fight. Our union cannot afford to lose it!



Photo: MILITANT

VICTORY TO THE STEEL MEN

Steelworkers, threatened by unemployment and low pay, are fighting back

By Wayne Jones

Steelworkers will not become the slave labour of British industry! They have overwhelmingly endorsed the steel union leaders' call for strike action against the disgustingly low pay offer.

Out of 700 ISTC branches, only 12 voted against strike action. This clearly demonstrates the widespread anger at their treatment by the BSC management, at the prompting of the Tory government.

The present 'offer' is a miserly 6% tied to productivity and manning reductions. Despite weeks of negotiation and the threat of strike action, this is only a 4% increase on the original offer.

What is more, there is a vicious sting in the tail. If it were accepted it would not only mean a drastic reduction in living standards but it would also create intolerable working conditions in the remaining steelworks and open the door for more lay-offs and redundancies in the future.

These proposals would have had the unions "dancing like puppets".

No wonder this package was decisively rejected.

As Bill Sirs explained, with inflation at 20%, it "means every fifth pint of beer my members usually drink they will have to go without, and every fifth egg. What will they do—not pay the rent in the fifth week?"

For areas such as Wales the redundancies, lost job opportunities, and low wages would mean a return to the 1930s with a vengeance.

Unemployment would leap to 12-15% and those 'lucky' enough to have jobs would be cowed by the whip of unemployment. This is the Tory strategy for all industry.

Read 'A Socialist Strategy for Steelworkers.' A Militant pamphlet. Price 20p

It is this horrifying prospect for all steel workers that has hardened their support for a strike. The 2% was the last straw.

At last the fight is on! This is the "moment of truth."

The government is trying to off-load the crisis of capitalism on the backs of the working class; and using the nationalised industries as 'guinea pigs'.

Villiers and Joseph have attempted to blackmail the workers by threatening further redundancies and lower production targets if the strike goes ahead and the 'offer' is rejected.

This will not succeed. Previous 'reasonableness' and 'cooperation' has been rewarded by massive shake-outs and a further decline. Enough is enough!

The strike call, the first since 1926, was the only way to answer the provocations of the BSC management and the Tories.

Steelworkers are no longer prepared to pay for the crisis of British capitalism. The uncompetitive nature of British industry results from decades of neglect under private ownership and now under the bureaucratic mismanagement of the present schemes of nationalisation.

Only steelworkers themselves can save the industry from destruction. The strike is a first step in this direction.

It must be pursued with the maximum unity and determination from the outset. The lessons of the recent engineering strike will not be lost on the steel unions.

It was the tremendous solidarity and tenacity at rank and file level that enabled the engineers to withstand the attacks from employers, the press and the Tories and gain a breakthrough on hours. The attempt to impose low wages on the public sector must be repulsed in similar fashion.

Private industry and steel stockholders, in connivance with BSC, have laid careful plans to break the strike. About five million tonnes is available for use by industry, and arrangements have been made to step up imports, and production in the private steel sector.

However, these plans will mean nothing if the steel unions deploy their forces correctly. No steel must be allowed to move. Pickets must be sent to every stockholder and warehouse to prevent distribution.

Len Murray has pledged support of the TUC. The rail unions and the T&GWU have pledged complete solidarity. No steel will be moved in or out of the docks.

The International Metalworkers Federation, the international co-ordinating body of metal working unions, said that affiliated unions in Belgium, France, West Germany, Holland and Scandinavia had been alerted and had offered full support. The Federation would do all in its power to stop the importation of steel from Europe or elsewhere.

The support from organised workers nationally and internationally is beyond doubt. Such support shames those claiming to be socialist who are calling for import controls as a solution.

With such solidarity action and firm local leadership with strike committees monitoring action, the strike can be a resounding success.

Regular mass meetings and strike bulletins are essential to counter the lies and half-truths of the Tory press and management and cut across any attempt to sow disunity amongst the steelworkers or to turn the working class against them.

But to be most effective the stoppage must be total.

To allow private steel to continue production is to allow a loophole to undermine and prolong the strike. A

total shutdown with effective picketing and no exemptions is the only way to ensure the short, sharp victory that Bill Sirs has called for.

The actions of the BSC management, like those of Leyland, coalmining etc in presiding over massive job losses once again calls into question the function of the nationalised industries under capitalism.

They are at present led by ex-capitalists, exploited by private industry and have only a hollow imitation of workers' control. How can they, on this basis, help the workers in the industry or the working class as a whole?

The struggle has now begun in earnest in the steel industry. These questions and the whole nature of the present chaotic system of running society will be discussed in the course of the strike.

The right to a job, a living wage, and to belong to a trade union—basic democratic rights—can only be permanently safeguarded by a fundamental change in society.

Only a socialist planned economy with democratic workers' control and management can retain a viable steel industry, integrated and expanded to meet the need for more and better houses, hospitals, schools etc.

On this basis steelworkers and the working class as a whole could look forward to the future with confidence.

- ★Unity of all BSC workers!
- ★For a full steel strike!
- ★Victory on both issues—pay and jobs!
- ★Mass meetings in all plants to prepare the strike and at regular intervals during the strike!
- ★Organise full effective picketing!
- ★Cancel the threatened closures!
- ★No jobs to go unless alternative work is made available in advance with no less favourable wages and conditions!
- ★Share out the work round the plants with no loss of pay!
- ★A wage increase for all steel workers of at least 20%!
- ★Democratic workers' control and management of BSC!

THEM OR US

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

It's presents all the way for the bosses. But what about us?

Living standards are being eroded daily, and inflation has again topped 17% in official figures. This is already the highest inflation rate in Western Europe, but is expected to shoot up to 20% in the next few months. Major price rises will include rail fares, electricity, and high mortgage repayments.

The 'social wage' will be hit even harder too.

After the estimated £4,500 million cuts already announced, a new round of cutbacks is anticipated within the next few months. The National Health Service is running on a shoestring with less and less money in real terms to meet the health needs of ordinary people in terms of staffing and equipment.

Area health authorities like Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham in London have faced massive cuts in finance.

Do the rich suffer? Not likely. While acute hospital services in the area have been cut by 10% following the closure of St Olave's Hospital, a new private hospital is being built in Southwark. What makes the situation even more sick is that a few years ago, the site of the hospital was a wharf, part of the then thriving docks in London.

Housing starts have slumped in both public and private sectors. It is feared that the 1980 level of housing starts may be the lowest since 1948 in both public and private spheres. So what chance do people have of finding decent accommodation in the '80s?

Unemployment is expected to spiral upwards in the next year. The prospects for the future are even grimmer as, apart from government cutbacks, investment by private manufacturing industry, already the lowest in Western Europe, is expected to drop even further this year.

And if you decide to use the strength of your union to fight against inflation, cutbacks, etc., what have the Tories in store for you?

In one of their most vicious moves yet, secret Tory plans have been made to deny access to social security to strikers and their families, regardless of whether the striker is receiving union strike pay. In other words, they are trying to starve workers and their families into submission!

The idea, revealed by 'Time Out' magazine, is to take a suggested sum of £10 a week from the social security paid to a striker's family, which is 'deemed' to have already been paid by the union.

Most unions in fact pay nothing like this level. Some have no strike pay at all.

Very many strikers do not claim any social security, but those who do, received according to official figures, £15.51 per week last year. So a cut of £10 a week would remove two-thirds of the entitlement!

Clearly, trade unionists will fight against any such move. The Tories are bringing the class war to new heights. The labour movement must also prepare for battle. The bosses are attacking our rights, our living standards, to keep up their profits.

The leaders of the labour movement must ensure that every attack is resisted, and that a campaign is mounted to expose, and end, the rule of the profit system which promises nothing but misery in the 1980s.

GET

Militant

<p>BRITAIN 13 Issues...£3.00</p>	<p>26 Issues...£5.90 52 Issues...£11.80</p>
<p>EUROPE [Airspeeded] 26 Issues...£6.60 52 Issues...£13.20</p>	<p>REST OF WORLD [Airspeeded] 26 Issues...£9.10 52 Issues...£18.20</p>

Name

Address

.....

Make cheques payable to MILITANT and return to the Circulation Dept, MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN, Bulk orders available, sale or return.