

# SCRAP MISSILES NOT HOSPITALS

**MILLIONS SLASHED  
FROM  
SOCIAL SPENDING  
£11,000 MILLION  
SQUANDERED ON  
'DEFENCE'**

Destroying hospitals and health centres, schools and nurseries, and spending millions more on weapons of destruction! That's the barbarous policy of the Tory government.

Thatcher's Minister of Health, Patrick Jenkin, recently admitted that the NHS urgently needs £4,000 million spent on hospital buildings to bring them up to 'modern standards.' Over half were built before the first world war!

What chance is there of this money being spent under the Tories?

Yet the Tory government has recently raised Britain's defence spending by a massive 25%! Even allowing for inflation, this is a rise of over 4% in real terms. In the financial year 1980/81, over £11,000 millions will be squandered on so-called "defence". This amounts to 4.9% of gross domestic product, second only to the United States within NATO countries. Thatcher's Cabinet is

now seriously considering spending £6,000 million on a new generation of "Trident" missiles, to replace the "obsolete" Polaris missile fleet. And that's at current prices, the real cost will inevitably be much much more.

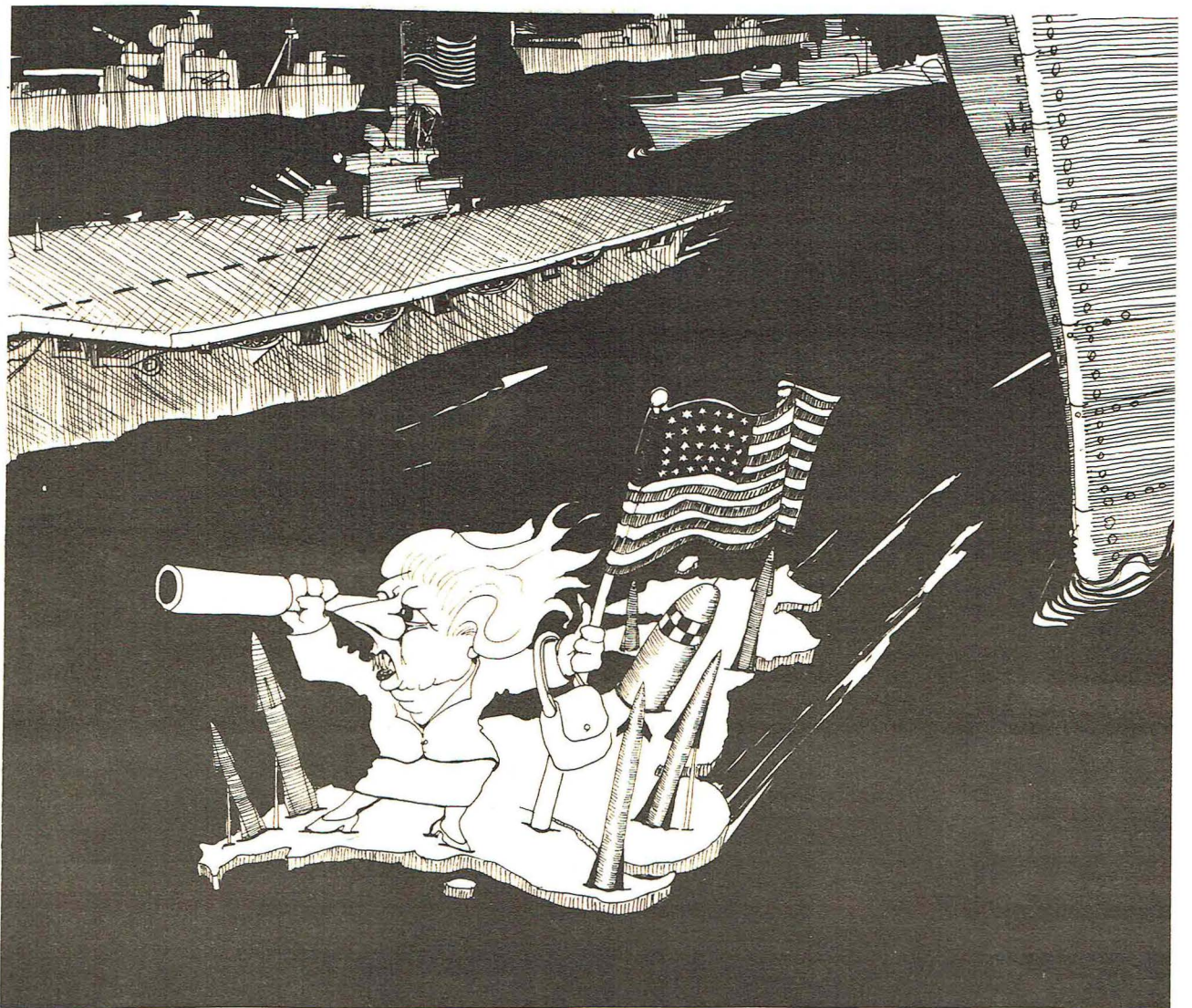
Altogether, more is spent for military purposes than on health and social security combined!

For the price of one Polaris-carrying submarine built—and yet house-building is virtually at a standstill!

Regardless of the fact that British capitalism is slipping to the bottom of the 1st division world's economic tables, and world capitalism is in a state of anarchy. Do not let another blood-sacrifice be made in the name of imperialism's anarchy. Do not let another victim of imperialism's anarchy be added to the long list of victims.

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By Bob Wade



## NO-TO THATCHER'S NUCLEAR CRUISE

### UNEMPLOYMENT

By Eileen Short

# Day to day Hand to mouth

"Stephen Galia, 16, found hanged... Stephen, who was found by his sister, 11, left school recently but could not get a job." [London Evening Standard, 12.6.80]

Another blood-sacrifice, another victim of imperialism's anarchy. Do not let another victim of imperialism's anarchy be added to the long list of victims.

ies think about Stephen when they preach about scroungers and dole-queue layabouts?

At the Newcastle Trades Council Unemployed Centre, the unemployed tell their side of the story. "You try your best not to worry... I get sick at times, true, but

worrying's not going to help you out of it.

"You just try and make the best of it, it's all you can do. We're just existing." Building worker, unemployed for over two and a half years.

The latest bulletin from Youthaid, a pressure group concerned par-

ticularly with unemployment, presents a stark picture: "It is expected that unemployment will grow by 30 per cent over the next two years, but school-leaver unemployment will grow by 125 per cent..."

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this country are suffering a catastrophic cut in their living standards, the Tories are determined to act as though Britain were still a "great power" armed with its own "independent nuclear deterrent."

Workers have no interest whatsoever in the maintenance of massive stockpiles of armaments. 'Defence,' as far as the tops of the civil service, the armed forces, and the Tory party are concerned means the defence of capitalism, defence of the profits and power of big business at home and abroad.

The labour movement must campaign against the Tories' grandiose military plans with bold socialist policies:

- ★ End all arms spending!
- ★ Withdraw from NATO!
- ★ No US bases or missiles in Britain!
- ★ End arm sales to reactionary regimes!

At the same time steps must be taken to safeguard the jobs of all workers in defence industries, and to divert the technology and skills now squandered on arms into socially useful projects.

In a number of key armaments firms, such as Vickers and Lucas-Aerospace, the shop-stewards' organisations have already drawn up plans which clearly show the way in which their industries could be used in a way which benefits the working people.

The capitalist class will never be persuaded to give up its armaments by humanitarian appeals. They regard arms as an essential defence of their system.

Only the organised might of the labour movement can bring an end to the waste of armaments and avert the danger of war—and the ultimate threat of a totally destructive world war.

But the fight on this fundamental issue must be linked to a socialist programme to end big-business domination of society and establish a socialist society based on planned production and democratic control by the working class and its organisations.

# THE ARMAMENTS RACE

**The Labour Party's political broadcast [11 June] warning against the horrors of nuclear war and calling for a cut in arms spending, will be welcomed by the overwhelming majority of the labour movement.**

The attack on the broadcast from Labour's right wing only confirms their pro-big business stand on this question, as on the issue of incomes policy, fighting the cuts, and campaigning to bring down the Tory government.

Nevertheless, as with the National Executive Committee's policy statement for the special conference, most Labour Party activists will feel that the broadcast did not go far enough. It stopped far short of calling for an end to all arms expenditure, did not call for withdrawal from NATO, and failed to link up the fight against arms with socialist measures to bring about a transformation of society.

The broadcast also included the mistaken idea that world war could break out as a result of error by the Pentagon's computers. It argued [as did the NEC's statement] that the build-up of nuclear weapons was in itself bringing the world nearer to nuclear holocaust, and that this was particularly so following the heightening of international tension following the Russian invasion of Afghanistan.

But none of the serious strategists of imperialism seriously believes that Afghanistan will lead to world war

between the super powers. The American leaders, imitated by Thatcher and company in Britain, have seized on the Russian invasion as a golden opportunity to whip up reactionary, pro-capitalist propaganda, diverting attention from burning social and economic problems at home, blackening the idea of 'socialism' in the Stalinist states, and justifying a new spurt in the arms race. The hysterical propaganda of the leaders of imperialism, however, must not be allowed to blind the labour movement to the fundamental issues.

There is war all the time under capitalism, with 'small' wars claiming millions of lives every year. Unless capitalism is replaced with a socialist society, moreover, there is ultimately the threat of world war and nuclear annihilation. But this depends, not on relations between the super powers, but on relations between the classes.

War is an instrument of policy, and is adopted by the ruling class not in a haphazard fashion, but when they calculate that it is necessary to defend their vital economic and strategic interests. With so much at stake, we may be sure the American ruling class has

made certain there are sufficient checks to prevent a totally destructive world war being triggered off by a single computer or human error.

How could capitalism benefit from nuclear war—which would mean the total destruction of the profit system, the annihilation of the working class whom it exploits for profit—and in fact the wiping out of most of life on the planet?

The idea put forward by some military strategists, that it would be possible to limit a nuclear war by means of a so-called 'flexible response,' or alternatively the idea that one side could win victory through a preemptive 'first strike,' are both utter madness. This is shown by the strategists' own conception of 'MAD'—mutually assured destruction, which is their insane answer to the threat of a first strike from the other side.

## The threat of world war depends not on relations between super-powers, but relations between the classes

However, while the capitalist class remains in direct control of its system, and the organisations of the working class remain intact, nuclear war is ruled out. But if in the coming period of social convulsions, the working class is defeated and power taken by bonapartist military dictators, then there would be the inevitable danger of world war and nuclear destruction.

If future Hitlers, Francos, and Pinochets are allowed to march to power over a pulverised working class in America, Western Europe, or Japan, there is no doubt

that such madmen would sooner or later attempt to find a way out of the crisis by an attempted 'first strike' against Russia. Such barbaric dictatorships, however, could arise only after a series of devastating defeats for the working class. The coming period will see the awakening and radicalisation of workers throughout the world, and the working class will be presented with many opportunities to carry through the transformation of society.

The threat of world war, therefore, is not a problem which transcends all others as far as the working class is concerned, but a problem necessarily linked to the problem of the socialist transformation of society.

Part of Labour's broadcast focused on US imperialism's plans to base at least 160 ground launched 'Cruise' missiles in Britain. Quite apart from the factors

only emphasise the real position of capitalist Britain—as an economic and political satellite of US imperialism. The Tories' crazy policy, which Thatcher claims, is preserving Britain's 'great power' status, is in reality only accentuating the subordination of British capitalism to American imperialism's military-economic system.

The massive increase in military spending can only further contribute to the decline of the British economy—and it is fundamentally economic power which determines the power of states, not the amount of nuclear hardware that they have in their arsenals.

Even military and strategic experts, like Lord Carver, a former Chief of the Defence Staff, have publicly criticised the Tories' commitment to a new generation of nuclear weapons as being of dubious strategic value and a serious mis-application of limited funds.

Clearly, military spokesmen like Carver are not concerned with the welfare of the working class. On the contrary, they are afraid that a crippling commitment to nuclear weapons will reduce spending on conventional forces—forces they consider will be necessary to defend the capitalist system from their 'internal enemy,' i.e. for so-called 'counter-insurgency' measures directed against the movement of the working class to transform the system on socialist lines.

While opposing the monstrous waste on nuclear arms, therefore, the labour movement must equally warn the working class against the the ruling class's systematic preparations to defend their wealth and power against fundamental social change.



The Labour Party Young Socialists have been thrown into the forefront of the fight to defend basic democratic rights of the labour and trade union movement and the battle against police harassment.

Last Saturday (14 June) LPYS members held a paper-sale and Day of Action in the Broadway, Southall's main shopping centre. Leaflets were disappearing fast, 'Militant' and 'Socialist Youth' were selling well, and we got a friendly response to the message we were putting across through the megaphone and we were signing people up for the LPYS and Labour Party.

Suddenly, without warning, a vanload of six police officers including an Inspector descended on us, ordered us to stop selling papers and escorted five of us to a van.

By an  
LPYS member

After 2½ hours in the police station, we were all charged under Section 121(1) of the Highways Act 1959, i.e. with obstruction of the highways, etc.

The blatant attempt to trample underfoot one of the most basic democratic rights will not go unchallenged by the LPYS and the labour movement generally. This kind of leafletting and street activity to recruit workers is customary in the labour movement.

Such 'days of action' are held up and down the country every weekend and a large part of our size and Saturday's police force is akin to that

in a repressive police dictatorship, although it is typical of the treatment received by immigrant youth in particular.

The attitude of the Labour MPs, members of the Party and trade union officials we have contacted over this incident is one of real anger. Stuart Holland MP contacted the Sunday papers and will be asking questions in the House of Commons this week. Other Labour MPs should support him.

The LPYS are organising a march and demonstration on 21 June through Southall. Every Labour Party branch, LPYS, Trades Council, trade union and immigrant organisation will be contacted to support the march, as a first step in the fight against such police attacks.

The demonstration leaves from the Car Park, Dominion Cinema, The Green, Southall at 11 am on 21 June.

# Labour Party

## COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY

### FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY GOES ON

By Tony Saunois

(LPYS representative on National Executive Committee)



Tension shows on the faces of right-wingers Owen, Rees and Healey [l to r]

Labour's Commission of Enquiry met last weekend to consider its recommendations. The main issues clearly centred around the questions of increased democracy and accountability.

Pressure from the party membership on these crucial reforms has been greater than on virtually any other subject in the entire history of the party.

The demand for change has not been the result of "left plots" or "conspiracies" as alleged in the media and claimed by the right wing of the party. It has stemmed from the growing support for radical socialist policies and a leadership prepared to fight for them.

It has flowed from the rejection of the pro-capitalist policies preached and practiced by the right wing leadership of the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP). Reduced to a rump within the PLP, Labour's right wing hoped to use the Commission of Enquiry to safeguard their position in parliament and regain, by manoeuvre, a controlling influence over the party as a whole.

In this they manifestly failed. Mandatory re-selection of MPs and the establishment of work place branches of the party have been endorsed by

the Commission. The call by the right for a change in the NEC structure to regain an artificial majority was not discussed last weekend.

All these positive proposals from the Commission need to be endorsed by the conference in October. They strengthen democracy in the party and assist in building firmer roots amongst trade unionists.

However it is over the question of the method of electing the party leader, and who should decide the contents of the election manifesto, that the weakness of the Commission's report is shown. Yet even in this regard the acceptance of the principle of an electoral college to elect the leader and decide the content of the manifesto is a rebuff to the right wing and a tacit admission of the undemocratic nature of the current procedure.

The point at issue is the composition of the college

and the role it has to play. A staggering 50% of the total vote is proposed for the Parliamentary Labour Party. 25% is allotted to the trade unions. 20% to the CLPs and 5% to the Socialist Societies.

The essential dominant influence in the Labour Party by the trade unions is weakened in one of the most important decisions! Details have yet to be finalised but one suggestion is that the college should comprise of 60-70 participants elected in the proportions stated.

The effect of this would be to give the right-wing 50% of the college from the PLP alone! Those who politically represent the least are to be given the greatest influence. A college with such a composition is unacceptable. Pressure must be exerted on the NEC to amend this proposal to increase the influence of the trade unions and CLPs.

Annual conference, which decides policy and elects the NEC is undoubtedly the most democratic body to elect the party leader. With large sections of the labour movement, including the T&GWU supporting the principle of an electoral college, however, this is currently the main alternative to the status quo. As a tremendous advance over the present situation a representative electoral college should be supported.

One of the issues of most concern is the suggestion that the electoral college should have the final say over the content of the election manifesto. This proposal threatens the authority of annual conference as the policy making body. The NEC should have the final say over the content of any election manifesto, based on decisions of party conference.

These three main issues of democracy are of critical importance. If the party leadership is to campaign on the policy adopted by the rank-and-file and reflect the socialist aspirations of the labour movement they are critical. It is therefore vital the NEC is pressurised to stand firm and support greater democracy in the party.

Photo: Militant

# Jenkins and the Right Threaten Party

By Jim Chrystie

Jenkins' call last week for a split in the Labour Party is a serious warning for the labour and trade union movement. He reflects what many of the right-wing leaders in the Labour Party want—a split in the Party and the formation of a "radical centre".



Roy Jenkins

now the deepest in British politics...to pretend that Shirley Williams, Bill Rodgers and Roy Hattersley really have more in common with Tony Benn and Eric Heffer and Stan Orme than they do with Peter Walker, Ian Gilmour or Edward Heath is to live a lie. But it is a lie which the Labour Party has to live, if it is to live at all."

You can't speak much plainer than that. If necessary then the right wing will split from the Labour Party rather than carry out a socialist programme.

Their policies are clear—they are only divided on whether the time is ripe. In their response last week to Jenkins' latest call, many of the right wing advised caution.

They want to see if they can reverse the democratic tide at this year's Party Conference.

Their caution was reflected in the capitalist press. They are worried that Thatcher's policies are becoming increasingly unpopular with the mass of both workers and the middle class. And people will turn towards a more leftward-moving Labour Party.

To try to avert this, the capitalists want to build up a third party, especially among the middle class. This party would be a safe capitalist "2nd eleven" which would play when the Tories "1st eleven" had run into trouble.

But last week throughout the capitalist press, there was opposition to launching such a party now. The capitalists are concerned that if the right wing quit, the Labour Party would be pushed to the left out of their control. To split the Labour Party is for them a gambler's throw. They want to see first if Thatcher will fail, or the right wing lose in its attempt to reimpose its stranglehold on the Labour Party.

But their lack of enthusiasm to Jenkins' proposals should not disguise the danger to the labour movement. The capitalists and their allies in the Labour Party are merely biding their time. They must be defeated by a vigorous campaign for democracy and socialism in the labour and trade union movement.

They are scared of the transformation that has begun in the Labour Party. Last month's special conference demanded increased public ownership and re-nationalisation without compensation of public assets hived off by the Tories to private hands. Last October's Party Conference extended the democratic control of rank and file members over their representatives.

The right wing don't accept this. Their privileges and perks are at stake. One right-wing Labour MP described the left as "career assassins." The right want to return to the days of carrying out capitalist policies, and when they ran the Party with an iron hand.

But those days are gone. As capitalism has moved into crisis, the class polarisation of society has deepened. And this has been reflected in the radicalisation of the Labour Party.

The right wing of the Party are quite open about this. They know which side of the class battle they are on. David Marquand, ex-MP and one of Roy Jenkins' main backers, writing in 'Encounter' magazine last year, stated:

"The gulf between socialists and social democrats is

# MARXIST WEEKEND SCHOOL

June 27-29

The 'Militant Marxist Weekend School' at Goldsmiths College Students' Union from Friday June 27th to Sunday 29th offers an excellent chance for debate and discussion on the ideas of Marxism.

On Friday and Saturday evening the film 'Battle for Chile' will be shown. And on

Sunday afternoon there will be a debate between Lynn Walsh (Militant) and Mike Gatehouse (Communist Party) on "The Lessons of Chile 1970-73."

For the Saturday and Sunday morning, the School divides into five courses. John Pickard and Brian Beekingham will be speaking on 'Introduction to Marxism,' covering the Theory of Marxism: the basis of Marxist Philosophy, Marxism and

Internationalism, and the Marxist Perspectives for Britain.

'Militant's' support in the trade union movement has been growing very rapidly. The course on 'Marxism and the Trade Unions' will be of interest for any active trade unionist. Brian Ingham, 'Militant's' Industrial Correspondent is speaking on 'Perspectives for the Trade Unions' and 'General Strike'—one of the key debates in the movement at present. Bob Faulkes (Hackney Central LP) concludes that course, speaking on 'The Role of a Marxist as a Shop Steward.'

Brian Beekingham introduces the basics of Marxist Economics, with a session on 'Wage Labour & Capital.' Rob Jones is speaking at the other two sessions on 'Will there be a Slump?' covering the development of capitalism and the post-war boom, and a Marxist analysis of 'Tribune's' 'Alternative Economic Strategy.'

The course on Trotsky, with

Alan Woods and Ted Grant speaking, offers a detailed analysis of Trotsky's role in the events leading up to the Russian Revolution, the Revolution itself, the struggle against the rise of Stalinism; and the enormous events of the 1930s.

The course on China, with Peter Taaffe and Lynn Walsh speaking, offers a Marxist analysis of the Chinese Revolutions of 1925-27; 1945-49, and the perspectives for the development of China today.

The school is open to all those active in the labour movement and there will be ample time for discussion and debate.

Send bookings to Militant Marxist Weekend School, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Bookings will be accepted at the School itself, but the full reading list and timetable will be sent to those who book in advance.

Cost £3 whole weekend, £1.50 Saturday or Sunday, £1 Friday evenings.

## TRADES COUNCIL CONFERENCE

# 'LET'S BE MORE EFFECTIVE'

There was a determination by delegates at the recent Trades Council Conference to make the Councils effective organisations able to mobilise and unify trade unionists at a local level. Activists had drawn lessons from what happened on the TUC Day of Action on May 14th.

Although in many areas the Trades Councils had worked to make the day a success, there had been a lack of a lead from the TUC "If they want us to fire the guns, they should give us the bullets," remarked one delegate.

Delegates knew that further battles were ahead and were determined that the Trades Councils should be able to play their full role in these struggles. From the very first debate on the annual report, that was the mood of the conference. John Kelly successfully moved a reference back over the refusal to implement the previous year's resolution, asking for a list of Trades Council secretaries to be made available to all Trades Councils. This refusal was calculated to stop action between Trades Councils.

The next debate continued the theme of unifying workers at a local level. By a narrow majority (119 to 110). Conference passed a resolution allowing direct representation of shop stewards on Trades Councils. Whilst such a resolution had been defeated, in 1971 and 1978, delegates now saw the necessity for unified action against the Tories.

And that was continued into the next debate, where a motion calling for increased representation on TUC Regional Councils was carried, despite opposition from the platform.

Behind all these debates lay the central theme of Conference of all-out resistance to the capitalists and their Tory

government. Delegates argued for a really vigorous campaign against the anti-Trade Union legislation, in order to get the movement not only to defeat the Bill, but the government itself.

Alison Hill (Gosport) pointed out that it was not enough to have anti-Tory action. A decisive break with capitalism was required. Unfortunately the TUC's alternative economic strategy did not do this, as it left the centres of economic power in private hands.

"You can't plan what you don't own," she said about the TUC's call for a strengthened National Enterprise Board. Half measures were not enough. Trade Unionists should learn that from the horrific Chilean experience.

The need for the Trade Union movement to defend all workers and oppressed sections was pointed out. In the debate on Southall, Bernie Bateman (Hillingdon) reminded Conference that last year it had called for the TUC to hold a public enquiry into the death of Blair Peach. This was even more necessary after the coroner's court 'misadventure' verdict.

Overall the mood for change which ran through the conference reflected the lessons that working-class activists had drawn from May 14th. Delegates wanted to ensure that the Labour Party and Trade Union leadership would match up to the fighting capacity displayed by the Trades Council movement.

Photo: Militant



Bristol workers demonstrate their opposition to the Tories on May 14th

By Ann Jones

[Brighton and Hove District TUC]

# YS ROUND UP

Recent activities of the LPYS have ranged from holding days of action to participating in Miners' Galas, and even "infiltrating" Tory public meetings.

In Nottingham, YS members not only attended the recent Miners Gala, but have held a Militant Readers Meeting, and discussion group. They were unable however to hold a meeting on unemployment, because the brewery owner objected to the politics.

Although it had been agreed that the meeting could take place in a room at a local pub, it was vetoed at the last moment by the pub's brewery, Hardy-Hanson. It just happens that this brewery is owned by T. Bailey-Foreman, notorious owner of the Nottingham Evening Post. He doesn't believe in democracy for his sacked workforce, nor in the right of free speech.

Other YS branches have been more fortunate. In East Kilbride the members decided to properly organise a day of action on 6 June, and not just see it as a large paper sale.

They bought 100 'Plunder Woman' badges, 1,000 'East Kilbride Against the Tories' and produced 1,000 local leaflets advertising YS meetings. Then they got extra copies of 'Socialist Youth' and the new LPYS anti-Thatcher poster.

They drove a car almost covered in YS posters into the town centre and set up a table with posters, papers, badges etc. At lunchtime the local MP, Maurice Miller, and John Divers of the LPYS Scottish Regional Committee spoke. All this got an excellent response from local people, and besides the amount of material sold, six people wanted to join the LPYS and a dozen come to the next meeting.

In areas where the labour movement isn't so strong, more unorthodox methods have to be adopted. In Dorchester YS members infiltrated a public meeting called by the local Tories, on 'Education in the 80s'. The main speaker was Mark Carlisle, the Tories Education Minister.

His general line that the money wasn't available, and anyway it should be spent on defence instead, was answered by Claire Bishop of the LPYS. She pointed out that if the banks alone were nationalised, the money saved on getting rid of the extortionate interest charges would help free large sums of money for local councils and government to spend on education.

Other members of the audience attacked Carlisle's speech, and whilst the somewhat perplexed minister left this so-called Tory stronghold, YS members quickly sold the 7 papers they had taken and wished they had brought 30.

## GLASGOW MILITANT MEETING

# Clear lead needed for labour movement

By David Churchley  
(Strathclyde NALGO)

"May the 14th was a demonstration of the latent power of the labour and trade union movement on Clydeside, and in Strathclyde, we saw the biggest movement of the working class since 1926 and the UCS struggle itself."

That was how Peter Taaffe, editor of 'Militant', started off his opening remarks at the public meeting in Glasgow. Over 150 people heard Comrade Taaffe outline the reasons why the press and the Tories were playing down not only the demonstration on the 14th but importantly the likely outcome of this activity in the next period.

As the stark reality unfolds, showing the brutal face of decaying capitalism, workers will question the reasons why



Scottish Teachers demanding industrial action to get decent wages

the Tories are embarking on this assault on living standards and trade union rights but also will examine the position adopted by the previous Labour government.

The politics of the right wing of the Labour Party are now foundering on the rocks. The reforms granted by the system through previous Labour governments have now begun to run out. The oppor-

unity of any further crumbs from the bosses' system are diminished.

"That is why any reforms granted by the bosses, even under a left-wing led Labour government in Britain will be cancelled out," said Peter Taaffe.

The Alternative Economic Strategy, now being adopted by the tops of the trade union movement, offered no general

solution to the problems facing the working class in Glasgow, in Strathclyde and in Britain.

Peter drew on the conclusions of the sheet metal workers' union conference who recognised quite correctly that such a strategy offered no way out for their members and would not provide the programme for a fundamental change in the balance of forces within society.

"The future will bring periods of upheavals as well as those of quiescence on the part of the working class." The absolute and irrefutable need for Labour to be returned on a fighting socialist programme was clearly spelt out.

The discussion at the meeting centred around the day-to-day problems facing workers in the area. The need for a clear and decisive lead, even in the face of overwhelming odds such as redundancies and closures, was called for, in particular by Talbot car workers.

Similarly public sector workers agreed on the need

for a committed labour movement fight-back not only in opposition to cuts but in bringing down the Tories. One speaker, Larry Flannigan from the teachers' union, identified the force of reaction against the Tories, as shown in the clear results in the recent District Council elections in Scotland.

Comrade Taaffe summed up by calling for a well organised and conducted 24-hour general strike. This demand, along with the other ideas put forward at the meeting was enthusiastically welcomed by the audience.

"The part that the working class in Strathclyde can play in the coming period is vital to the whole British situation." That message must now be taken back to the workplaces, the factories, the YS and CLP meetings and the trade unions. It must be translated into a living reality through activity in support of bringing down the Tories and for the return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

# LEFT and RIGHT

● Prospective delegates to October's Labour Party conference should be warned about the chairman, Baroness Lena Jeger, who presided over the Special Conference at Wembley with a kind of studied incompetence. "Being absolutely anonymous," she called "You over there" as the first speaker. "Ooh," she exclaimed, "it's David Ennals [Minister of Health in the last Labour government]." Next came the "good-looking plumpish gent in the grey suit"...who just happened to be Joe Gormley of the NUM. But it's true she didn't recognise everyone. When 'Militant' supporter Ray Apps from Brighton Kempton gave his name and organisation, she audibly groaned "Oh God..." Quite a few well-known left-wingers waved their arms in the air all day and were disappointed by the Baroness.

● How would you react if management demanded that you refrain from industrial action until they give the word that they're ready to take you on? That's what German chancellor and Social Democratic Party leader Helmut Schmidt is 'offering' the Russian leaders as a recipe for disarmament.

"He reiterated his recent suggestion that both sides—which, in effect, means the Soviet Union—refrain from deploying further medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe," 'The Times' reports, "in the three years or more needed before NATO is in a position to station its new Pershing 2 Cruise missiles." [10/6/80].

For all their pious phrases about detente, these statesmen, claiming to represent the Russian and German working classes, are absorbed in their big-power manoeuvrings. They have no intention of attempting to curb the proliferation of weaponry.

● The trade union movement has gained itself a new ornament. The newly-formed Clearing Bank Union will have a Mr Jack Britz as its leader. Mr Britz, in an act of supreme sacrifice for the labour movement, is giving up his present job as personnel director of the Bowthorpe Group to become general secretary of the CBU. His salary? Just a mere £18,000 a year. But while young office workers on low pay and long hours may be angry about this well-heeled character switching jobs, Mr Britz defends his salary: he told the 'Telegraph' [10 June] "It is almost as if union leaders are expected to suffer for working for their members."

If you can hear a low growling beneath your feet it is probably the martyrs of our movement turning, no somersaulting, in their graves at the blatant careerist whinings of this so called 'trade unionist'.

● The ruling class must be writhing in their satin covered chairs—trade unions are now established in Buckingham Palace and other royal abodes, at the headquarters of the Freemasons, and the minions at the exclusive Simpsons restaurant in Piccadilly are enroled—dash it, even the Conservative Central Office is unionised! And now comes the latest blow.

Workers at Fortnums, the 'Queen's grocers' are calling in ACAS to help them set up a branch of ASTMS. and Mr David Jaggs, managing director of Fortnums, is quite upset about the nastiness of it all: "I hate the situation of 'them' and 'us' appearing," he said. No doubt it reminds him of the class society we live in, where the privileged elite squander, with sickening extravagance, the wealth produced by the mass of working people; but this 'reminder' will turn to fear in the minds of the ruling class when working people move to claim the wealth of society which is rightly theirs.

# TYRANNY AT THE MILL



hours is also forbidden (this obviously keeps the mind free to concentrate on pulling the levers and pushing the buttons). Even getting permission to go to the toilet requires major negotiations!

If this sounds like a description of a behind-the-times primary schools, then just to complete the picture, the management has its own peculiar system of rewards for "good workers"—they're presented with a little coloured flag to display on their machine!

Every month a list of names is displayed on the notice board. Beside the names is either a star, a circle or a blank space. Yes you've guessed—a star indicates that you've been a good worker, a circle shows that you've been about average, and if you've got a blank space beside your name...well, you'd better pull up your socks! (In primary school we used to get awarded gold and silver stars for good work...)

There's also, however, a more serious side to the story. Much of the machinery in the factory is a danger to the girls operating it—some is unguarded which means the machinists have to continually avoid getting their fingers chopped off.

The management's answer to complaints about the antiquated machinery is from time to time to switch the machines from one flat to another. It's certainly cheaper than buying new machinery, but it doesn't do much to improve safety, or for that matter productivity.

Many textiles workers face similar and even worse conditions—in our factory the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers is recognised by management. However I would like, through the pages of 'Militant' to ask the advice of experienced trade unionists on how to go about raising the level of trade union organisation and consciousness.

This is a major problem that I and other shop stewards in the industry face when it comes to attempting to fight for improved working conditions. Any guidance would be welcome.

## 'Textile workers are treated like school children'

says Anne Petrie, NUT&GW shop steward, Glasgow

Charles Dickens, describing the conditions of factory life in the 18th century, could easily have been describing many textiles factories today.

Recent reports in 'Militant' concerning the struggle of Klein Brothers workers in Salford for trade union recognition highlighted the problems facing workers in the

clothing and textile industry.

Even in factories, like the one I work in, where the union does exist, conditions are appalling by any standards. In my own factory,

typical of many hundreds throughout Britain, a 200-strong, mainly female workforce work day in, day out under dreadful conditions for a poverty-level wage of £49, before tax, for a 40-hour week.

In my factory, to add insult to injury, we have to put up with a mass of petty rules and regulations. Drinking soft drinks is forbidden. So is eating sweets.

Textiles workers are not only brutally exploited economically; we are subject to petty tyranny throughout our working hours.

Talking during working

## ROYAL REDUNDANCY

On Friday 6th June Stafford was visited by the Queen. At the station, other passengers were bundled out of the side door of the station—they couldn't possibly be allowed to use the same door as her majesty.

Outside the front door there was a brass band and a few cubs and scouts to greet her, along with the Mayor.

In preparation, council workers had been out all week

prior to the visit, sweeping up the roads and putting coloured bunting along the route. All workers assigned to do this work were paid double time. On the actual day several schools were closed for an hour, council workers were given half an hour off with pay and some factory workers along the route also had time off with pay.

Three weeks ago, when the TUC 'day of action' was

called, teachers were told not to go on strike because children would suffer in their education! But it's OK to have time off to wave flags about. It seems a bit hypocritical to me.

Like British industry, the Queen's services in opening schools, roads, and hospitals are no longer required—they aren't being built. So perhaps we should make her redundant, like they're making us

redundant up and down the country.

The Queen is a Tory weapon, she still has the right of veto if she doesn't agree with the policies of the party in power. So let's bring down the Tories, abolish the monarchy and the House of Lords and march forward to socialism in the 1980s.

By Nigel Shaw  
(Stafford & Stone LPYS)

# WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO OUR SCHOOLS?

By a 'Militant' teacher

**I teach in a comprehensive school in a very large overspill council estate near the south coast, where local and county councils are Tory-dominated.**

**In my school at the time of the general election we had a mock election. Some kids voted Tory and the reasons they gave were most revealing.**

One 14-year-old boy explained that the Labour government had made a mess, so now the Tories should be given a chance to make a mess. A 12-year-old girl said that the Tories were going to send them all to grammar schools.

The boy has now learnt just what a mess the Tories can make and the girl has learnt what Tory policy is on educating workers' children.

The first blow was school meals. These have gradually increased in price while the number taking them has fallen dramatically. At the beginning of this term, a new system was introduced in secondary schools.

Children will pay cash for snack-style meals and only children whose parents are receiving Family Income Supplement or supplementary benefit will get free meals — to the value of 50p. This is a real cut in standards.

50p will buy soup, a roll, a cup of coffee and a cold sweet, or two fish fingers, chips and beans with a portion of ketchup and a cup of coffee. A small portion of meat costs 30p, meat pie costs 35p.

The result of this is fewer

kids having meals. Kitchen staff and dining room assistants have in consequence been, and will continue to be, sacked. The county are so mean that they will not allow the kitchen staff tray-wiping time, so the kids must juggle with two plates and a hot plastic cup of coffee.

Many children now bring sandwiches or, just as likely, a bag of crisps and a Kit Kat. In their generosity the Tory government have made it a requirement that schools must provide (free) facilities for children to eat their sandwiches.

However, they do not allow dining room assistants to supervise the children eating there—hence the rumours that teachers will be sold their next pay settlement in return for doing dinner duties as part of their contracts. (How many other public servants work through their lunch hour?)

I found two girls in the school toilets one lunchtime eating hot-dogs. They explained that this was their lunch and they were eating in the toilets because all their mates in the classroom kept asking for a bite of their hot-dogs!

In the classroom things go from bad to worse. No repairs are done unless there is a risk to health and safety. Classroom doors with broken glass just have the glass knocked out and stay unglazed.

Any broken external windows are boarded up. Since

hardboard is as dear as glass, I assume the theory is that the nasty little vandals at the school would break the windows as fast as they were repaired.

It is lucky the kids are not compulsive window-smashers and that there are only a few, usually accidental, breakages. Otherwise we would all be in semi-darkness with unopenable windows!

The general condition of the building is deteriorating as redecorating is not being done by the county authorities. Minor flaws such as holes in plasterboard are unrepaired, and soon become major flaws as they grow into big holes. The kids are also naturally more likely to damage what is already part broken.

I teach science—supposedly what industry wants. But there is literally only one class set of each book at best and one book between three at worst. This means time wasted each lesson handing books out, collecting in and checking each book for damage.

The books are damaged more quickly as each book is used more often than if each child had a personal copy, and of course kids look after personal loan copies better than an already tatty book issued for just one lesson.

This book shortage also means that you can't let children take books to do home work or for revision—and that applies to pupils taking public exams too.

Scientific equipment is in short supply and the kids often have to work in groups of five or six when, educationally, it would be far better for them to work in pairs. The only time a child ever does a practical experiment alone is in a practical exam.

The whole state of affairs is shown clearly by the fact that for each secondary school

child about £13 a year is spent to buy books and equipment.

In fact, at my school there are 1,020 pupils and last year the main allowance was £10,000 with a special allowance supplement of £3,000. This year, despite inflation, the main allowance was £10,700 and the special allowance was £1,500. We have not had any reduction in the number of children attending the school.

Primary school children get an allowance of about £7 for each child for a year. This works out at 4p a school day to provide for everything from musical instruments and science equipment to chalk and paper.

The kids at my school think they know why things have got so bad—well, they call me Maggie Thatcher when I haven't got a pen to lend out! They might just be on the right track!

It's not just in school that Thatcher has hit the kids. In December 1978 they had a good Christmas. I can remember them excitedly telling me of the bikes, the radios, the tape records and other nice presents.

For Christmas 1979 I was grudgingly told when I asked that they were having new school shoes, a school games kit or a new coat. And some didn't even get that.

I cannot take the children on one side and explain the failings of the capitalist system to them. I'd lose my job. All public employees in this county have been threatened with disciplinary proceedings, or even the sack, if they dare to speak out as a public servant against the policy of their public masters, in my case, the education authority.

The kids are innocent and already embittered victims of capitalist cruelty. They know that many of them are likely to go straight from school to



the dole queue. They are beginning to believe that education is a waste of time because that is the very clear message coming across to them as Thatcher smashes up the educational system.

This, of course, adds to the increasing difficulty of my job. As the kids become more alienated they spend their resentment on the nearest representative of authority—Me! You can't imagine how it hurts to have a child throw her father's unemployment in my face when I tick her off because she hasn't brought a biro.

You can't imagine how much it galls to have the kids blame me for the whole vile state of things in general and I have to hold my tongue.

I make an appeal to LPYS

school students: talk to your mates, get them to go to YS meetings so they can begin to understand the reasons behind what's happening to them and they can discover how they can fight back constructively.

Finally I'd like to say "thanks" to all 'Militant' supporters because if I did now know that you are all working to bring about a change for the better I would be sunk into absolute despair as the teaching job gets harder and education gives way to child-minding.

Who needs educated workers when you've got silicon chips? Maggie doesn't. She'd be happy if we went back to 18th century illiteracy—that way no one would be able to read 'Militant'!

## Back to the 19th century

The Tories have their own "solutions" to the problems of lack of facilities in education. Some schools ask for "donations"; parents are increasingly asked to help in fund-raising and Warwickshire education committee want groups of parents to pay some teachers' salaries.

At a Tory conference in Winchester, the Education Secretary, Mark Carlisle, said he saw "nothing wrong at all in parents making voluntary contributions" to their children's schooling as the "public purse was not limitless."

Nothing compulsory of course! That would be against the Education Act of 1944. But the 'Sunday Times' [8 June] mentioned a school in Leicestershire where the parents of fourth year children paid out £25 this year on textbooks, materials for woodwork and for good quality paintbrushes.

The purchase of the paintbrushes was not compulsory but failure to buy made the children dependent on using an inferior paintbrush which reduces the chances of passing an examination.

After all, if these groups buy the textbooks, they may just conceivably want a say in what textbooks are purchased!

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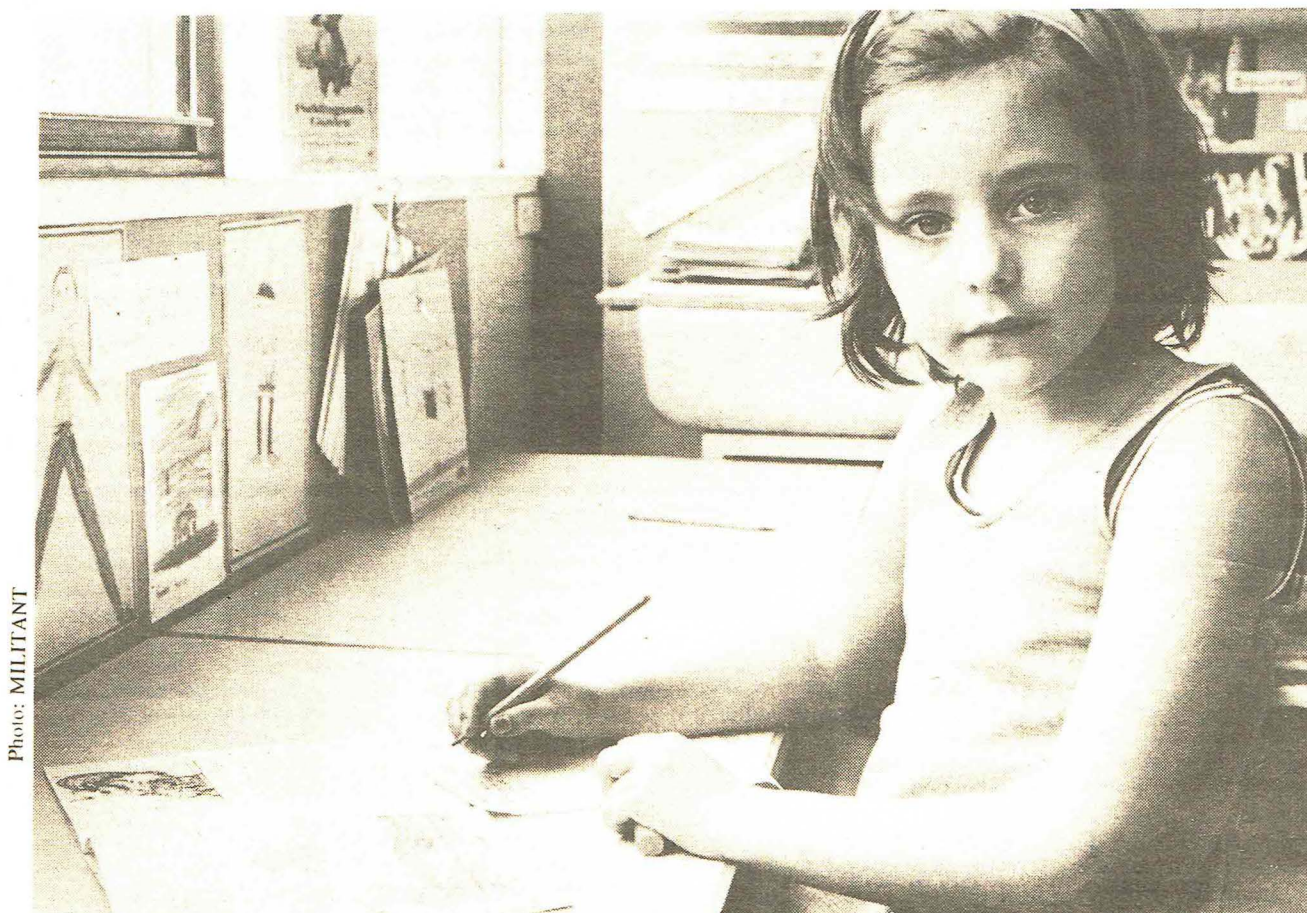


Photo: MILITANT

A free education service allows working class children some hope of an education. What will be left if the Tories have their way?

# Northern Ireland- DAILY ORDEAL FOR WORKING PEOPLE

By Bob  
Wade

**'Militant' warned, when the first British troops went into Northern Ireland over a decade ago, that their primary role would not be to protect Catholic workers but to defend the interests of British capitalism.**

The politicians, backed up by the Tory press, claimed the army would be defending the Catholics from rampaging gangs of loyalist bigots: yet the army have since systematically carried out repressive measures against the working people as a whole.

Though horrendous enough, the H-blocks, SAS assassinations and beatings by the army are not the only aspects of repression. Working people face harassment and fear everyday.

A member of the Belfast Labour and Trade Union group described a house raid: "Our house was the first to be raided on our estate—the troops came at 4am and wrecked the house.

"They came into my room where I slept with three of my sisters. We were terrified. They stood there with their blacked-up faces just staring at us—we weren't allowed to get out of bed.

"When they left, my mother and sister literally had to sit on me to stop me shaking so much from fear. The raids became so frequent you knew when they would happen. We used to wake up at 4am, get dressed and wait for them to come."

The army have now scaled down the number of house

raids, but they have been able to collect a large amount of information on every family, street and area in towns such as Derry and Belfast.

Billy Lynn from Belfast said, "When your house was raided they took down details such as the colour of your curtains. Now, when they stop you in the street for a spot check and you give them your name and address, they ask things like 'what's the colour of your settee?'.  
"They say it's so people can't give someone else's name and address—but it's nerve-racking if you happen to have changed curtains recently. You don't know whether the Army know this yet, and if you give the wrong answer, you're dragged off as a suspect."

Billy Gibson, of the Belfast LTUG, described the city centre, which has been completely cordoned off by steel railings and army/RUC checkpoints and gun positions; "It's like being in a zoo—I hate it. Everyone is searched going in and out. The army might decide it's your turn for a thorough check—they usually do this to every fourth or fifth bloke.

"They give you a thorough search, check your name and address, and push you for information; just little details about where you live, what you do, who you know, all so it can go on their computer for more information.  
"The other day a soldier pointed at me and said, "You

can get shot for wearing that." I didn't know whether he meant my combat jacket or my Trotsky Centenary badge, but I just kept quiet."

Military presence in Northern Ireland makes workers' everyday lives a series of irritating and frightening procedures. The army may cordon off an area when looking for a bomb or suddenly decide you must be given a thorough search.

This may make you late for your last bus or train—but you would be foolish to try and run to catch it. Some nervous squaddie with an itchy finger may wonder why you're running.

Motoring is no simple task either. You must be careful not to drive near a RUC Land Rover or army 'pig' (armoured car) as they are often stoned by youngsters, and your car or yourself may be hit. The army often put down road-ramps near their positions, for 'security' reasons. But at night these are not easily visible, and can do serious damage to your car, or even cause an accident.

And, at all times you must keep a sharp look out for a dark figure waving a little red light—a soldier is flagging you down for a spot-check. On March 31, a 15 year old Belfast youth was shot dead after the car he was in, believed to be stolen, failed to stop at an army checkpoint. In Northern Ireland, failing to comply with this military dictat can mean death.

Information on all political groups is collected by the Army, and they have learnt to collect it in a surreptitious manner. Members of the Belfast LTUG have had their names taken, especially since the recent growth in support for the group after their successful 'Youth for Socialism' campaign.

A 'safe' pub the group use after their weekly meetings was visited by the army on the pretext of a bomb-search. The bar is only used by print workers and the LTUG, and



Photo: MILITANT

Photo: Belfast city centre. Shoppers queue until the "all clear" after a bomb scare in a department store. Meanwhile the state brings in its forces.

customers are only allowed into the pub if recognised by the owner—the door is always locked.

A member of LTUG explained, "The chances of someone placing a bomb in there are pretty remote, and the army's search was pretty half-hearted. Of course, just as they were about to leave they asked a couple of us our names and so on. They have done exactly the same a couple of times since."

Added to all these examples of every day harassment are the rumours and tales of horrendous violence, not only from the army but the sectarian as well; the rubber bullets fitted with razor blades or nails; the knee-cappings with hand drills; 12 year old Catholic children being lifted after dark by the army and dumped in the Protestant stronghold of the Shankill Road; the army shootings and beatings.

This, alongside the misery of poverty-level wages, mass unemployment and intolerable housing conditions, make Northern Ireland a

horrendous monument to British capitalism.

As 'Militant' has always demanded, the army must be withdrawn from the six counties. But coupled to this demand is the need for the labour movement to organise independently for its own defence and security, and to fight for the socialist programme that will eradicate the social conditions which breed sectarianism.

The call by 'Militant' supporters for a 'trade union defence force' is a realistic and essential demand. Workers must rely on their own traditional non-sectarian organisations for their security and protection—they have seen that this can not be expected from the army, and certainly not from the sectarian paramilitaries.

The apologists for big business have claimed that the Army has been 'keeping the two sides apart'. No doubt the intervention of the Army prevented a further escalation of the sectarian civil war in the six counties during the seventies—but this was not

out of any concern for the welfare of the Catholics and Protestants.

It was ultimately in order to maintain and protect the capitalist system, which would have been totally disrupted by a full scale sectarian civil war; a war which could have spilt over into the mainland.

The British Army will never be dislodged by the paramilitaries—their futile bombings and shootings are mere wasp stings on the British capitalist state.

More importantly for the labour movement, as Militant has consistently explained, the policy of individual terrorism only gives the ruling class an excuse to justify yet more repressive measures, which produce yet more obstacles in the way of the organisations of the working class when they try to organise.

Only a united working class, united around socialist demands can force out this repressive regime, ending the horrors of the daily violence and sweeping away the rampant poverty of Northern Ireland.

## WORKERS NOTEBOOK

● Not only are wages in Northern Ireland lower than in the rest of Britain, but the cost of living also tends to be higher. For example, electricity costs to domestic consumers went up by 96% between 1975 and 1978 in Northern Ireland [though industrial consumers only saw their charges go up by 26%].

In 1978 the price per unit was 3.268p compared with

2.77p in England and Wales and 2.382p in Scotland. This was partly due to government failure to subsidise electricity board deficits. In the financial year 1978-79 legal action was taken against 1,259 consumers and 2,851 were disconnected, a big increase on previous figures.

● After three years of discussion, the Health and Safety Executive's working party on noise and industrial deafness has broken up. The representatives of the CBI rejected any reduction in the current general noise level in industry, which is at present 90 decibels. The TUC have been pressing for a level of 84 decibels, the present legal level in most European

countries.

As 'Militant' showed [12 October 1979], the employers, through the CBI, had threatened a major press campaign to prevent the implementation of this basic health safeguard.

The TUC have pointed out that at least two million workers are subjected to more than 84 decibels constantly through a day—and even capitalist sources

admit that about a million workers experienced 'excessive' noise at work daily.

In short doses, many workers suffer even higher noise levels. Any given machine can emit up to 135 decibels, whereas the maximum in the USA is 115. As every ten decibels doubles the intensity of noise, this means the maximum noise level is four times as high as in America.

Compensation for industrial deafness and hearing loss is niggardly, even though industrial deafness is now treated as an industrial injury. The best award was £8,500 last year for total deafness.

# FIGHTING THE CU

## A GREAT EXAMPLE

Once again, as the result of capitalist crisis and the Tories' policies, the working class is threatened with mass unemployment and mass poverty on the scale of the inter-war period of recession and slump.

As Thatcher's cuts really begin to bite, Labour councillors all over the country are faced with a tremendous battle to maintain vital services built up through years of effort by the labour movement. Simply to try to raise the rates to avoid cuts would just be hitting workers' living standards from another direction.

The drastic cut in the rate support grant and more and more Tory directives to Labour councils aimed at preventing them from protecting workers' interests calls for an all-out fight against the Tory government.

With the prospect of enormous battles facing Labour groups, the fight of Poplar Labour council in the 1920s to resist the implementation of cuts imposed by a Tory government takes on a new relevance. The fighting class spirit demonstrated by the Poplar labour movement at that time is a magnificent example which should be emulated by Labour groups today.

Earlier, 'Militant' [issue 494, 14 March 1980] published a review of the recent book by Noreen Branson, 'Poplarism' [Lawrence and Wishart, £7.50] which dealt with Poplar's first great battle, when the Labour councillors went to jail in a successful attempt to resist the vicious driving down of the level of maintenance to the unemployed, the poor and the sick.

In a second article, a NALGO member recounts the further struggles of the Poplar labour movement which are also described in Noreen Branson's book.

The historic contemporary photographs of the Poplar struggles are from the Tower Hamlets Local History Collection, and are reproduced here by courtesy of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Amenities Committee.



Above: Labour councillors address a street meeting in Poplar; Right: Victory rally in Victoria park, 1921.

## Poplar— When Labour mobilised the workers —

# Tories were forced to retreat

**Not content with their victory over the government on the rates issue—when the councillors were sent to prison—Poplar Council fought two more major battles on behalf of the people of the borough.**

**Again, there are many lessons to be learned for today, besides the fine example that was set to the labour movement.**

The first of these battles concerned the rates of relief for the unemployed. As the recession of 1921/2 worsened so the period of time out of work lengthened. Benefit was soon exhausted so that the unemployed had to turn to the so-called Boards of Guardians for assistance. Most Boards—though not that in Poplar—acted on the assumptions of the 1834 Poor Law that "in no circumstances should the situation of a person on relief be as good as that of the lowest paid labourer." This meant poverty of the worst kind.

Another proviso was that before receiving relief the unemployed had to spend time on a "labour test", usually breaking stones, for roughly half the prevailing rate of

wages. The alternative was to go to the workhouse—a fate all workers dreaded.

With increasing numbers out of work, however, the labour test became impossible to administer and Poplar was among the first to abandon it. They became noted for their payments of "outdoor relief" which were more generous than any in London. In the words of one councillor, they "refused to treat poverty as a crime."

Finally, Sir Alfred Mond, head of ICI and the representative par excellence of big business, then Minister of Health, was compelled to send a circular to all Boards of Guardians telling them that outdoor relief could be given without a labour test—an act which Edgar Lansbury claimed as another victory for Poplar.

However, major battles were to be fought over the issue of what relief should be paid. Mond insisted

that relief should always be below the standard labourer's wage. To make matters worse he introduced the family means test so that the whole of the earnings of a family could be taken into account in assessing relief. If the oldest boy or girl in the family worked, then the whole of their earnings would count as "family income" in assessing relief for parents and other children. Any means test—which is by its very nature an invasion of privacy—is unpleasant; but the family means test was far worse as it meant families sharing in the poverty of the individual.

Poplar Guardians did not accept the principle of the household means test, though they did operate it in a very much modified form. At the instigation of Charles Sumner, the mayor, Poplar adopted the highest scales of relief in the country: £2 for a man and wife and 6 shillings (30p) for each child, with a rent allowance.

Although the scale had to be abandoned later, the council made known their demands that there should be "work or full maintenance for the unemployed." Since unemployment was the fault of capitalists, not the unemployed, it was wrong to make the unemployed suffer for what was not their fault. To criticisms that high rates of relief discouraged the unemployed

from seeking work, Edgar Lansbury answered "so much the better for wages", though he also produced evidence to show that the Poplar scales did not discourage anyone from seeking work.

**"Guilty and proud of it!"**

Once again Herbert Morrison, leader of the London County Council Labour group, criticised Poplar. Later deputy leader of the Labour Party under Attlee, Morrison was the forerunner of the present-day right-wingers like David Owen, Denis Healey and William Rodgers, who want to confine the struggle against the Tories to leisurely parliamentary opposition, and deprecate mass action to defeat Tory attacks.

Morrison held that scales of relief should be those "practical in existing circumstances", and made it clear that he thought Poplar's actions would damage Labour's election prospects by scaring off "moderate" opinion. Yet in the 1922 elections for Boards of Guardians, Labour representation increased in Poplar—with

the highest turnout in London, despite a campaign by the gutter press and Labour losses throughout the rest of London.

To see Poplar once again flouting government wishes was more than Mond could stand. He sent H I Cooper of the Bolton Board of Guardians, an advocate of the tightest economy in Poor Law affairs, to "investigate" Poplar.

Cooper did not contact any of the Guardians, but after looking at the books he accused them of "extravagance" in running the workhouse and excessive payments to the unemployed. Typical of his criticisms was that the Guardians had substituted butter for margarine in the workhouse diet!

Poplar replied with a booklet 'Guilty and Proud Of It', in which they stated their refusal "to treat poverty as a crime and paupers as criminals." (Copies of this booklet can be seen at the Tower Hamlets Central Library local history collection.) Through mass meetings they made their views known throughout East London.

Mond tried to squeeze Poplar financially by refusing sanction for a loan to tide them over until the payments from the Metropolitan Common Poor Law Fund were made later in the year. He also planned a law which would take over the Poor Law functions in



# BATTLES IN THE 1920's



Poplar, though this failed through lack of Parliamentary time.

Meanwhile, the councillors discussed possible courses of action—one being to hand to the *Guardians* the precepts due to the London County Council, the very action which had resulted in their jailing the previous year. After a meeting with the councillors Mond realised that they would not compromise, so he sent them an order restricting relief to the lower "Mond" scale. But he allowed a loan providing the order was strictly complied with.

Yet again, the councillors won the argument. They pointed out that the money was needed to support present expenditure and that if they ran out of money the result would be starvation—blamed on Sir Alfred Mond! Alternatively, they could pay precepts intended for other bodies directly to the *Guardians*. Either way, Mond could see no way round the problem.

Poplar celebrated this as a great victory. Charles Key told a mass meeting in Victoria Park that Poplar's fight was part of a national one. The conflict was really with the men behind Mond, who saw that if adequate relief was given to the unemployed "the capitalist would lose his greatest power—that of using the unemployed to reduce wages."

But Mond had no more problems with Poplar. The coalition government soon fell—and Labour won all the Poplar seats.

With two major victories over the government Poplar could have been allowed to rest on its laurels. But there was a third fight to come, in which the council was at least partly successful. The issue was that of council workers' wages.

The employers' organisations, the Poplar Municipal Alliance, consistently campaigned for economies in council spending. One of their targets was the wages paid to council workers—for Poplar had paid a minimum of £4 a week for both men and women since 1920. Yet with recession, general wage rates had fallen—and were to fall even lower in the depression.

In Poplar it was argued that the council should set a good example to trade unionists resisting wage cuts and keep the relatively high basic pay. Needless to say, they were opposed by Herbert Morrison, the great "pragmatist", who wanted council wages to rise and fall with wages outside. Morrison's view was shared by the District Auditor, who in one case surcharged the councillors £17,000 (later reduced to £5,000) for what he regarded as payment of excessive wages.

After discussion, the

council took the matter to appeal. The Divisional Court upheld the Auditor, but an appeal to the High Court resulted in victory for Poplar, though the grounds for the judgement were very shaky. On this occasion, other councils supported Poplar for they saw it as a fight against attempts to increase the power of the District Auditors. From being used as checks on corruption they were being used more and more to 'audit policy'. Under today's Thatcher government of course, Heseltine is trying to arm the government with a whole range of powers to block the efforts of Labour councils to fight the cuts, by giving the minister extraordinary powers to send in the Auditors or Commissioners.

The first, short-lived Labour government, which came to office in January 1924, regarded Poplar as something of an embarrassment. Ramsey MacDonald even said that "Poplar was misleading the spirit and policy of the socialist movement." Only John Wheatley, Minister of Health and one of the "Red Clydesiders", gave any support, but he was tied by Cabinet decisions. But when the Labour government collapsed in October 1924, even that help was no longer. The Tory government of 1925 was more determined to 'deal with' Poplar than any

of its predecessors.

The Law Lords finally found against Poplar on the wages issue. While Poplar could have defied the courts as it had done before, the tide was against them. Trade union leaders had accepted wage cuts too widely. The £4 minimum was now 40% above that paid by other local authorities. Under protest, Poplar offered to reconsider wages provided that the surcharge was cancelled. This offer was accepted by Neville Chamberlain, now the Minister of Health, so that some wage cuts came into effect, though these were less than the Municipal Alliance wanted.

## Reforms under attack

Poplar brought a new word to the English language—'Poplarism', originally defined in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* as "the policy of giving out relief on a generous or extravagant scale." But the battles of the twenties have done far more than that. Many of their ideas, denounced at the time, became almost respectable in the years to come.

Their attempts at a redistribution of wealth through the rates developed into the Metropolitan Common Poor Law fund.

More recently, rate support grants have done a great deal to equalise rates between councils and help the worse off. They campaigned for full maintenance for the unemployed and for adequate child allowances. In principle, these have been accepted—though in practice they have always lagged behind what they should be. Now, many of the basic reforms on which the "welfare state" rests—built up through the pressure of the labour movement in a period of economic upswing—are being wiped out by the Tories.

Poplar council pioneered equal pay for women—not accepted generally until fifty years later. They ensured a closed shop for trade unionists and did everything possible to help the cause of labour. Through meetings, discussion and participation, the councillors built up a large, enthusiastic and well-informed Labour Party.

Yet now, many of their achievements are under attack. The council which succeeded Poplar, Tower Hamlets, shows no signs of this socialist commitment in fighting cuts. Involvement of councillors is minimal and they rely on a well-paid "management" clique to run their affairs.

On the advice of this bunch the council has refused even to accept a union membership agree-

ment covering all staff. Nor has it shown any commitment to the cause of the low paid. Last year Tower Hamlets had the longest strike of council manual workers, as well as a lengthy strike of social workers, provoked by hostility from management and complete lack of interest from the council.

Far worse, however, are the Tories' attacks on government spending. The rate support grants to Inner London Boroughs have been cut drastically, and attempts are being made to bring so-called "overspending" under control. The surcharges and controls by District Auditors, originally introduced to deal with Poplar, remain and have become even more draconian.

Clay Cross councillors were bankrupted and disqualified for their fight against the Housing Finance Act. Other Labour authorities fighting cuts could come under attack in the same way.

Even the benefits to the unemployed, small as they are, will be increasingly under attack. Prentice's attacks on "scroungers" conceal the fact that benefits are not taken up, and the additional "snoopers" will make the socially deprived even more unwilling to claim their rights. More and more, the Tories wish to treat the unemployed as criminals. Those in the labour movement who scandalously echo Tory attacks on the unemployed and social security claimants would do well to remember the words of Edgar Lansbury: if benefits are high "so much the better for wages". Capitalists would love to see workers forced by poverty to take jobs at low wages.

Despite the setbacks that have been suffered, the example of Poplar council must remain an inspiration to the labour movement. Although they were opposed both by Tories and the Labour "moderates", Poplar confounded them both by its determination and success. As Labour councils all over Britain are confronted by Tory attacks on the working class there is still the example of "Poplarism" to show what can be done, given the will to fight.

But the temporary character of progressive reforms under capitalism, always threatened with the reappearance of economic crisis, underlines the need to connect local and partial battles to defend working class interests, with the struggle for a socialist society which would be fundamentally reorganised and planned to provide a better life for the great majority of the people.



SWEDEN

# Sweden — THE DREAM SHATTERS

For decades Sweden was portrayed as the model for all socialists to follow. Marxist theories of class struggle were out of date. They belonged to the nineteenth century.

Sweden was the model for the modern socialist now.

There, society was gradually moving forward, with a welfare system providing benefits flowing from a mixed capitalist economy, which had government participation but not control or ownership.

Marxists argued that the fundamentals of class society remained, and that as capitalism moved back into recession and out of the post-war economic boom, class antagonism and battles would affect all societies, including Sweden.

And last month which saw the biggest class battle in Swedish labour history proved who was right. Nearly one million blue and white collar workers took on the bosses and the government and defeated them.

This struggle marked the end of the 'Swedish model' and has put an end to the era of 'social peace'. The 'great battle' marks a turning-point in the development of the Swedish class struggle.

Throughout the country workers mobilised. There was a very great will to fight on the part of the workers. The strike meetings, in spite of the poor preparation, were well attended.

The decisive action of the workers forced the employers' association, the SAF, and the capitalist government, to give in. The SAF, which had first offered a wage increase of 0% was forced to settle for 7%.

The SAF and its government had had the ambition this year of setting in motion the first serious attack on the workers and their organisations. The capitalist class wanted to inflict a defeat on the trade unions in order to pave the way for still harder attacks in the future.

**By Per Olssen**

(Editor,  
Swedish Marxist paper,  
'Offensiv')

Confronted by the enormous strength which the Swedish trade unions possess—with some 80-85% of the workforce unionised—the employers and the capitalist government saw their plans shipwrecked without trace. The Swedish bourgeoisie was quickly reminded of the power and strength of the working class, once roused into action.

The most serious capitalist newspaper "Dagens Nyheter" wrote in an editorial after the strike "What have the labour organisations achieved, except demonstrate their power to force the government and the SAF to their knees?... The government's policies have been more or less reduced to ashes."

This editorial shows to some extent how the bourgeoisie's self-confidence has taken a knock after they were forced to give in. The self-confidence of the working class, on the contrary, has been strengthened.

The new generation of workers, who for the first time in their lives have participated actively in the class struggle have learned many lessons from the experience. The morale among the pickets was high. "We will not give in." That was the general mood.

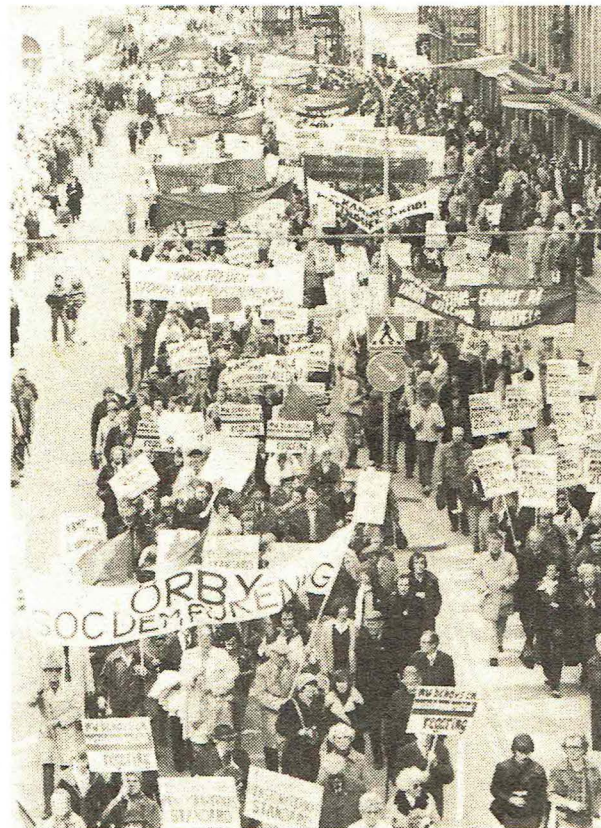
More and more workers are becoming conscious of the power and strength which they possess when they engage in collective and united action. The success of the workers in struggle prevented the capitalist government from carrying out its plans for a wage-freeze and a government incomes policy.

That is why the strike should be seen as a victory. The result of strike cannot only be measured in economic terms, but it is at least equally important that the least conscious workers were drawn into the class struggle. The fact is that the morale of the workers improved.

After the strike, there was no



Part of the May Day meeting in Stockholm last month



Workers' demonstration on May Day, this year

weakening and splits in the ranks, as was the case after the great strike of 1909 in Sweden. The big strikes of 1909 then led to the loss of thousands of members by the trade unions.

Reports after the recently concluded strike and lockout show the exact opposite. The metal workers' union alone experienced a growth of 3,600 new members in the course of the conflict.

The high degree of organisation among the blue-collar workers is a powerful weapon in the great class struggles which await us in the 1980s in Sweden. In the course of the struggle, the workers displayed an impressive loyalty and discipline. Only in a handful of small workshops were attempts made to break the strike.

The management and directors who tried to beat the overtime ban or used scab-labour drew the bitter conclusion that they were helpless once the trade unions took counter-measures. The bosses' position was so weak that at times the pickets felt that their presence was superfluous!

It is a fact that the capitalist press which strove with might and main to find

workers who were against the trade unions' actions could hardly get hold of a single disloyal worker. If the trade union branches had no experience in conducting a strike (for many unions in the public sector this was the first time in history that they were on strike), the capitalists' ineptitude was shown up in a still greater measure by its stupid and provocative behaviour.

As early as March, the SAF was demanding a wage freeze combined with the demand for a slashing of social services. At the same time big rises in share prices were reported on the stock exchange and companies were marking up huge increases in profits. Such an "offer", in a situation where the workers had seen their living standards drop for three years was a slap in the face.

The effect of this was to strengthen the fighting spirit and desire for revenge on the factory floor. When the SAF gave notice of their lock-out, the will to struggle grew even stronger.

Nevertheless, the employers persisted in their provocative stance which was shown not least by their stupidity in beginning their lockout on the

second of May—one day after the workers' day, first of May.

The growing fighting spirit which was gathering on the shop-floor forced the TU leaders, who were accustomed to compromises and gentlemen's agreements with the capitalist class, to fight against the employers. They had to try to win back some of the prestige they had lost.

To some extent, the trade union leaders have succeeded in doing this, but only for a temporary and limited period of time. The leaders of the labour movement today are not prepared to point out a socialist policy for an end to the crisis.

They continue to harbour illusions in the possibility of changing society "bit by bit." They are therefore incapable of giving a correct leadership in the coming struggles.

During the 1950s and 1960s reformist policies rode on the crest of the post-war boom and the increase in world-trade. Few countries are so dependent upon world markets as Sweden. During these two decades, capitalism could afford to give reforms and higher real wages at the same time as the capitalists were guaranteed fat profits.

Under the pressure of the capitalist boom class collaboration developed with the framework of the so-called "Swedish model" as the ideal of the labour movement. The class struggle was declared to be outmoded.

Now the situation has changed completely. The Swedish economy has suffered a serious stagnation. Economic growth in the 1970s was halved in comparison with the 1960s.

In the last years of the 1970s, industrial investment underwent a catastrophic decline. The disastrous position of Swedish capitalism has determined the employers' menacing attack upon the trade union movement.

The enormous strength possessed by the workers has proved capable of preventing the more militant wing of the capitalist class from carrying out a similar policy to that of Thatcher in Britain. The bourgeoisie is openly divided over its future policies.

The government—in contradiction to its own programme and despite loud protests of the SAF—has nat-

ionalised whole sectors of the economy and steeply increased the budget deficit. The deficit in government spending now stands at 55 billion kroner, 11% of the gross national product, one of the highest figures in the world!

Through their position in society, the workers hold the bourgeois government in an iron grip. The capitalist class is conscious of the fact that they cannot continue to increase the deficit, because that would cause inflation to rocket.

On the other hand, they are aware that a switch towards the policy of monetarism would lead directly to an open confrontation with the working class. The recent struggle showed them the red light.

The real solution to the problems which face the workers is the socialist transformation of society. The Swedish model is dead. There is no way back to the golden age of the 1950s and 1960s.

## A new epoch opens

Under conditions of capitalist crisis, reformism inevitably degenerates into "reformism without reforms." If the Swedish labour leaders shy away from the task of mobilising the workers behind a socialist programme, the next (Social Democratic) government will be forced instead to carry out the dirty work which the capitalist class today does not dare to do.

The crisis of capitalism leads every government which does not choose to attack the monopolies into a policy based upon reduced living standards and government incomes policy.

The Swedish workers' movement is so strong that if its membership were mobilised for socialism, there would be no force on earth capable of stopping it. The "great battle" showed that the workers are ready to fight. The "great battle" marked the beginning of a new epoch, an epoch of harsh class struggle and profound crisis even in the Scandinavian countries.

BRAZIL

PORTUGAL

MIDDLE EAST

# NO WAY OUT FOR BRAZILIAN

By Phil Frampton

'Tomorrow, when you clock in to your factory, you must leave all you love at the gate.' These were the bitter words of a metalworkers' leader announcing the end of their six week strike which paralysed Brazil's car factories.

Though the 300,000 workers involved failed to win most of the concessions they had demanded, and the struggle ended in mass dismissals, their action has served to further isolate the dictatorship. After 16 years in power the cracks are appearing.

Whilst Brazil still has fascist inspired labour laws and the only officially recognised unions are the state controlled 'pelegos' the employing class were forced to negotiate with the real leaders of the metal workers. The strike had such popular support that over 150 tons of food was collected and distributed to the strikers' families.

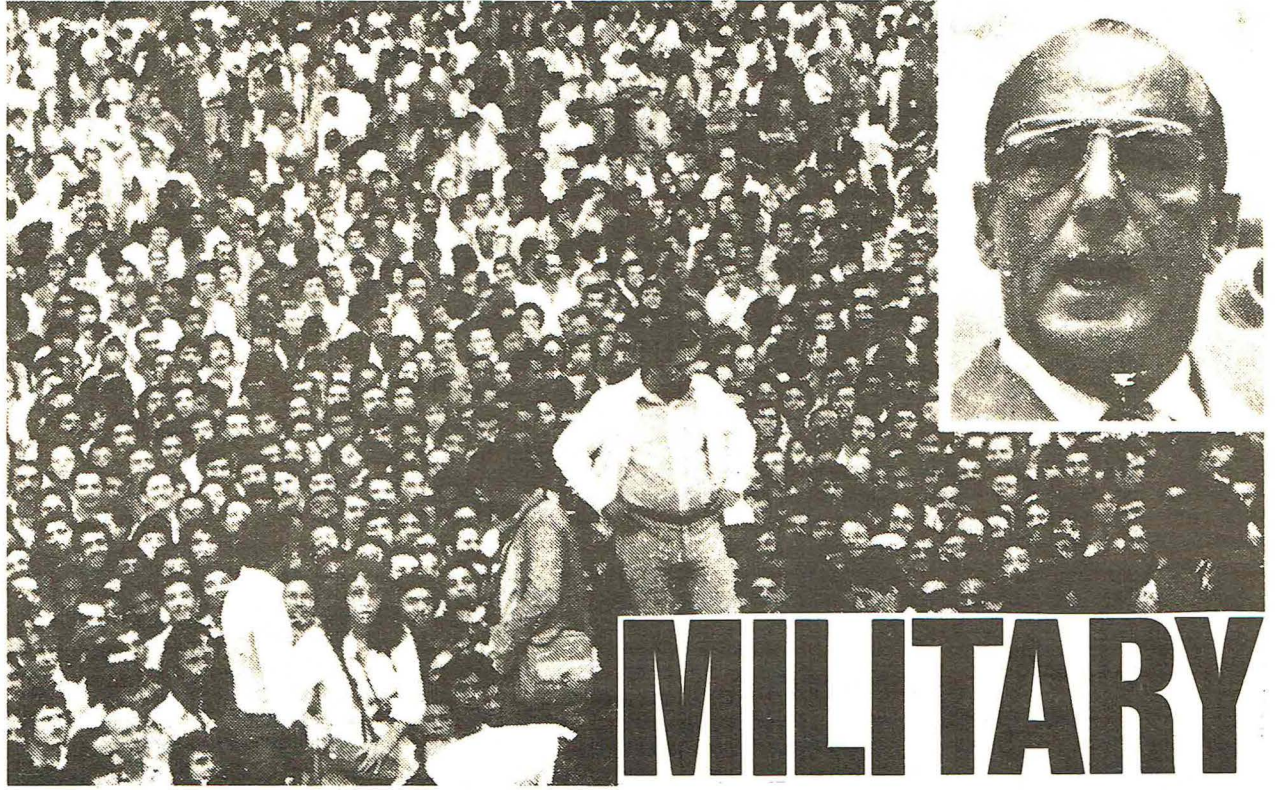
The Catholic church played a leading role in collecting food and money for the strike and giving the metalworkers meeting places and offices. Even the newly formed 'banker's party' was forced to denounce the government.

When the metalworkers leaders were imprisoned the government originally denied responsibility so scared were they of enraging the population. The military withdrew from the streets when 200,000 workers took part in a May-day demonstration.

Marxists have pointed out that when the working class takes bold and decisive action all the other oppressed sections of society are drawn in their wake. In Brazil's biggest city, Rio de Janeiro, tensions rose to the extent that the regimes' henchmen the Military Police surrounded the governor's palace to win their wage claim.

Half a million peasants, farmers and rural workers demonstrated and forced the government to abandon the announced increases in taxes on soya beans.

What was lacking was a mass workers party, based on a clear socialist programme, to unite the different sections of the population in a struggle to overthrow the regime. The metal workers leader, Luis da



Metalworkers on strike

Inset: President Figueredo

Silva, who also heads the fast-growing Workers Party was not willing to conduct such a political battle. But the class polarisation within society continues.

President General Figueredo remains in power but his own party of stooges ironically named the Social Democratic party is disintegrating in confusion as to how the growing militancy and demands of the workers can be met when the economy is in

crisis. Figueredo has cancelled the council elections promised for November because he was scared his party would be trounced.

The government swings from reform to repression and back. They try reform to try to appease the workers and repression because they know that reforms cannot work indefinitely.

In Militant (25/1/80) we pointed to the economic lunacy of the regimes' att-

empt to salvage Brazilian capitalism by turning from disastrous monetarist policies to the equally disastrous 'Keynsian' policies of budget deficits to fund an export drive. Now, Brazil is recording its biggest ever balance of payments deficit and prices are rising at 100% a year.

Whilst European manufacturers are calling for protection against Brazilian 'unfair' competition, international finance is rapidly losing

confidence in the regime. It has charged extra high interest rates for money loaned to prop up the economy.

If international big business which controls 75% of the Brazilian economy has no confidence in the generals' rule, then Figueredo's days are numbered. And the metalworkers strike has shown that the workers are now prepared to risk life and limb to end their squalid exploitation.

## Portuguese workers take to the streets

By a Portuguese YS member

In the last week there hasn't been one day free of strikes. As the situation in Portugal becomes increasingly polarised, workers have moved into action. In Lisbon they marched against the government's use of the media for pro-capitalist propaganda.

Workers from the chemical, metal, graphics, telephones and post office have taken industrial action. On 22 May on S Marie, an island in the Azores, a general strike stopped all voyages between the islands.

Workers' demands and actions have gone beyond their leaders' wishes. Reluctantly sometimes, the leaders have been dragged along. On the Lisbon demonstration for the first time in a long while the Socialist Party (SP) leadership participated in a Communist-led union demonstration.

The victories and battles that workers have been engaged in are a response to the economic attacks by the capitalist government. The 1980 budget continues these attacks. Inflation is expected to rise a further 2% to 24%, and unemployment will also soar.

Unfortunately the workers' resistance to the effect of capitalist policies has not been matched by their leaders. The SP leadership is not prepared to fight on a clear socialist programme combining agrarian reform with the take-over and running by the working class of major industries.

Instead the leadership wants to form an alliance for this autumn's elections with a number of small capitalist parties, and groups who have left the SP. The leadership fails to understand that last December's electoral defeat was a result of following capitalist policies whilst in government. The proposed electoral alliance will lead to further concessions to capitalist solutions.

Only a bold socialist approach can achieve results. And the fight for this programme will take place within the SP and Communist Party, not on the fringes.

Inside the SP, Marxists have a clear position: no to alliances with capitalist parties; for workers' unity in action; for a SP campaign based on a clear socialist programme.

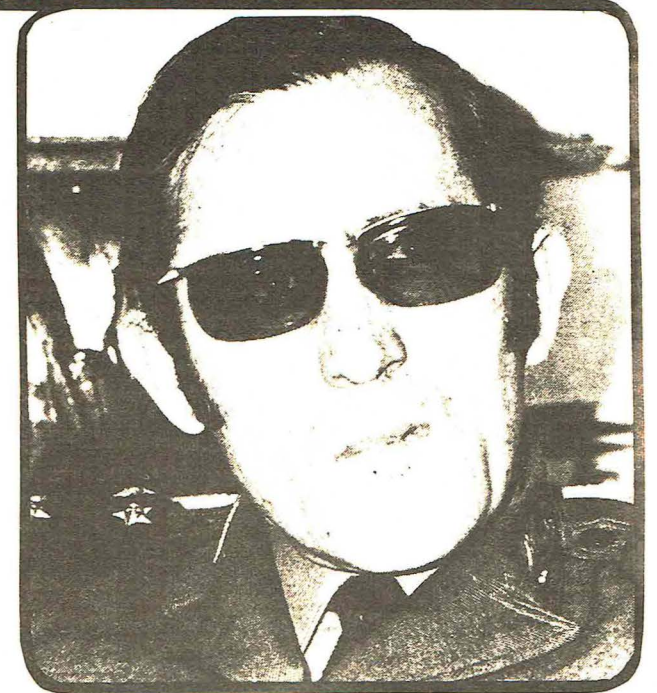
But the SP leadership is not only prepared to ally with small capitalist parties, it is also supporting the capitalist General Eanes for a further term as president. Eanes has

disagreed with Sa Carneiro's capitalist government, but only on methods, not on aims.

Eanes was responsible for the counter-revolutionary action of 25 November 1975, for the fall of the second government resulting in an agreement between the SP and the big capitalist CDS, and the formation of the authoritarian Mota Pinto government. Eanes wants to shackle workers by means of a 'social contract', Sa Carneiro by repression. Neither should be supported by workers.

No illusions can be put either in that would-be Napoleon, Otelio Carvalho. His FUP organisation has split into fragments.

As an alternative to these candidates, Marxists call for a civilian, socialist candidate, independently facing up to the right wing and fighting for socialist policies. That is the way to build upon the recent Portuguese workers' struggles and pave the way for a socialist, workers' government.



Socialist Party leadership backs pro-capitalist General Eanes [above]

## MIDDLE EAST

After the debacle of Carter's raid to release the hostages in Iran, a deepening division has opened up between the US and European governments on Middle East policy. It has centred around the failure of the Camp David agreement to bring peace to the area.

European governments now want to bring in the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) into the talks. Their interest is not rooted in concern for Palestinians, but dictated by their dependence on Middle East oil.

As the article on the

## DIVISION IN IMPERIALISM'S CAMP

oil crisis in last week's 'Militant' showed, Europe is far more dependent on Arab regimes cannot ignore the injustice that has been meted out to Palestinians over the past decades.

The Camp David agreement tried to paper over this issue by vague talk of autonomy for the West Bank. But the deadline for agreement on this went by a month ago. The Israeli regime was not prepared to concede an inch on this issue.

Instead the Begin regime has encouraged extremists to settle on the West Bank. As Israeli military control has been tightened, Arab mayors

have forced assassination or expulsion. Whole Arab communities have been terrorised by the Israeli military or armed religious fanatics.

With Begin refusing to make any concessions, even his Defence Minister Weizmann, resigned. And Egypt, desperate to end its new isolation in the Arab world, broke off talks with Israel. In Israeli-occupied Gaza the Arab mayor and all councilors resigned. And Begin's Cabinet was racked by bitter disputes.

In order to try to salvage something from the Camp David agreement, Carter has called a new round of talks for

next month. He is concerned to project this for electoral purposes as the one foreign policy "success" of his administration. If Camp David was a success, there must soon be a new definition of failure.

Whatever patched-up deal is worked out in the coming period, it will be unable to resolve the basic problems facing the Israeli and Palestinian people. Neither US nor European capitalism offers a way forward.

By Colin Barber



VIEWERS? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES?  
CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO:

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## The good old days

Dear Comrades,

As many thousands of school leavers prepare to join the dole queues it is worth reflecting what capitalism had to offer school leavers during its 'golden era'.

I left school in 1966 when the problems of unemployment had seemingly been resolved. In fact the Youth Employment Bureau had an abundance of jobs on offer. But what kind of jobs were they?

My first wage packet contained £3-10s-3d, £3 of which went to help my hard-pushed mother who found it difficult to cope even in those 'golden' days. Now 10/3d was not exactly a fortune even in those days. So what could a young lad do?

## Resist the war machine

Dear Comrades

World tension is gaining with high probability of war, considering the record of people in power who make decisions which affect our lives.

Thatcher's efforts to whip up a cold war over Afghanistan and Iran could be lethal to peace, as will proposals for US-controlled nuclear missiles to be based in Britain, which we would have no control over and would therefore be the target for retaliation if America used them. This, together with extra useless military expense, at times of massive cuts, will not defend but make us prime targets.

Nuclear war can never be in anyone's interest. It would be catastrophic and unsurvivable!

The window-dressing of conning people into accepting war and hopeful survival is rubbish and insulting. It's our lives they are playing with. It's eventually up to us whether we accept a futile war. We must not sit back and accept everything without question.

We must not allow US missiles on our soil and must remove all nuclear weapons from Britain as a step towards a nuclear-free Europe. This with co-operation, public awareness and participation together with resistance to the war machine, will hopefully prevent mass extermination and long-term suffering.

Fraternally  
Gordon Warren  
Chelsea

## Appeal

Dear Comrades,

I am in the process of establishing a library for Baillieston and Garrowhill Labour Party. If any of your readers, particularly in the West of Scotland, have any books or pamphlets for which they have no further use, we would be glad to have them.

Any such gifts would be gratefully received and acknowledged.

Yours fraternally,  
Jim Friel,  
Baillieston & Garrowhill  
Labour Party

Well, I worked three nights overtime till 8 o'clock and a Saturday morning. This boosted my take-home pay to £5! Needless to say scab wages meant dreadful working conditions as there was no union at the firm.

Even in its hey-day, capitalism couldn't offer youth a decent job with decent pay. Today it increasingly puts youth on the scrap-heap while still paying abysmal wages to those who find work. In the future capitalism can only offer a bleak prospect for youth and for the working class in general.

The conclusion? Get rid of this system and replace it with a socialist planned economy—an economy that will offer jobs for all, with short hours, decent conditions and a decent living wage.

Yours fraternally,  
Ray Physick  
Sunderland.

## If wages cause inflation...

Dear Comrades,

I'm writing to tell you a story about a pal of mine who is a joiner by trade. He first entered the working class in 1964, building houses for Wimpey. At that time a joiner's wages were 35p an hour [actually 6/10d] and a three bedroomed semi detached Wimpey house cost £2,900.

My mate left the trade in 1972 and went to university for about 5 years. However the wheel has now turned full circle for him and he is back at the tools working for Wimpey.

A joiner's wages are £1.30 an hour, and a three bedroomed semi detached Wimpey sells for £27,000. Anyone with half a brain can work out that since 1964 the wages have gone up four times and the price of the house has increased by nine times.

The question is, if wages cause inflation, how come the house isn't selling for £11,600?

Fraternally,  
Bob Wylie  
East Kilbride  
Labour Party.

## Zimbabwe: workers' independence the key

Dear Comrades

Comrade Millsom's letter in issue 503 raises important questions about developments in Zimbabwe. He asks if it is realistic for Mugabe to implement socialist policies, given the pressures of imperialism and the threat of South African intervention, and questions whether international pressure could be exerted to defend a healthy Zimbabwean workers' state, given the bankruptcy of the leadership of the workers' parties internationally.

The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 faced many similar problems. Twenty-one imperialist armies intervened in war-devastated Russia to try and crush the revolution and prevent it spreading throughout Europe. Despite

## Undeterred

Dear Comrades,

Supporters of the 'Clause 4' tendency in the LPYS are very fond of extolling their belief in and support of democracy. However, the events at the last ward meeting I attended give the lie to these empty words.

Certain members of the ward had objected to the sales of 'Militant' after the meetings. A discussion on the selling of papers at the ward took place: it was pointed out that the labour movement could only bene-

## Black America: the fire still burns

Dear Comrades

Whether Vernon Jordan, of the National Urban League, was shot by paid assassins or for other reasons is immaterial. Most black people see it as an attack on their leaders.

In spite of the fact that leaders such as Jordan are willing to work within the strictures of capitalism, the lack of a Marxist alternative means that they have a measure of respect in the ghetto.

Every time people like Vernon Jordan start to attack capitalism, which to a limited degree he has recently, the assassin appears. But what happens to leaders is international news; what happens to ordinary blacks is overlooked.

## Cut these handouts

Dear Comrades

I have just read an advert in the financial pages of 'The Times' that has infuriated me.

The Laird Group Ltd have declared their fund dividend, with "points made by the chairman, Sir Ian Morrow, at the AGM." Point 3 is "The compensation of £3.75 million for the nationalisation of Scottish Aviation represents a surplus of £1.8 million over book value."

reformist leadership, workers in many parts of Europe took action in support of the new proletarian state.

The victory of the armed workers and peasants in the civil war fired the determination and enthusiasm of workers in every part of the globe.

In Zimbabwe, the question is not what Mugabe can or cannot do, but what the tasks facing the workers and peasants are. How are their interests to be defended and extended?

As Jim Chrystie pointed out in issue 500, the aspirations of the workers and peasants in Zimbabwe for national liberation, for a decent standard of living, and for real control over their lives, cannot be realised on a capitalist basis.

Although Zimbabwe now has a black government, the old state machine has not been broken. Workers are being prevented from taking strike action, and the government has stated that land reform will only take

place in the context of preserving present white ownership.

Workers are being asked to 'have patience' and 'bide their time'. These calls serve to disorientate, confuse and weaken the struggle of the workers, who are the only force capable of defending the present gains of the revolution, and extending them to transform society.

Capitalism is being given an opportunity to consolidate itself.

Mugabe, more and more, will be caught in a vice: from imperialism to preserve capitalism, and from the masses for work, land, education and a decent life. Certainly, the greater the pressure from below to destroy capitalism, the greater the threat of South African intervention. But it would be self-defeating for the workers to cease struggling against capitalism in Zimbabwe for fear of intervention by capitalism in South Africa!

If the South African

regime intervened in Zimbabwe in an attempt to crush an organised, conscious movement of the masses against capitalism, it would be confronted not only with determined opposition from the masses in Zimbabwe, but also from the workers in South Africa. Revolution would be placed on the agenda in the whole of Southern Africa.

The important thing is for Marxists in Zimbabwe to organise around these ideas, rooting themselves in the movement of the workers, and fighting for the workers' independent interests.

Objectively the conditions are maturing for the socialist revolution in Southern Africa. But the essential question is leadership. Victory will only be assured if workers are organised independently around a revolutionary programme to transform society.

Fraternally,  
Gillian Moodie

Yours fraternally,  
Alan Runswick  
Wallasey Labour Party

I take it this means the taxpayer has donated to these parasites not just the cost of the company, which has already been paid many times over by its workers, but an extra £1.8 million!

This kind of "public spending" should be cut, not schools and hospitals. Here are the scroungers, not the unemployed. The Labour Party must say: no compensation to the big shareholders—only on the basis of proven need.

Fraternally,  
Jake Shepherd G&MWU  
in New York.

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paper. If we have to sell the paper one foot outside the door frame rather than one foot inside—so be it.

Organisational manoeuvres will not hold back working people from searching for a solution to their problems and however these comrades may try to stifle Marxism—presumably because they cannot confidently offer any alternative—they will not stop workers from taking up the answers 'Militant' offers.

Yours fraternally,  
Christine Jones,  
Newham LPYS

## The Barnacles

Dear Comrades,

Last week my union branch, NUPE Edinburgh No 1 (8,200 members) agreed to send a motion to our National Executive on Labour Party affiliation. At present our political affiliation stands at 500,000, but now that NUPE has 750,000 members nationally, affiliation should be increased to 700,000.

In line with NUPE policy for socialist answers to the crisis, we feel every vote will be crucial at the Labour Party conference. The extension of democracy, a leadership which reflects the views of the party's rank and file, a programme to solve the ills of society, our representatives to be under our control and not in the bosses' pockets. This must be the mainstay of democracy in the party.

Let us defeat the careerists who give socialism a bad name. Roy (£60,000 a year) Jenkins will definitely quit the Labour Party (I thought he had) to spearhead a new centre party of leading moderates, the 'Sun' gleefully tells us.

The right wings' days are numbered (and some know it). Working people cannot afford parasites in our ranks; let us cleanse the movement of these barnacles on our ship and steer it on a socialist course.

Yours fraternally,  
Graham Wilson,  
NUPE,  
East Edinburgh LPYS.

Even the two 'comrades' elected to stand on behalf of NOLS for full-time positions in NUS defied the NOLS Conference decision. One didn't stand, and the other preferred to stand on the "Left Alliance" slate, which included a member of the capitalist Liberal Party.

The success of the two NOLS candidates for the NUS executive 'part-time' positions, as reported in 'Militant', shows that NOLS can stand independently of the CP and Liberals and win.

It should not be forgotten that the present NOLS leaders opposed NOLS standing independent candidates in NUS.

Labour Clubs, though, should take heart; with well-organised anti-Tory campaigns, and the call for the election of a Labour government committed to socialist policies, we can win hundreds of students to our banner. This is the way a mass active NOLS can be built, and a new leadership, prepared to campaign and organise in the struggle for socialism, be created.

Yours fraternally  
Alan Watson  
NOLS NC

## Labour students—take heart

Dear Comrades

Dave Smith (Letters 506) does a disservice to NOLS by saying that there is "no crisis in the leadership."

The Editor of Labour Student has yet to produce an edition, attends no National Committee (NC) meetings, and refuses to resign. The chairman of the Scottish Organisation of Labour Students is apparently resigning; open splits and arguments take place amongst the NC members at NC meetings and NOLS caucuses at NUS conference. All this, combined with the machinations at Glasgow University, is a real indictment of the NC's work. Is this not a crisis?

Last NOLS conference rejected the NC Report on Youth Unemployment. The NC has blocked the admission of part-time students to NOLS. The Labour Party NEC referred back this item to the NC for clarification; so the NC decide to wait until the NOLS Conference next Christmas, hoping for a reversal of this important step forward.

Minority documents, a right introduced by 'Militant' supporters, are summarily abolished by the NC. "We are all minorities on certain issues," stated the leadership at the last NC. Yet they were all elected on the "Clause 4" slate, and I was elected as a 'Militant' supporter, with 40% of the votes at conference.

Whilst clubs can amend the policy section of the documents, this is no substitute for clear debate around alternative documents.

If there is no crisis in the leadership why have no major campaigns, rallies or demonstrations been organised by NOLS in the past five years? Why has NOLS, under the leadership of the 'Clause 4' group, not stood an independent slate in NUS until this year?

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# HELP US GROW

**"Please find enclosed a cheque for £300 as a donation for the Fighting Fund. Forward to a daily 'Militant'!"**

"I enclose a cheque for £50 on behalf of Maghull Labour Party...to celebrate your 500 editions."

"Enclosed is £23 earned by Littlehampton comrades (with some sweat!) furniture removing, wallpapering, cutting lawns and raiding friends' pockets for spare change at every gathering. It's all worthwhile for 'Militant'."

This is how 'Militant's' funds grow and how this week's total went over £2,000! A very rare windfall, support from organisations in the labour movement, numerous individual donations and a lot of hard work on the part of supporters!

When our fighting fund needs £9,468 by July 12th to be "on target" these examples must be followed. The two lists below show just how effective a bold and persistent approach can be, too.

At the South Wales miners' gala, three excellent initiatives raised £200. Rob Sewell went to "the top"! He got donations of £3 each from the President and Secretary of the South Wales Area NUM plus £2 from MP Dennis Skinner, £1.50 from two Swansea NUPE organisers and £1s from the secretaries of Penallta, Oakdale, Blaenant, Brynlliw and Tower NUM lodges.

W Hayward, Bert Davies, D Williams (Compensation Agent) and the vice president of the South Wales Area NUM were also 'persuaded' to donate. The political arguments of the 'Militant' are strong enough to persuade every member of the labour movement to part with cash once they are explained and an appeal is made.

Another illustration is the list of NALGO members in Glasgow contributing this week: I Weddle £10, W McCord £4, M Hay £5, M Mearns £4, W Whittaker £5, J Donnelly £10, L Monteith 50p, H Baxter £1, D Cummings £1, E Burns £5, E Terrace £10, E Lennon £2.

Even the NALGO General Secretary, Geoffrey Drain, was persuaded to part with £1 for 'Militant' at the union's conference! MP Audrey Wise and Euro-MP Alf Lomas did likewise at Labour's Special Conference!

£99 was collected at the POEU Conference and a delegate from Plymouth to COHSE Conference sent £20 from his expenses. Other TU expenses came from Leicester, London and the Black Country.

Just as important are the pennies and pounds from workers with no extra money in their pockets. £1 was collected in the Parks department, Hillingdon, Glasgow SOGAT members contributed £2, a shop steward at T Lewis at Bristol donated £3, and NUHKW shop stewards

P Morris and P Swift of Leicester gave £3 and £1 respectively.

T King and D White of Redruth, Cornwall contributed £20 from recent pay rises plus £6 in extra pence on sales of the 'Militant' in that area. Young members of the Labour Party in Acton sent £5.70 from fund raising activities. Pollock LPYS gave £3.96 and Epping Forest LPYS £2.40.

Probably the youngest of all contributors this week was Ricky Martindale (aged 3) and probably one of the oldest was T Howe, Secretary of the Bradford pensioners and TU Action association.

Many 'Militant' supporters are still expressing their appreciation of the work of Ian Burge, the London Hospital worker who died recently. Another £12 was received this week from Coventry 'in memoriam'.

Thirteen more readers have donated a day's wages paid to them for May 14th, the TUC's Day of Action. It's not too late for you to follow suit with a similar contribution!

V Maxwell of Glasgow donated a very welcome £30 this week, R Schofield (CAA, SCPS) who usually gives £10 a month to the 'Militant' has decided this week to make it £15. B George of Cardiff Labour Party donated £12, K McCoombes of Pollock LP gave a tenner and L Flanagan (EIS) gave £9.45.

Amongst the many who donated fivers this week were P Hoche (Wakefield NALGO), T Heavey (Newham North East), C Burford (North London), H S Gatawa (Hayes), S Hevey (Soton LP), I Campbell (Carlisle), J Sutherland (Coventry) and H James (ISTC Middlesbro'). E Fitzpatrick of Glasgow gave £8 to the 'Militant', R Worth of Newton Abbot gave £7 and a Thurrock Labour Party member gave £5.50 on top of payment for 50 issues of the 'Militant'.

A Havant LP member gave £1 as did many other readers including R Dedeam (Kensington EETPU), a Kent SOGAT Branch Secretary, R Pitt (Middlesbro') EETPU, K Hyde (Birmingham T&GWU) and J McKay and M Nidd both from Essex. T Smith (NATSOPA Plymouth) and D McDonald of Glasgow made their donations £2 each.

The one fund-raising activity that every 'Militant' reader can support must be involved in and push to the limit is the sale of the raffle tickets for the bumper prizes of a television/radio/cassette to be drawn on 12 July. Make sure that not one ticket is left unsold and not one stub is left out of the draw!

'Militant' needs your support as much as you need the 'Militant'! Support us with cash whenever you can!

**By Clare Doyle**

# Build Militant

Area	Received	Percentage of half-year's target achieved	Target half-year	Target for year
Eastern	1667		2,250	5,000
East Midlands	1723		1,710	3,800
Hants & IOW	1338		1,755	3,900
Humberside	579		1,125	2,500
London East	2461		2,790	6,200
London West	1652		2,115	4,700
London South	2471		1,800	4,000
Manchester & Lancs	1162		2,295	5,100
Merseyside	2008		2,700	6,000
Northern	2115		3,285	7,300
Scotland East	901		1,440	3,200
Scotland West	1667		2,250	5,000
Southern	1900		2,655	5,900
South West	1043		1,440	3,200
Wales East	645		1,260	2,800
Wales West	766		1,395	3,100
West Midlands	3210		4,050	9,000
Yorkshire	1871		3,285	7,300
Others	6353		5,400	12,000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>35532</b>		<b>45,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>

**TARGET FOR JULY 12th £45,000 TARGET FOR YEAR-£100,000**

## THIS WEEK £2085

### ads

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

**RANK AND FILE MOBILISING COMMITTEE Pamphlet**  
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Plus many more new designs, and of course our made to order service for badges and tee-shirts SAE for lists and details:— Dept. M, Mapographics, 32 Worple Road Mews, London SW19.

### Greet Labour's Conference

Get your Labour Party or LPYS branch, trade union or shop stewards' committee to place their greetings to Labour Party Conference in the pages of 'Militant'. Support the paper that fights for socialism.

Rates for greetings:

Semi-display:

3 column centimetres...£2

6 column centimetres...£4

Display:

one-sixteenth page...£7

one-eighth page...£14

one-quarter page...£25

Closing date for copy is Saturday 13 September, but send your greetings as early as possible to: the Circulation Department, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

### 'Militant' Summer Draw

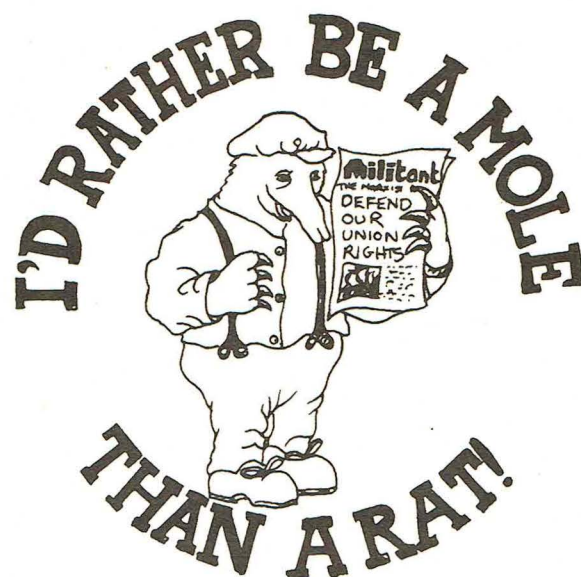
**Double prizes! Don't miss out!**  
**One set must be won by Northern readers and the other by Southern readers**  
**10p tickets in books of ten**  
**from your local 'Militant' seller or from:**  
**1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN**

**STRATHCLYDE Draw Results**  
18th May 1) 2+25. 2) 31+32.  
25th May 1) 11+27. 2) 37 with any of the following: 12, 15, 16, 28, 35. 1st June 1) any two from 5, 17, 32. 2) 31 with any of the following: 7, 16, 27, 29, 30, 37.

**GOSFORTH Discussion Group**  
23 June—Which way for the Labour Party? 30th June—Socialism and internationalism. 7th July—Lessons of Chile. 21st July—The alternative strategy, an alternative to socialism? Venue: The Collingwood Pub, near Cox Lodge. Time 7.30 pm.

**Ian and Barbara Sugarman announce the birth of Thomas James on Sunday 15th June.**

**Simon Smith and Nicky [Isle of Wight] are pleased to announce to all friends and comrades the birth of daughter Helen Natasha—another future to fight for.**



Summer T-shirts. Colours—white, yellow, sky blue, dark green, navy and black. All with red motif. Styles—round neck, and short sleeves or cap sleeves (state which one you prefer) sizes—children's 24, 26, 28 and 30 inch chest. £2.50 each.

Adults—Small—32-34. Medium—34-36. Large—38-40. Extra Large—42-44. £3 each.

Both costs include postage and packing. Please indicate, colour, style, and size preferred. ALL PROCEEDS TO THE FIGHTING FUND.

Cheques and postal orders made out to R. Harris. Send orders with payment to: R. Harris, 35 Westminster Court, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 1UR.

### MILITANT MARXIST WEEKEND SCHOOL June 27th-29th

COURSES ON:

**Introduction to Marxism** Speakers: John Pickard and Brian Beckingham.

**Marxism and the Trade Unions** Speakers: Brian Ingham and Bob Faulkes.

**The Life of Trotsky** Speaker: Ted Grant.

**China: History and Perspectives** Speakers: Peter Taaffe and Lynn Walsh.

**Marxist Economics** Speakers: Brian Beckingham and Rob Jones.

PLUS:

**Debate: The Lessons of Chile 1970-73.** Speakers: Lynn Walsh (Militant) Mike Gatehouse (Communist Party).

**FILM: The Battle for Chile**

At: Goldsmith's College Students Union, Lewisham Way, London SE14.

Cost: £3.00 whole weekend, £1.50 Saturday or Sunday only, £1.00 Friday evening only. Half price School Students and Unemployed. (Cheques payable to 'Militant').

**BOOK NOW!** Send bookings to, or for further information: Militant Marxist Weekend School, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

# TRADE UNION CONFERENCES CSEU, TGWU RULES REVISION

## EMPLOYERS FEAR CONFED'S POWER

**Last autumn's nine week engineering strike shook the engineering bosses badly.**

Members of the Engineering Employers' Federation have leaked a confidential document sent to over 6,000 engineering firms, which calls for moderation from management and improvements in industrial relations.

The mobilisation of two million engineering workers in a series of one and two day strikes demonstrated to the employers the strength of the unions.

Members of the Engineering Employers' Federation have leaked a confidential document sent to over 6,000 engineering firms, which calls for moderation from management and improvements in industrial relations.

The demand for a £100 minimum time rate in engineering is gaining ever more support on the shop-floor. It is essential if we are to maintain living standards against the background of 22% inflation. Above all, it is a demand around which the mass of engineering trade unionists can be galvanised into action.

Engineering workers will look to the conference to adopt a clear call for £100 for 35 hours, rejecting the attempt by the right wing of

the AUEW to commit themselves to nothing more than "a substantial increase in pay."

The dead hand of right wing leadership in the AUEW and the EETPU led to only a semi-victory last autumn. The resolute action of the membership during that strike created a situation of strength where the full claim of £80 for 35 hours was within reach. Engineering workers at present only enjoy £73 for 39 hours because our leadership refused to match that resolve.

The EEF document calls on employers to show particular concern for the well-being of their employees and to "promote as far as possible, a sense of stability and continuity of employment." Fine words, but they hide the biggest challenge to the Confed unions—fighting redundancies and standing by workers victimised in the

industry.

The Confed unions have to be brought together in a stand against unemployment. With a national lead, the demand for work-sharing with no loss of pay and a 35-hour week can become a rallying point for workers whose jobs are threatened.

The right wing complain that members won't fight on this issue. Yet workers fighting for their jobs, often have to fight first for official union recognition. It is left to them to approach other firms in the combine for support. They are isolated by that same right wing union leadership.

The employers may cherish hopes of co-existence, but their hopes will be dashed by their own actions. Enormous interest rates are being extracted from manufacturing industry by the banks and the money lenders. Rates of 17% and above are proving cripp-

ling for engineering, directly and indirectly: customers are unable to expand or re-equip and orders fall.

The EEF calls for "higher productivity, which pays for high real earnings." Reality is quite different. Under today's system higher productivity, with no market for the goods, leads to unemployment.

To match up to this threat the Confed conference has to take a political stand. Workers in Britain's largest industry must give a lead against the Tories' policies of de-industrialisation.

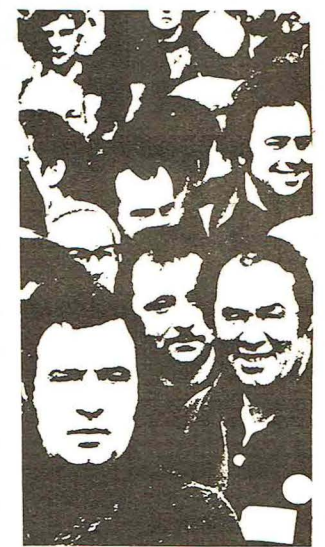
Only a socialist programme can provide the alternative. The right wing look to the policies of Callaghan, whose main plank for return to office is an inspiring five years of wage restraint.

The socialist programme has to be based on clearing out not only the Tories but also the economic chaos that private enterprise rests on; replacing today's decline in living standards and jobs with a fully planned economy, where manufacturing industry is geared to the needs of the economy and ordinary working people—no longer strangled by rent, interest and profit.

**By Jon Ingham**

(Leeds No 6 AUEW)

## DOCKERS FIGHT TO SAVE JOBS



**Dave Jennings  
[T&GWU dockers]  
spoke to Bill Hopwood**

In the past few years dockers haven't been to the forefront of industrial struggles. The Tories' onslaught seems certain to end that.

The relative security of the post-Devlin years is coming to an end. Already Middlesborough Dock is closing, provoking local action, and there are rumours threats to the Upper Docks in London. The decline in trade and the steady march of new handling methods such as containers are threatening jobs.

The Middlesborough Dock, a tidal dock in the city centre, needs repairs costing £3 million. Although it has been profitable, re-investment will not take place. Instead work is to be transferred to Tees Dock, closing the old one down.

Already on the dock there is a preference system called a rota. The first rota—about 300 workers—get the pick of the jobs, including overtime and weekends. Only after them do the second rota—eight crane drivers—and third rota of over 150, get work.

Many of the third rota have to make do with the basic pay, top line £67, and take home about £50. They are lucky to get a day's work.

The Port Authority claim that with the closure of Middlesborough there will be work for all, which seems unlikely. The union called their bluff by asking for the basic to be raised, as according to management workers would seldom be reduced to it, so it would not mean much extra expense.

They refused, instead offering to make 50 redundant. Now the dockers are banning overtime and are on a one-day strike a week.

This is the first united action on the Tees for a long time. However the preference system of separate rotas, which is rare in Registered Ports, causes a division in the union.

The system is decided and controlled by the union branch and there is a permanent majority on first rota. There is a campaign now to remove this division.

Its root lies in fear of unemployment and loss of pay. Many old hands, after fifteen years or more of uncertainty, try to ensure jobs and pay by this system. But preference is no long-term guarantee, while we face a worsening recession.

It weakens the union by causing a division in the ranks. It is important to fight the threats to jobs and pay as a united force.

## TGWU Must prepare to fight EXTEND SHOP-FLOOR DEMOCRACY

**Election and accountability of full-time officials is the issue that dominates the agenda of the T&GWU Rules Conference, 24th to 26th June.**

This is hardly surprising! In its sixty-year history, the largest union in the country has held just six elections for full-time posts, and those were all for the general secretary—the only elected official paid by the union.

Once the general secretary has been voted in, moreover, he holds office "during the pleasure of the union," which really means till retirement. Moss Evans will be 65 in 1990. So unless the constitution is amended, a good number of delegates have cast their last vote for a T&GWU full-time official.

Under the existing rules, full-time officials are, it is true, appointed by the lay General Executive Council, and exceptionally could be dismissed by them. But how can 39 members be aware of the activities of 500 full-time officials within the union? They wouldn't even know their names.

The current rule book therefore embodies two completely separate sets of principles. For the election of branch officers and shop stewards, which the rules say must take place every two years, the rule book embodies the principle of responsibility to those you serve. But for

**By John  
Kelly**

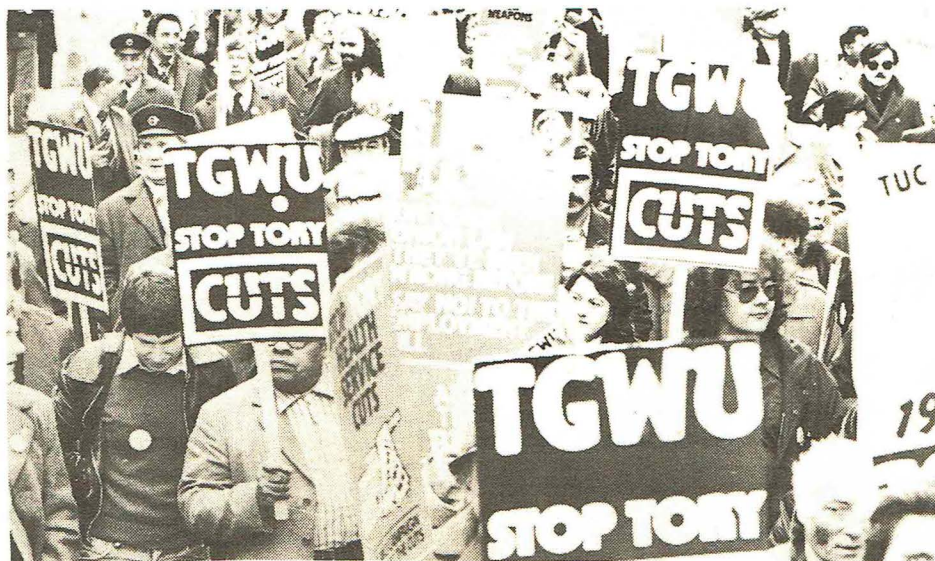
(T&GWU, Ford,  
Southampton)

appointed officials there is a danger they could become a law unto themselves.

If the T&GWU is successfully to tackle the challenge of the 1980s—unemployment, low pay, the Tory government—it needs a structure that encourages the greatest participation and ensures that union officials genuinely fight for the interests of the members. Shop-floor democracy must be extended to every level of the union. After all, how can the T&G correctly campaign for re-selection of Labour MPs, but oppose re-selection of its own officials?

Delegates must reject the handful of motions to increase the period between elections for lay officers, but support re-election of paid officials every three, four, or five years as the various motions put forward.

But many on the right of the labour movement, seeing



T&GWU members will need fighting leadership to combat the problems they face.

Photo: Militant

themselves defeated as at last year's Labour Party Conference, are now questioning the block-vote system and the election of union delegations. In the T&G rule book, election of delegations to Labour Party Conference etc is not even mentioned. The Rules Conference should therefore approve motion 563 (from 5/909 and 6/522 branches) for the election at the Biennial Delegate Conference of "delegates to the annual conferences of the TUC, TUC Womens' Conference, the Labour Women's Conference and the Labour Party Conference."

In holding a biennial conference the T&G itself is among a minority of unions. Thatcher may force a pay freeze upon the unions, Prior introduce Stage 2 of his new Industrial Relations Act, all in a year when the union has

no conference. Policies can only be decided by a full delegate conference, but with the speed of events now it must be annual.

But the Rules' Conference is only every six years. No wonder there are 566 motions to amend rules on this year's agenda! There hasn't been an opportunity to make amendments since 1974. Delegates should support motion 49 for an annual conference, motion 64 to allow rules changes to be taken at the conference, and motion 81 deleting all reference to a separate Rules Conference.

A special recall conference of the union is also required before a strike of the whole membership can be called. Yet who can say that with Thatcher in power, members might not be imprisoned again, for example, like T&G dockers were in '72,

and a strike of all 2.2 million will not be needed? How much time will be lost in holding a conference before taking action?

Delegates should vote for motions 135 and 78, empowering the General Executive to call an all-out strike.

Delegates should also back motion 564 (from 5/909 branch) providing for a full annual youth conference of the union, and the establishment of a National Youth Advisory Committee. If accepted this would lay the basis for a real youth section in every district and region of the union.

The 1980 Rules Conference provides the opportunity for the T&GWU to bring its rules into line with the members' need for a fighting, democratic organisation.

# Caledon fights on NO TO REDUNDANCIES

**'Save the Caledon! Save our jobs!' were the cries resounding round Benton House, Newcastle on May 8th.**

Two busloads of Dundee shipyard workers had travelled over-night to give vocal backing to the delegations from the yard in negotiations with British Shipbuilders.

Inside the meeting, the delegation were putting forward their detailed and well-researched proposals for keeping "a balanced labour force commensurate with the needs of a shipyard" and for modernising the yard. Against the management's plan to cut back to a 'balanced core' of 350 men, the workers have shown that a force of 764 will be required if the yard is to function as a shipyard.

To no avail! BS threw down the gauntlet, announcing that they were to seek 170

**By  
Ewan Duncan**

(Robb Caledon  
Combined Union  
Committee,  
personal capacity)

voluntary redundancies by June and a further 324 by August. A letter was sent to all employees asking for the first volunteers.

The very next day the workers picked up the gauntlet. A mass meeting voted, with only three dissenters, to oppose all redundancies, compulsory or voluntary. They urged the 133 who have

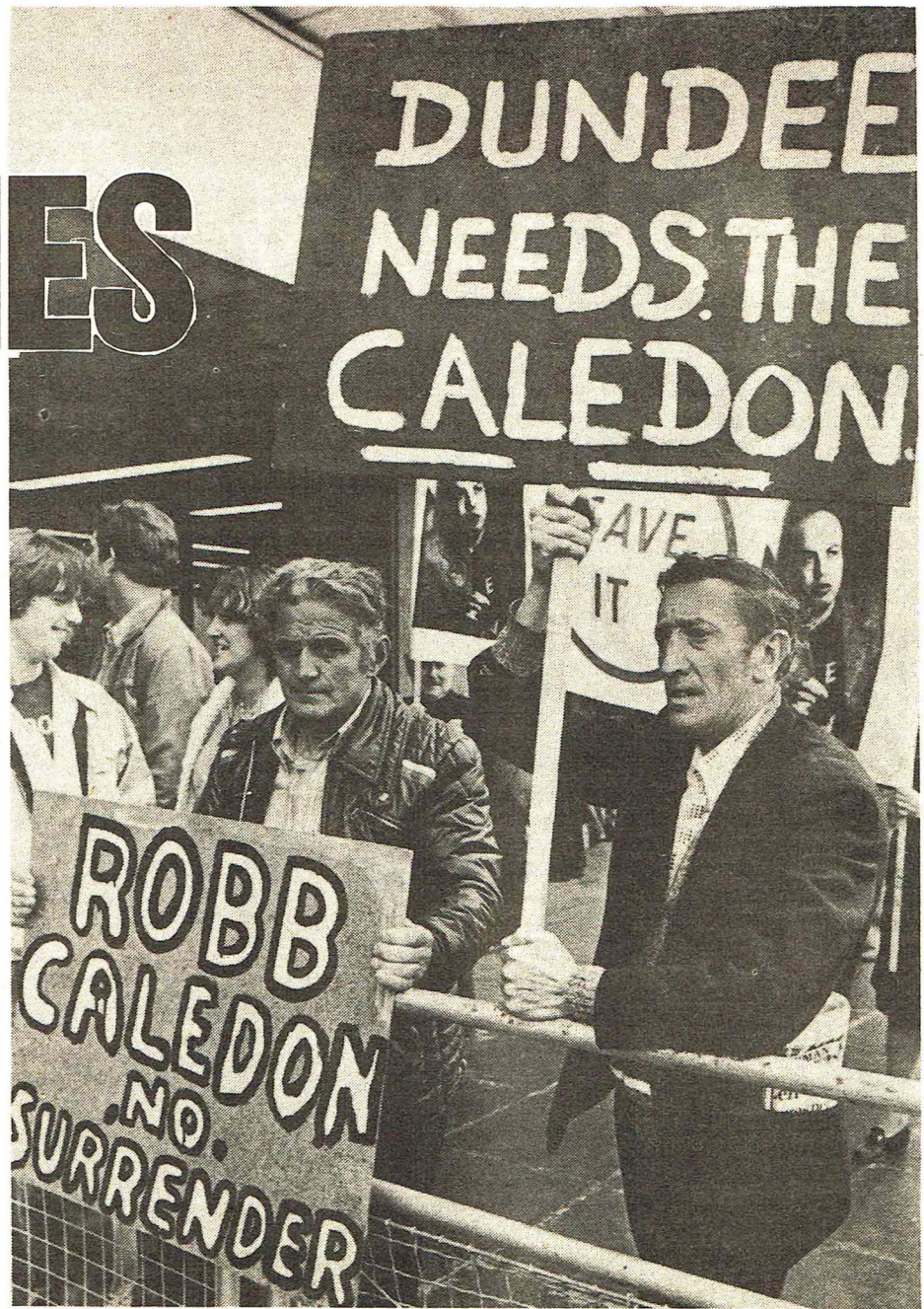
already volunteered to withdraw their names.

Harry McLevy, Confed district secretary, spelt out the consequences facing Dundee if the yard were to be run down. Male unemployment is up to the level of 1923. 1,000 youngsters between 16 and 18 are without jobs. Any worker volunteering for redundancy was volunteering for the dole.

Other employers in the area are laying workers off. Kestrel Marine, which makes oil installations, now employ only 170. Yarrow ship-repairers have pulled out altogether, for the lack of necessary facilities.

There is now an overwhelming case for the main demand which the workers are putting forward—the complete modernisation of the yard for which detailed plans have been drawn up by the yard committee.

The Caledon workforce have demonstrated convincingly that they are ready to fight for their jobs. With the backing of the whole labour movement in Dundee and throughout the shipbuilding industry, we can and will win this fight!



Robb Caledon shipyard workers lobbying last year's Labour Party Conference. Photo: Militant

## SOGAT says Nationalise the Press

**"The trade union movement cannot sit back and allow this government to erode the standards of the movement which have taken hundreds of years to build."**

These words spoken by Bill Keys, the general secretary of SOGAT in his keynote address to conference in the economic debate set the tone for that debate and indeed for the conference itself.

"The next Labour government must apply socialist policies with the same tenacity as the Tories have served their masters." Conference erupted in roars of spontaneous approval and applause.

The lead given by the general secretary was followed by delegate after delegate at the rostrum. George Willoughby, of London Central, in moving the major economic composite supporting the socialist alternative economic strategy, spoke of the Tories as government of the rich, by the rich, for the rich.

Bob Gillespie, of Glasgow and West of Scotland branch, declared boldly that the next Labour government must be prepared to attack the power of the top 200 companies; and Brian Gilliland, a 'Militant' supporter from Scottish Graphical Division (West Branch) supported this demand by highlighting the section of the economic resolution calling for the implementation of

**By a  
'Militant'  
correspondent**

Clause IV part 4 of the Labour Party constitution.

Brother Gilliland also made the important point that unless support was given for the proposals of re-selection of MPs and NEC control of the manifesto, many of the calls for socialist policies would remain as vain demands instead of being implemented.

The debate ended with the unanimous support for the full alternative economic strategy put forward by the Tribune group. Despite our criticisms of the "alternative strategy," this support for left policies represents a big step forward for SOGAT.

If the support for socialist policies is allied to the decision to amend the union constitution to include the aim of working for the public ownership of the press under democratic management and control then in years to come the 1980 BDC of SOGAT will be seen as a watershed for the union.

"Militant" supporters Jim-

my Friel and Brian Gilliland played a key role in the adoption of this amendment to the rule book. Brother Friel in moving the amendment delivered a ferocious speech against the press of big business. He criticised all the national dailies for their scandalous campaign against the public sector workers in the winter of 1978 and more recently for their orchestra of abuse on the May 14, Day of Action. Nothing short of public ownership under workers' control could resolve the problems that the labour movement faces with the press completely.

In summing up, Jimmy Friel handled criticism that a call for public ownership might result in the press becoming nothing better than the BBC, by explaining that his ideas on democratic management under public ownership would see the press shared out to the main interest groups in society with the boards of the companies created being controlled by a combination of representatives from the government of the day, the trade union movement and the workers involved in production of the newspapers concerned.

Conference also made several other important decisions for the future of the union. Jimmy Wilson from the North Western Group moved that the union should negotiate in future on the basis of a minimum wage of £90.00 per week for 35 hours, which was accepted by the conference, as was continued support for the principle of one union for the print industry.

In this respect the resolutions passed in favour of the formation of Joint Federated Chapels in the print and calls

for a wages conference prior to all national wage negotiations in order to formulate a common claim, will have to be pursued vigorously by the activists in the union to ensure that these steps towards one unions are put into practice.

Over the week, about 200 copies of two editions of

'Militant' were sold and nearly £250 was collected for the Fighting Fund (including £16 from members of SOGAT's NEC).

The 'Militant' public meeting was attended by about 25 people and was the largest fringe meeting at conference.

The task now for 'Militant' supporters in the union is to

build support for the paper as the union moves to the left but most importantly in the weeks and months after conference to work with the others on the left to ensure that the decisions of conference are driven home to the entire ranks of SOGAT.

## Pickets in evening dress

Members of the BBC Wales Symphony Orchestra picketed outside Broadcasting House, Cardiff on 2nd June, to demonstrate their opposition to the BBC's plan to close down five of their eleven orchestras.

Members of the Musician's Union (some in evening dress) gathered outside Broadcasting House at 5.30 am. and all vehicles entering the BBC complex were stopped and informed that it was an official picket line. A large number of vehicles turned back and numerous car horns

were sounded in support, sometimes drowning the music of the musicians.

Mr Adrian Eales, a first violinist in the BBC Wales Orchestra and a Musicians Union official, said that "although the BBC Wales Orchestra was not immediately affected, if five orchestras closed down, then no orchestra in Britain will be safe. He added that the strike had the support of 42,000 musicians, and this would inevitably effect both television and radio programmes.

One of the first and main events in the strike was a free concert staged at Sophia Gardens, Cardiff, last Friday, to publicise their campaign and demonstrate the public's support for the orchestra.

Other trade unionists employed by the BBC have already shown their solidarity by refusing to do work normally done by any one taking industrial action.

**By  
Anthony Tynan**

## SAVE THIS HOSPITAL

Just under two months ago, on April 25th, staff at Birkenhead Childrens Hospital were informed that their hospital was to be closed by Wirral Area Health Authority.

The AHA admit that the services at St Catherine's where patients will be transferred are not as good and conditions are cramped.

The staff have started a campaign to save the hospital.

**By members of the  
Campaign Committee**

87,000 signatures have been counted so far against the closure; a meeting of 200 people held; demonstrations

organised; delegations sent to parliament and a committee of mothers and parents formed.

With the help of the LPYS we have set up a fighting committee to co-ordinate the campaign, and we will be holding a public meeting on June 30th. We feel the hospital to be essential for Wirral children. Second class treatment is not good enough!

## NGA CONFERENCE-

By Chris Newis

(Birmingham NGA branch committee, personal capacity)

The National Graphical Association, the largest craft union within the printing industry, is holding its biennial delegate conference this week.

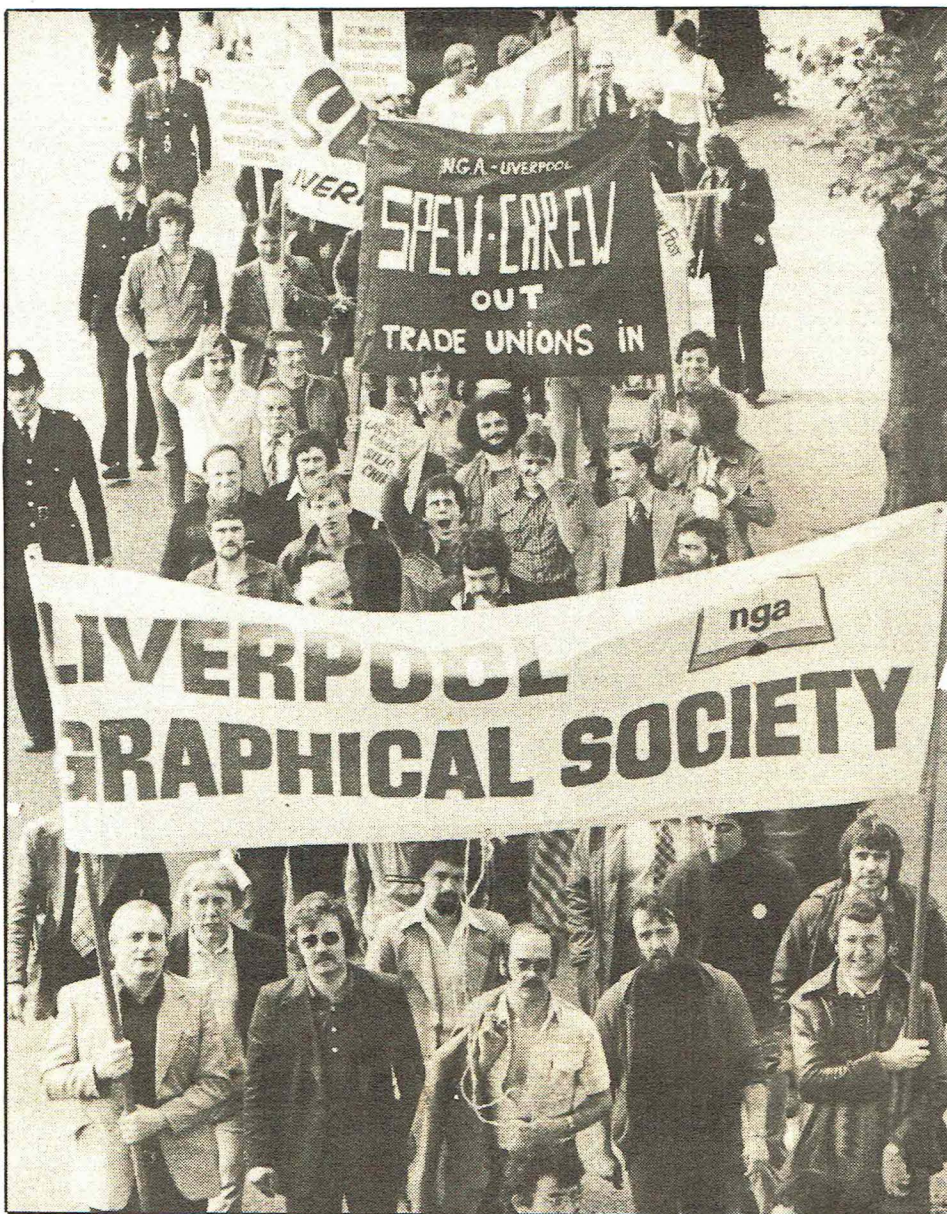
After the recent dispute with the provincial newspapers and general trade employers for an £80 minimum earnings level and a 37½-hour week, in which the union successfully beat off lock-outs and scab tactics, conference delegates will be concerned with consolidating what has been achieved, and preparing for the continuing attacks by the employers and their ruthless Tory backers.

As the National Council's annual report indicates, the main areas of struggle over the past two years—apart from the major national campaign on hours and wages—has been on who controls new technology, particularly over keyboard operations on computer installations. The most publicised struggle was on 'The Times' when the Thompson organisation—financed by its oil millions—attempted to break union power at shop floor level, in order to dictate how labour-saving new techniques were introduced.

The employers have not given up, however. T Bailey Forman of the 'Nottingham Evening Post' continues to produce newspapers having sacked 28 journalists for participating in an official strike, and has successfully broken the NGA control of key stroking. The print trade unions, with the support of the wider trade union movement, must mobilise to bring this reactionary management to heel, to demonstrate once again that the trade union movement will not allow employers to ride rough-shod over working people in their search for quick profits.

The 178 resolutions on the conference agenda, plus emergency resolutions, express members' concern on a wide range of issues. On unemployment a resolution from London calls for the first priority to be given to creating jobs and expresses particular concern that the number of young workers under 18 in the industry has declined by 5,000 in the two years up to the end of 1978—and even further since then.

The concern about unemployment and the need to create more jobs is reflected in resolutions from Liverpool, S Wales, Mid-Counties and Kent and Bristol calling for a



NGA members march through Nottingham in protest at the anti-union 'Evening Post' management

# PREPARING FOR FUTURE BATTLES

shorter working week, with other areas calling for earlier retirement and longer holidays.

Major resolutions on the Tory Employment Bill from the National Council, with amendments from several branches, opposing any co-operation with the Bill if it becomes law, reflect the growing determination to halt the Tory attack on union rights. A resolution from Liverpool calls on the union to ignore any future high-court judgements which deprive the union of the right to exercise its industrial strength in pursuance of a dispute. The NATSOPA leaders, in defying the 'Express' management and their legal servants, have shown how powerless the courts are if confronted.

An emergency motion from Liverpool expresses total

opposition to an incomes policy while the rest of the economy is unplanned. This supplements the Mid-Counties resolution opposing any form of incomes policy. These resolutions, linked to the call from several branches for the union to recommence the highly successful low-pay campaign which has produced a tremendous response from the rank and file, must be our answer to the press propaganda for a new round of wage controls.

Resolutions from Birmingham and Liverpool recognise the role of the press as direct agents of the bosses. They call for support for the Campaign for Press Freedom but point out that the only way to guarantee a truly democratic press is when printing facilities are nationalised and placed under the democratic

control of the labour and trade union movement. This is an issue of major importance—delegates should support the resolutions and take a stand beside our brothers in SOGAT (see page 15).

The conference promises to be one of the most important in the history of the union with union democracy occupying a prominent place. No less than nine resolutions, plus amendments, call for the periodic re-election of regional and national officials, and a Liverpool motion calls for an annual, rather than biennial, conference.

Certainly this conference covers all the fundamental issues of importance to the rank and file. It is up to delegates to ensure that, in debates and voting, we prepare the union effectively for the coming battles.

### Unemployment

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Unemployment and social security benefits are not calculated as more than stop-gaps, if that. For longer-term necessities: clothing, house repairs, etc., the unemployed have to go cap-in-hand for special grants. Now, with prices soaring faster than ever, the Tories are eroding even these meagre payments.

An MSC survey in 1979 found that the long-term unemployed received an average of £25 a week. More than a quarter had to survive on less than £20, while over a third had child dependents. Another survey in 1974 found that more than half did not possess a change of clothing.

"All we can do for clothes is just hand down from one kid to the other, and you just cannot afford to replace what you're handing down. So you're running short for one as you're handing down for the other." (Unemployed building worker's wife)

What the unemployed want is a permanent job and a wage they can live on. The vast majority of those interviewed for the MSC survey were interested in government training schemes. "The under-30s tended to argue that the schemes were preferable to the boredom, penury and lethargy of not working, but others, young and old, felt that the need was for real, permanent jobs."

"You do a job that

somebody gets £60 for but you only get £20, then at the end of six months the employer dumps you and gets someone else...It's not them that's paying the wages, it's the government. I want a proper job." (Paul, 17, unemployed since leaving school)

A useful job—is it too much to ask? Apparently, yes. There's only one answer to the attacks of the Tories and the bosses—to organise and fight.

The trade unions must demand control of the government work schemes, recruiting the temporary workers and defending their rights and conditions. Every firm should be forced to take on a set quota of apprentices and trainees.

The unions must open their ranks to the unemployed and actively go out to recruit at the dole offices. If the bosses, the Job Centres and the Tories can offer nothing, then the unions must take on the fight for jobs—for a 35-hour week without loss of pay, worksharing, opposition to all redundancies and the nationalisation of any firm threatening closure.

As a Newcastle mother, with two unemployed teenage children, put it: "Something's really got to be done...My father was on the dole in the 'thirties, he was on the Jarrow march."

"I've heard what they lived like—we live day to day but they lived hand to mouth. And it'll come to that again with a Tory government in, if something's not done. What's happening in Newcastle and Liverpool today, can happen in the Midlands tomorrow."

## BUILD MILITANT

Just a few weeks left to reach the 'Militant' fighting fund half year target. £250 was raised at SOGAT conference. Help build 'Militant' by sending a donation and by buying and selling 'Militant' raffle tickets. Details page 13.



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