

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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2 Million Unemployed- DOLE QUEUE NIGHTMARE

Unemployment has shot up by 10% in the last month. The official figure of 1,659,676 marks a grim post-war record.

It means a horrifying prospect for workers in Britain, especially school-leavers. There's precious little chance of stable employment for the 712,000 young people who will be leaving school in the next six months.

This month alone sees 186,926 school-leavers without work. And the overall trend is getting worse.

Short-time working is up. The number of redundancies this year is up 150,000. And down has come industrial output, overtime and the number of job vacancies.

Socialist policies

The official figures hide the reality. Unemployment is well over the 2 million mark, if the [estimated] 300,000 who don't claim benefit and the 300,000 kept on short-term government-funded jobs schemes are included.

Probably by the end of the year even the official figure will top 2 million. Economists using the government Treasury model, forecast this week that unemployment will rise to 3 million in 1983. By then, they predict one-sixth of British manufacturing will have been destroyed!

The labour movement must stop this march towards catastrophe. Only bold socialist action can halt the bosses.

This week, Ford's announced 2,300 redundancies. Yet last year Ford's [UK] made £368m profits.

By Jim Chrystie

The management claim they need sackings to make labour 'more mobile' and redistribute 'surplus labour capacity.'

When jobs are threatened the labour movement must fight to share out the work and introduce a 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

Create jobs, by instituting a programme of useful public works. There are millions of people without decent homes, suffering poor health facilities. The building of homes, schools, hospitals would be a boon to both the unemployed and the rest of the working class.

The Tories and the bosses will say that they couldn't afford such a scheme. But can we afford the bosses? Their system offers a nightmare for youth and working people.

Such a scale of unemployment means that at least 20% of the resources of British industry are unused. If all workers on the dole queue were provided with decent jobs, production would rise by at least 20%.

The problems of unemployment could be solved, together with those of inadequate homes, schools, hospitals. But this can only be done if the next Labour government grasps the nettle of the nationalisation of the banks and the 200 or so monopolies which dominate the economy, under democratic workers' control and management.

On this basis, with a nationalised economy and a plan of production the horrors of mass unemployment could become a thing of the past.

TORIES SACRIFICE YOUTH TO BOOST BOSSES PROFITS

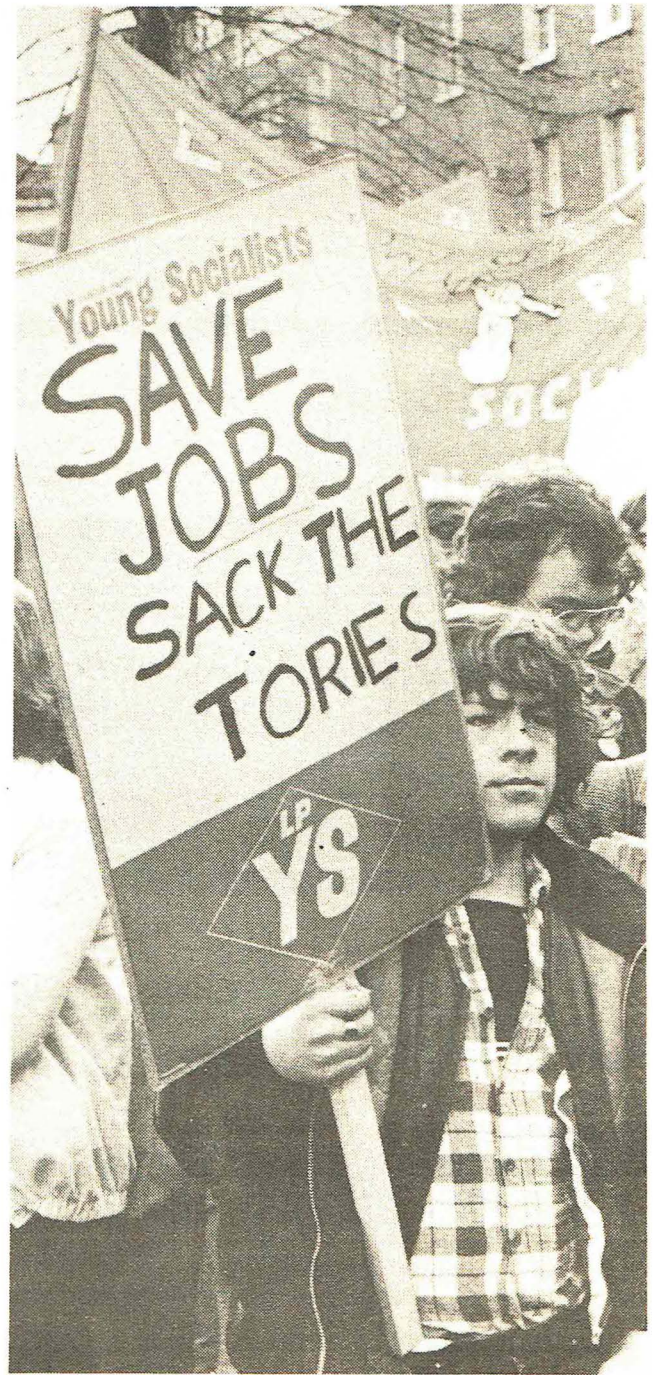


Photo [below]: Royal Northern Hospital workers fight for their hospital. Now Birkenhead faces a similar struggle.



Photo: Mark Rusher (IFL)

BIRKENHEAD CHILDRENS HOSPITAL Save lives-Save our Hospital

Cuts in public expenditure by this Tory government are bleeding the NHS dry. Every cut puts more lives at risk.

The rich can get over such problems. They can afford expensive private health schemes. It is ordinary working people who face the grim reality.

The ugly face of capitalism can be seen in Birkenhead in Merseyside, a town which already suffers from un-

employment in excess of 8,000. On top of this we have some of the worst housing in the country. Now the hospital serv-

ice is at risk, and innocent children's lives are put in jeopardy through the proposed closure of Birkenhead Children's Hospital, the only children's hospital in Wirral.

Staff and patients here are not prepared to see our hospital closed. We are fighting a battle to prevent the shutdown and save the lives of local children.

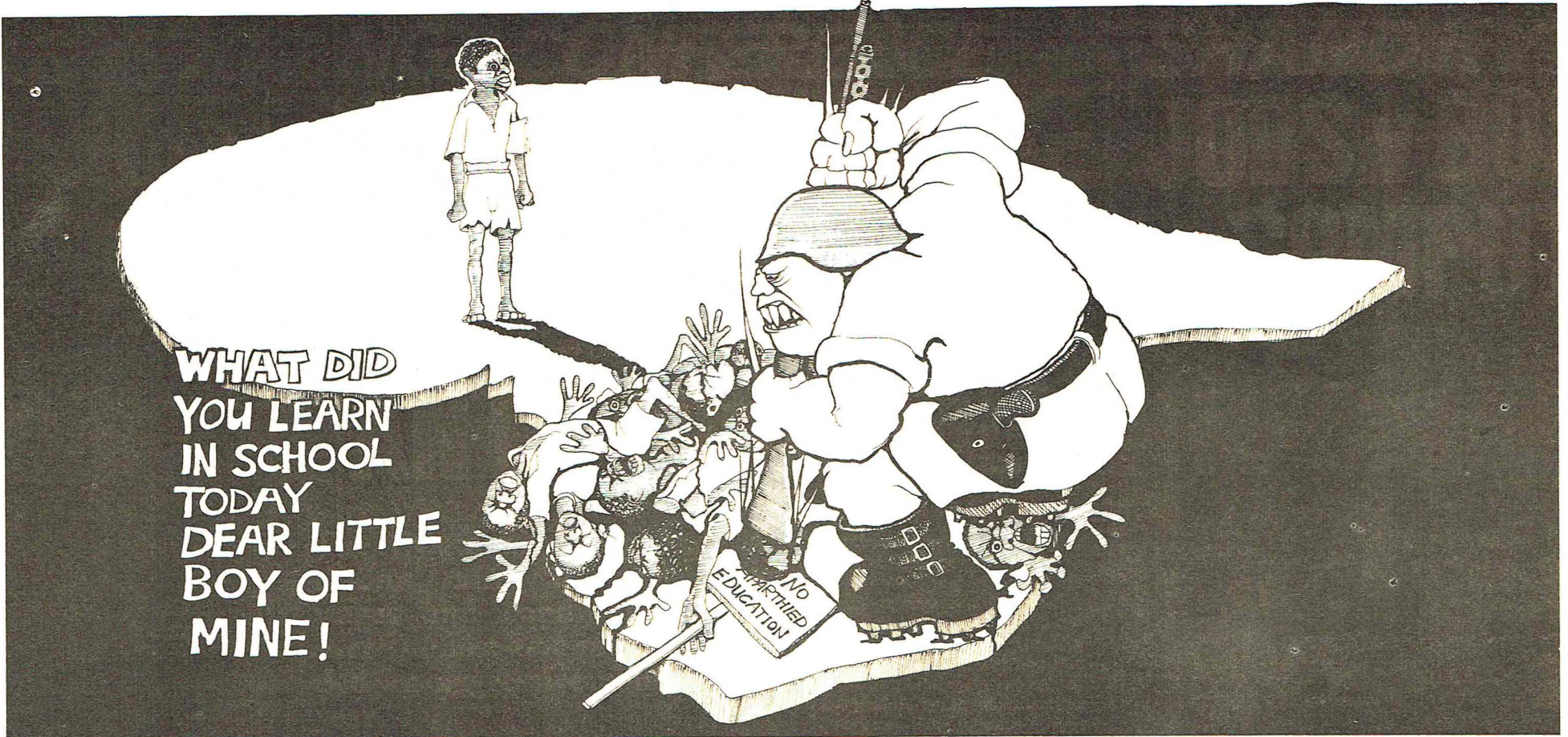
A new 'wonder hospital' has been promised, at Arrowe Park but the earliest this will open will be 1983, and some sources say it will be a lot

later. And with a virtual clampdown on new building this is very likely. Why is this vital facility closing now?

For the next few years, the location for the children's hospital will be the nearby St Catherine's which was literally a workhouse in the 19th century!

No casualty department exists, so management plan to erect a 'Portakabin' to house outpatients and the emergency department—or build a new wing. What

CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE



Militant

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The way forward for Labour

There can be no doubt that the pro-capitalist right wing in the Labour Party has suffered an important defeat with the decisions of the Party Commission of Inquiry.

The right wing first proposed the Commission as a means of overturning left victories scored at the 1979 Annual Conference and of securing changes in the Party structure which would allow the right to re-establish their grip on the Party.

But despite a few concessions which the right won from some wavering elements on the NEC, the Commission has not served the right's purpose.

The Commission was forced by the huge weight of Party opinion to support mandatory re-selection of MPs, the National Executive's present structure and to concede the principle that the Party Leader should not be solely elected by MPs. No wonder some right wing Labour MPs are reported to be "depressed" and suffering from a "loss of nerve".

Rumours have once again begun to fly of Labour MPs breaking away to form a new "centre" or "democratic Labour" party. Neville Sandelson MP said "that the whole nation would breathe a sigh of relief" if the Labour Party split. The extremist Left and the moderate majority of the party should now go their separate ways."

The 'Observer' has reported that London CLV coordinator Jim Daly is running from his home the new Radical Centre for Democratic Change, widely seen as the embryonic organisation for Roy Jenkin's new centre party.

The Commission was forced to accept mandatory re-selection of MPs and a change in method of electing the Party Leader because of the sheer weight of evidence in front of them. [See the

statement of the Rank and File Mobilising Committee, on this page.]

But at the same time the right wing, led by Callaghan, Foot and Duffy, have won some decisions which would in effect give the Parliamentary Party a veto over the election of Party Leader and more importantly over Party policy. As the Mobilising Committee makes clear, the Commission's proposed 'Electoral College' is completely different from that demanded in the past.

The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy's proposal was merely for a redistribution of voting strengths when the Leader was elected at the Annual Conference, not an entirely separate body as the Commission is proposing.

'Militant' has, in the past, called for the Party Leader to be elected by the Annual Conference in the same way as card votes are normally conducted, a position which 52 CLPs in their evidence to the Commission supported. But it is clear that in the present situation the CLPD Electoral College [which 72 CLPs backed] has become the main alternative to the right's plans at the next Annual Conference.

Therefore 'Militant' will be supporting the Mobilising Committee's proposals at the Conference, proposals which would mean a big step forward, despite their limitations, if accepted.

But the most important issue to come out of the Commission is the idea that the "small electoral college" should be allowed to have a veto over the Annual Conference decisions by voting

each year on the "rolling manifesto" and approving the final election manifesto.

Eric Heffer, one of the Commission co-chairman, has said it is likely that the left will submit a minority report on the questions of the Party Leader and Manifesto to the July NEC. An all out effort must be made to place the maximum pressure on all NEC members to reject the Commission's proposals on the Party Leader and Manifesto and support the minority report.

The Mobilising Committee will be undertaking such a drive, but it is essential that all 'Militant' supporters now take the initiative in every section of the labour movement: CLPs, trade unions and Co-ops.

It is especially important that the trade unions are won over in this battle. There can be no doubt that the right wing will be launching their own offensive with all the strength they can summon, after all for many of them their personal careers are at stake! Terry Duffy has already said that if the left issue a minority report then he will do likewise, and seek to rally support around the AUEW leadership's extreme right wing, pro-CLV position.

The Commission's workings reveal that it is not only the Labour Party leaders who need to be accountable to their members.

Democracy must also be extended in the trade unions. Members of the T&GWU, SOGAT and ASTMS will be bitter and angry to learn that union policy was not fully backed by their leaders on the Commission. It has been reported already that a London Division of ASTMS has protested at the actions of Clive Jenkins.

Undoubtedly SOGAT, ASTMS and T&GWU branches, divisional and regional committees will be flooding their executives with resolutions demanding that delegations to Party

conference support union policy.

The July 23rd meeting of the Labour Party NEC must be faced with a flood of resolutions and telegrams demanding opposition to the Commission's Leadership and Manifesto proposals. At the same time a determined campaign will have to be waged until the annual conference to commit delegates from all sections of the Party to support the five aims of the Mobilising Committee.

The right wing's desperate manoeuvres, which are backed by the capitalist press, reflect their enormous fears for their own future and that of the capitalist system they support. They correctly see that democratisation of the Labour Party is only the first step along the road to transforming the Party into an organisation fighting to overthrow capitalism.

The capitalists and the supporters of the capitalist 'mixed economy' inside the Labour Party are worried that the Labour Party is slipping out of their control, that it will not be a safe 'second eleven' for running their system. But no amount of propaganda or even temporary right wing victories can halt the radicalisation of the Labour Party and trade unions.

The fundamentally Tory policies of the last two Labour governments, the capitalist recession and the attacks of the present Tory government are the reasons for the growth in support for socialist ideas inside the Labour Party. The right wing's fundamental weakness is that their policies have been seen to fail twice in fourteen years.

Democratisation of the Labour Party is one of the first steps along the road to building a mass membership, socialist Labour Party which can lead the labour movement to the implementation of socialist policies and sweep capitalism into the dustbin of history.

MOBILISING COMMITTEE STATEMENT

This circular has been distributed to Constituency Labour Parties by the Rank and File Mobilising Committee for Labour Democracy, and we reprint it here for the information of Militant's readers.

'Militant' supports the Rank and File Mobilising Committee in its efforts to extend Party democracy. Other groups supporting the Committee are the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, Clause Four, Independent Labour Publications, Institute for Workers Control, the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, Labour Party Young Socialists, National Organisation for Labour Students and the Socialist Campaign for Labour Victory.

Re-selection: The Inquiry was in favour of Mandatory Re-selection but only by 7 votes to 6, despite the fact that 90% of submissions were in favour of it (for Mandatory Re-selection: 205; for Optional Re-selection: 21; for the old system: 1).

For this reason, the NEC has only to put a consequential amendment to clarify certain ambiguities in the resolution passed last year. This must be passed or the whole selection process will be in turmoil, but we should also be on guard against any attempts to re-open the whole issue.

Electoral College: The Electoral College which the Commission recommends, by 7 votes to 6, is of a fundamentally different variety from the one advocated by the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy (CLPD). It should be opposed for the following reasons:

Its size and composition (50% PLP, 25% Trade Unions, 20% CLPs, 5% Socialist Societies and probably only 100 people in all) render it barely accountable to anyone and in effect the enshrinement of the parliamentary veto over Party policy, first claimed by Harold Wilson.

Its members could be only

Mobilising Committee Pamphlet

Price 20p. From John Lansman, 10 Park Drive, London NW 11

indirectly elected so that the participation of the rank and file would be minimised; most organisations (and indeed most MPs) would thereby be effectively disenfranchised. Since it would be totally separate from the existing structure in the party, it would usurp many of the functions and powers of the Conference, and actually increase the power of the PLP to make policy.

The CLPD college on the other hand is simply Conference in a different form—with a different distribution of voting strength. It would give the political and industrial wings of the movement an equal say.

Half the votes would be cast by CLPs (2 for each CLP—1 cast by the Conference delegate, 1 by the MP or Parliamentary Candidate (PPC)), and the other half by affiliated organisations. All organisations plus MPs and PPCs would be involved.

So, do not be confused by the label 'Electoral College' since it can mean totally different things, and continue to support the CLPD model resolution on the election of the Leader since it is now more vital than ever.

Manifesto: The Commission unexpectedly recommended that jurisdiction over the manifesto should be in the hands of the electoral college; again this was in spite of rank and file wishes, since 86% were in favour of NEC jurisdiction (for NEC control: 142; for joint control of some variety: 24).

This proposal would mean that those presenting Labour's case to the electorate would cease to be directly accountable to Conference, thus further reducing rank and file influence in policy determination.

The NEC was instructed by last year's Conference to bring a constitutional amendment to this year's Conference which would give them the final say on the manifesto. They must be reminded of this obligation.

'MILITANT' BROADSHEET

'For a mass, democratically controlled, socialist Labour Party'

Price, only 2p. Order from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

SOUTHALL LPYS- FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY CONTINUES



Photo: MILITANT

Undeterred by the arrest of LPYS paper sellers the previous week, Young Socialists returned, to sell papers last Saturday

The Labour Party Young Socialists, fought back for the democratic rights of the labour and trade union movement in Southall last Saturday and reaffirmed the movement's right to sell papers, distribute leaflets and recruit workers to their ranks.

The unprovoked arrest of five members of the LPYS during a day of action on Southall Broadway the previous Saturday (see 'Militant' 20 June) had provoked a real wave of anger and opposition within the LPYS and sections of the labour movement throughout London. This

By a 'Militant' reporter

time the LPYS returned to Southall in force, with a march and rally some 100 strong with Young Socialists from all over London and backed up by local Constituency Labour Parties and trade union branches.

At the rally Martin Elvin (LPYS Regional Chairman) thanked those present for the enormous moral and practical and financial support given over the last week. He pointed out the dangers posed, not only by these arrests, but also by the threatened legal action by Ealing's Tory council against Sid Bidwell and George Guv for attending a rally in Southall Park on the TUC Day of Action.

Events like this presented a co-ordinated attack by Tories and police chiefs on the labour movement in Southall. But, he said, the police have picked a fight with the wrong people. This time they have picked a fight with the labour movement.

Kevin Ramage (LPYS National Chairman) pointed out that the police chiefs clearly felt they had a looser rein under Thatcher. Following the rally, the crowd divided up into large groups and returned back to the busy

shopping areas of Southall for a full day of action.

The response from the working class and Asian population throughout the day was tremendous. Over 150 'Militants' and a large number of 'Socialist Youth' were sold and more names were taken for the LPYS and the Labour Party.

It is significant that the police not only kept a low profile while lining our march, but actually disappeared from the streets altogether during the six days of action before the march and kept out of the way until we had gone.

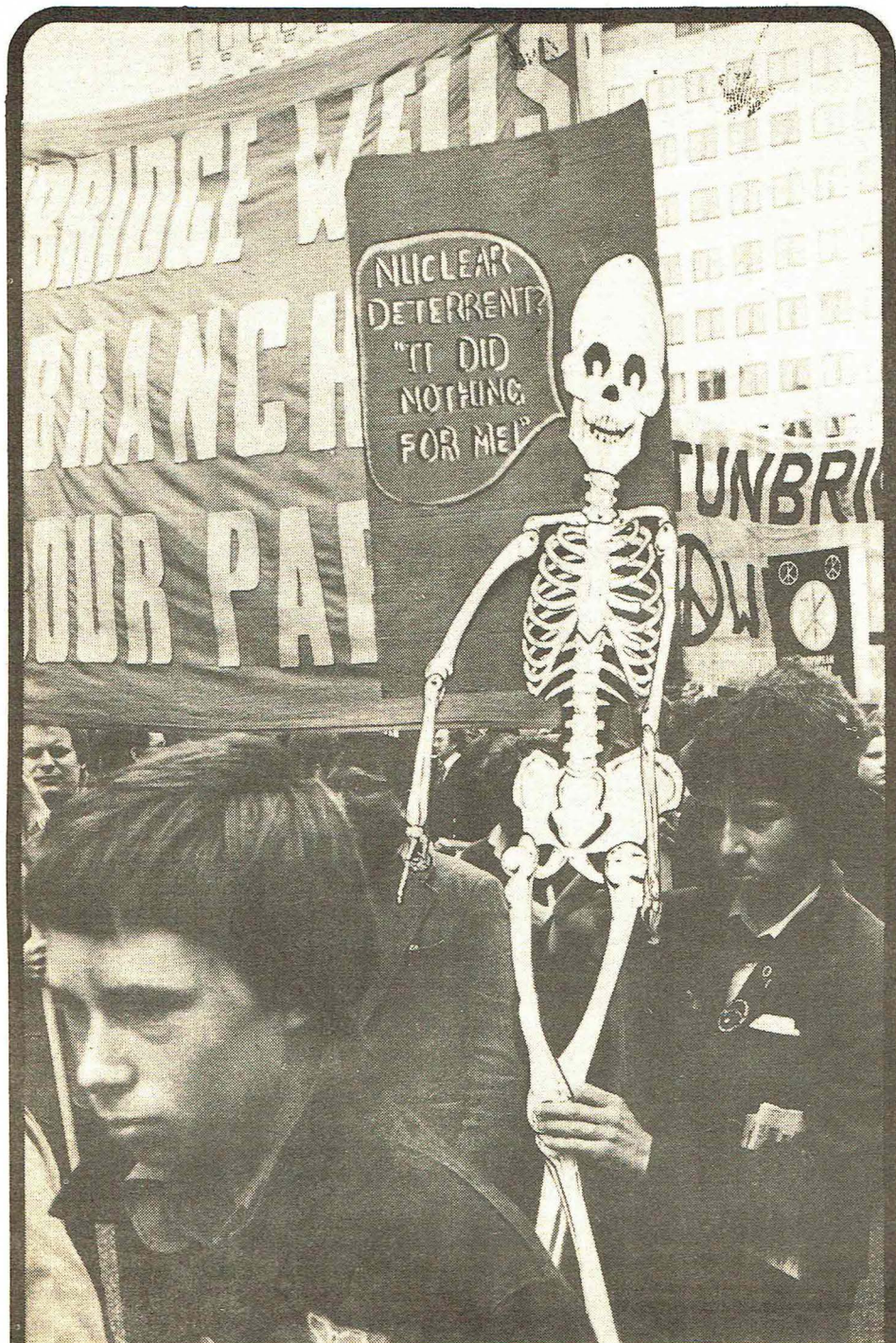
In the week before from every factory and workplace we visited we received support from the shop stewards and trade union representatives. The Indian cafés, cinemas and shops displayed our posters in the windows and put our leaflets on the counters.

Resolutions of support

Resolutions and donations of support have already been passed in trade union branches, trades councils, CLPs and immigrant workers' organisations all over West London. The speed and initiative particularly of the LPYS but of the labour movement generally are a tribute to the movement.

The Labour Party Young Socialists had already planned a campaign in the area to build a LPYS branch, building up to a major public meeting on 8 July in the Town Hall, taking up the question of racialism and the fight against the Tories.

Send resolutions, messages of support, donations, to: LPYS Southall 5 Defence Fund, c/o Steve Clare, 50 Rofant Road, Northwood, Middlesex.



20,000 MARCH AGAINST 'CRUISE'

Last Sunday saw the largest demonstration against nuclear weapons for twenty years. Many local Labour Parties, LPYS and trade union branches were on the march, called by the Labour Party. But noticeable by his absence was right-wing pro-NATO Labour Defence spokesman, William Rodgers MP.

The hostility to the Tories' defence policy was strong. Demonstrators called for all nuclear weapons to be removed from Britain.

Come to LPYS Summer Camp

It was great last year

"I enjoyed the extensive debate and positiveness and faith in the policies of the LPYS. It's given me great determination to go back to my LPYS branch and encourage my members to fight for these policies and win young people to our programme."

Fiona Winders,
Wanstead & Woodford LPYS

"We don't have camps like this in Belgium. I think the LPYS has achieved the correct balance in mixing politics with a holiday atmosphere. This is something we shall try and work for when we return." Francois Bliqui, Jong Socialisten, Belgium.

Every young trade unionist who wants to get involved in the fight against the Tories should join the other 800 who will be at the Labour Party Young Socialists Summer Camp in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire, from July 26th—August 2nd.

Certainly the Post Office Engineering Union think it's important for their young members to go, as they've written asking for more details. Has your trade union been asked to sponsor someone yet?

There is a special commission in the week with seminars on Trade Union Youth sections, the Charter for Young Workers, and the LPYS and the Trade Union.

The camp's political

programme will also include a commission on the Labour Party, and one for School Students.

In addition there will be a Socialist Youth Rally on 'Fighting the Tories' with Tony Benn, and Tony Saunio speaking. Debates between different views within the labour movement have been organised on Labour Party Democracy, Which Way Forward for Labour, Nuclear Power and the Middle East.

Every socialist looking for an alternative to Thatcher's 'radical' ideology will want to come along to the series of seminars on socialist philosophy, with Andy Bevan and Mick Brooks speaking.

Along with all the rallies, debates, and semi-

nars, the camp also has a full programme of sporting activities including canoeing, horseriding, football and rugby. In the evenings, apart from the discos and club nights, the films 'October,' Charlie Chaplin's 'Great Dictator,' and 'Norma Rae' will be showing.

All of this, and all your meals etc [all you need is a tent] for only £35! Organise your transport now! Book now—send £5 deposit [or the full £35] to Andy Bevan, LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

By Kevin Ramage
(LPYS National Chairman)

LIVERPOOL LIBERALS TO SACK 3,000

As if unemployment wasn't bad enough already on Merseyside the ruling Liberal Party on Liverpool council have decided to cut £10m off the budget, and throw up to 3,000 local authority workers out of a job.

They had hoped to hide their role as a party of big business by forming a 'working party' to implement the cuts, with two Liberals, two Tories and two Labour on the committee. The Labour group has refused to join such a group.

Now it must link up with the joint shop stewards' committee of the local authority workers to fight the cuts. The Liberals tried to hide their real class face during the recent council elections. They said they would reduce rates or keep them down. They never explained at what cost.

Now they will try to blame their fellow capitalists—the Tory government.

Only a clear socialist programme offers an alternative to these big business twins.

This loss of 3,000 jobs must be taken in combination with the other cuts already decided by the combined votes of Tories and Liberals.

The run-down of minor works; the transfer of all maintenance work to private enterprise; rationalisation of schools; freezing of recruitment and the ending of overtime working—measures such as these have caused a strengthening of the recently formed JSSC.

Uniquely, the committee comprises manual workers,

By Terry Harrison
[Liverpool District Labour Party]

staff, lecturers and teachers who are hammering out a programme of solidarity action.

Plans are being laid for a rally of all local authority workers on 10 July and a possible stoppage of work and lobby to coincide with the council on 23 July.

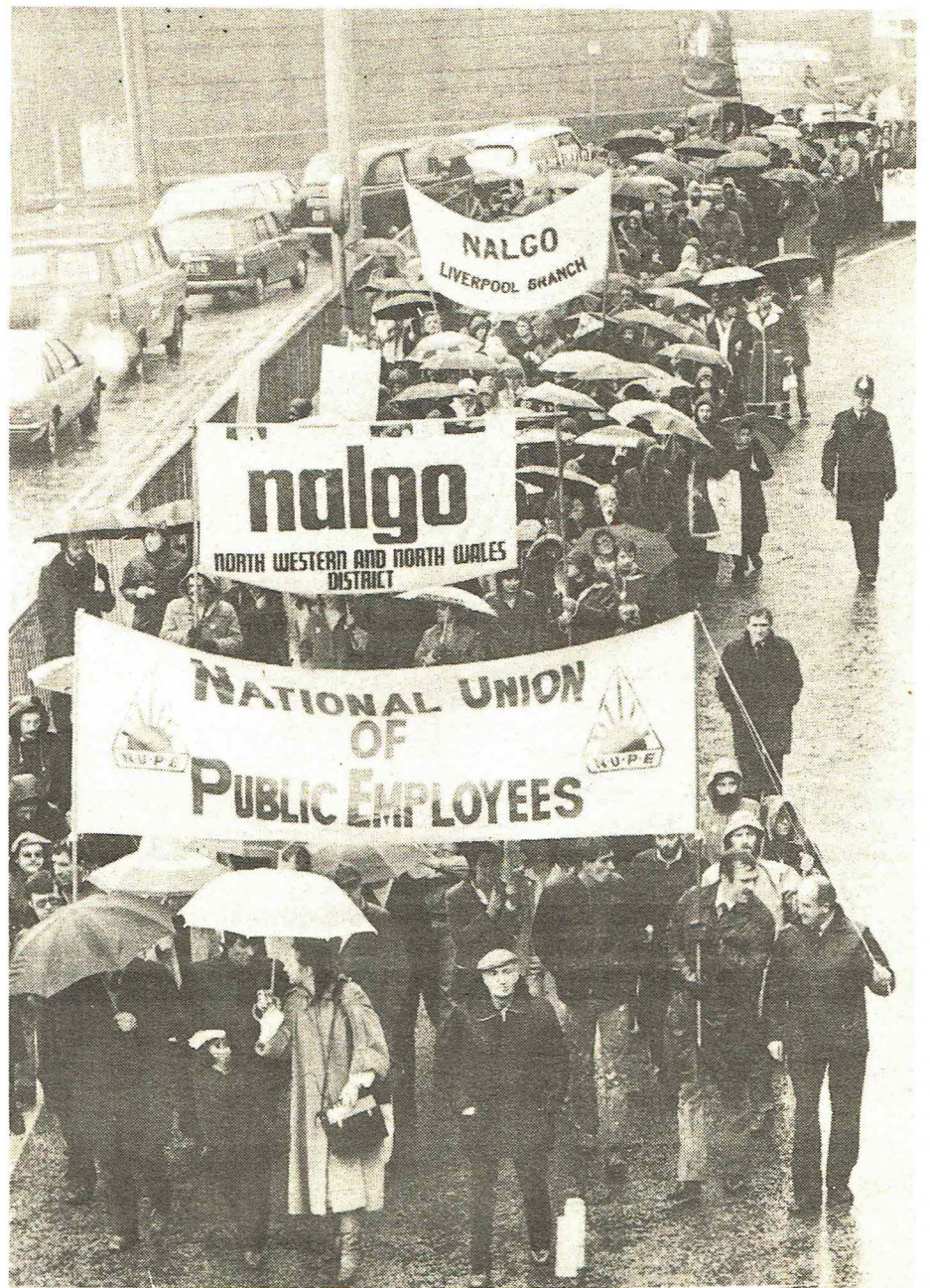
Labour must play its part. Regular meetings between councillors and stewards in order to discuss the latest information and work out tactics must be organised.

Local Labour Parties should make contact with local authority workers in these areas, raising the question of joint committees of action to fight the cuts. Labour Parties should carry out leafletting campaigns and organise public meetings and days of action to present an alternative socialist programme and provide a platform for the local authority unions.

The anti-working class parties' cynical call for unity to "save the city" must be disregarded. The only people who are not hurt by such cuts in public expenditure are those who the Tories and Liberals really represent.

The rich can get their education and health care by going private. Resulting from the Tories' massive tax hand-outs they can also afford to buy their houses.

Liverpool has experienced a growth of Labour Party membership. Many of them are local authority workers. They are beginning to realise that the struggle they are waging will be useless if the next Labour government returns to policies of wage



Local authority workers protesting about last year's cuts and growth in unemployment

restraint and further cuts in public expenditure. Nationally the Labour Party must now declare its intention to restore cuts, expand services, and produce a socialist alternative to answer Tory policies.

**Local Authority workers:
Rally 10 July
Lobby Council 23 July**

Labour MP defends public schools

Our Labour MP's decision to send his second son to the exclusive Ampleforth public school aroused substantial opposition in the local Party. When, after two months, Kevin Macnamara MP failed in his attempt to justify his action, the general management committee decided to call a re-selection meeting as soon as possible.

By John Goodby
(Central Hull CLP)

"How are we going to explain the MP's decision on the doorstep during an election?" was the question from one long-standing Party member. MacNamara's 'explanation' of his conduct amazed even his most loyal allies.

Cries of "disgusting" and angry comments from union and ward delegates punctuated the MP's attack on the dockers' delegates and those of a left-wing branch. He dismissed the critical motions up for discussion as the work of "johnny-come-latelies" and "Marxists".

But one by one, every single point made was crushingly

answered by delegates. Even with a scholarship grant, more than a thousand pounds extra had to be paid to provide the fees required by the school. There was no way any working class family could afford that, so the MP's argument that he was taking advantage of 'equality of opportunity' was bogus. On an MP's wage (£12,000) it's easier to overlook these minor problems, however.

Secondly, there is provision for the advanced musical tuition Mr MacNamara's sons require in Hull. There is no need for them to be 'forced' to go to a public school, as local Department of Education officials have confirmed.

For our Labour MP to send his sons to a public school and help undermine state education is a kick in the teeth for working class children in the city. It amounts to supporting elitism, prestige and the entire system by which the ruling class train their heirs and perpetuate capitalism.

The issue of accountability is a crucial one for the labour movement. MPs must represent party policy and the working class who put them in their position. What appears from Central Hull's experience is a confirmation of what Marxists in the Party have been saying for years—the impossibility of our representatives doing their job when they live on wages and 'perks' way above those of the

average worker. How can a life-style which includes two homes, a London flat, and months abroad every year compare with that of a low-paid worker struggling to keep his family? And

how can the MP represent working people unless he experiences the conditions they suffer?

All Labour party members must put forward resolutions calling for the wages of our

representatives to be vetted by the rank and file. Party members should also attempt to discover what skeletons in the cupboards their own MPs have got, and make them answerable to their local

CLPs. Only by forcing our representatives to be accountable will the labour movement provide the organisation and leadership the working class has a right to expect—the best.

LPYS Fight for jobs

By Stan Natrass

(Littlehampton Branch, Arundel Labour Party)

School-leavers in 'true blue' West Sussex will have a lean time this year. Mr Alan Colenutt, West Sussex Careers Officer, has publicly stated that "Finding work for the county's 4,000 to 5,000 school-leavers this year is going to be harder than last year."

According to the West Sussex Gazette, Mr Colenutt, after issuing this warning, stated that with continued co-operation between employers and school-leavers, "things may not turn out to

be so bad in West Sussex, as in other parts of the country."

"What a prospect to be held out to youngsters leaving school this summer," commented Jim McEwan, secretary of Littlehampton Young Socialists who have just held a successful "Week of Action." LPYS members distributed hundreds of leaflets in the shopping centre, and the main theme in the leaflet was Youth Unemployment.

Littlehampton Young Socialists also canvassed hundreds of homes in the area, carrying the message of hope that a socialist Britain could transform society, and provide everyone with a decent job, as well as all the other necessities of life. They were met practically everywhere with enthusiasm and good wishes. Many new members were recruited for the Labour Party. A special effort was made to call on new voters, and this resulted in at least four new members for the YS

who pledged regular attendance at meetings, two of them joining the YS on their canvass later in the week.

One particularly harsh cut in West Sussex is that imposed by the medical director of the South West Thames Chest Radiography Service, Dr Garrick Tomkins, who announced last week that the current cash crisis has forced the Authority to abandon plans to buy a new chest X-ray vehicle. From next Monday, the unit will not be visiting Burgess Hill, Henfield, Midhurst, Steyning and Three Bridges, and citizens of these towns and villages will have to visit their local hospital, or go to the nearest place visited by the mobile unit. This is another monstrous blow to people's health, and will result in already long waiting lists for X-rays at hospitals becoming longer still.

What further proof if it were needed, that the capital-

ist system stinks! It cannot provide vital equipment to SAVE lives, but is only pleased to massively increase expenditure on so-called defence, namely, weapons to DESTROY lives. The message that the Tory government is a luxury we can no longer tolerate is being driven home very forcefully, not only in the industrial areas, but in the once True-Blue Tory West Sussex.

Reports from Young Socialists—who are canvassing regularly for new members and supporters—show that people are eager to hear about a socialist society, and are joining the Labour Party when they hear about Clause 4 part 4, and what the implementation of that would mean.

"Militant" supporters in the Littlehampton area have had a great response for the paper. Sales have shot up to over the 100 mark in the last few weeks.

LEFT and RIGHT

● We need a new sovereign. Not a plea from the Prince Charles fan club. But the desperate cry from the managing director of London's Underground. And the sovereign he wants is a metal one—a new £1 coin. The problem is that what with inflation Tube fares are rising so fast that the old ticket machines are out of date. The average journey now costs 40p and it will soon be going up again, for the second time this year. So the average £1 fare won't be far away. And they need new machines to cope. Recently, just to upgrade 150 of London Transport's 1,000 machines cost £250,000, so you can see his point. There is an alternative though: free fares to encourage people off the overcrowded roads back to public transport. Last year there were 78m fewer Tube journeys than in 1970, when the average fare cost 8p. But that would be a move towards socialist planning—which could get rid of all types of sovereigns.

● The heads of some of the world's biggest drug companies are waxing indignant about an unscrupulous former chemist, Dr Robert Aries. "We have to protect society from people like him," bemoans George Ledoux, head of Boehringer France. Hoffman la Roche call him a "bad man."

Aries is certainly no angel. He made a fortune registering major companies' trade names before they got round to it themselves. He beat the giant Standard Oil to the gun when they adopted the Exxon title: the company had to pay out at least £1 million to 'buy back' the name. He wheedled industrial secrets out of laboratory workers and took out patents on formulas closely related to new products other firms were developing. He claims to be keeping the drug companies on their toes: a modern-day Robin Hood [Though needless to say he's amassed quite a packet for himself out of it].

But firms like Hoffman la Roche, who had Aries sentenced to prison in the '60s, are scarcely the people to complain about dubious business morality. Often with Aries' help, their excessive profiteering on drugs has been exposed—up to 10,000 per cent on Valium. Aries may upset the drug monopolies, but it is the Boehringers and Hoffman la Roches which have the NHS and our lives at the mercy of their profits.

● As the Cabinet prepares for its all-day discussion next month on incomes policy, what has been the latest guidance from their ideological guru, Friedrich von Hayek? Hayek is the preacher of monetarism, attracting disciples such as Milton Friedman. For over 40 years Hayek has spread the word. Now he has elaborated on how monetarism can be made to work. In a recent letter to 'The Times', he stated it would only be feasible if the unions were curbed and all their 'special legal privileges' removed. And if the workers oppose this? Hayek gave his answer in a recent television interview with admirer Bernard Levin. "I'm afraid it will have to begin by diminishing the powers of Parliament." Asked by Levin if this meant "dictatorship, as we've now come to call it," Hayek replied, "Oh yes, as you like to call this." The Tories may not be planning to introduce a dictatorship now. But Hayek's words should act as a warning to the working class that sections of the ruling class are quite prepared seriously to contemplate and even plan for dictatorial repression in order to preserve their system.

● Quote of the week? This gem from Peter Matthews, chairman of Vickers,:

"At a time of high inflation, exorbitant interest rates and a relatively strong currency" [thanks to Tory policies—Ed] "salary expectations rise, but in our industry the ability to pay more has diminished through reduced margins. Paradoxically, to increase profits and obtain more orders we must attract more skilled and able people and this we cannot do if we pay less than other comparable industries."

"The only answer is to achieve higher productivity and, of necessity, this has at times resulted in redundances": or, if you work harder, we'll have to sack you—but then we might be in a position to take you on again.

SHREWSBURY -A BOSSES CONSPIRACY

Labour activists would do well to read the new pamphlet by Des Warren, the building worker imprisoned for three years under the conspiracy laws.

With the Tories, egged on by their big business paymasters, straining at the leash to shackle the trade unions with new legislation, its lessons are timely.

Des was imprisoned after the three major industrial disputes of 1972 where the bosses attempted to use the courts against the unions—the miners, dockers and the building workers: "All three had charges made against sections of their membership, all three had displays of active solidarity around the courts at which their members appeared, 'Longannet 13', 'Pentonville 5', 'Shrewsbury 24', (which included Des Warren). Two of these attacks were driven back; the third was successful."

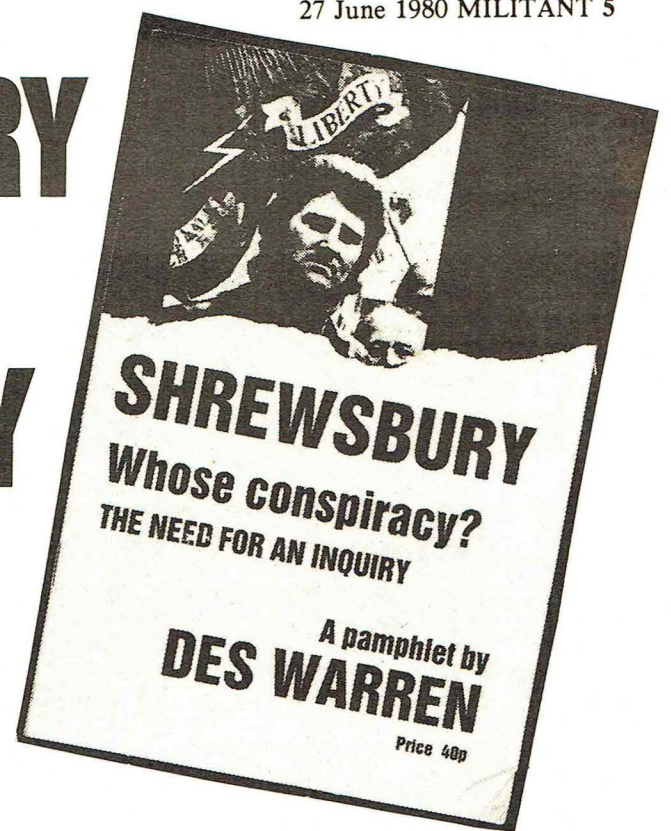
The 1972 building workers' fight for a basic £30 rate and a 35-hour week was bitter and drawn-out. With sites spread out over wide areas, and many working the 'lump', picketing by the union proved difficult.

On the picket at Shrewsbury which led to Des' arrest, feelings were running high; when flying pickets approached the first site in the area,

they were confronted by a plant hire foreman armed with a shotgun.

In spite of this, the 250 flying pickets, including Des Warren, effectively closed down the scab sites in the area. But six months later 24 of the pickets were arrested. Serious charges were laid against the three leaders—Warren, Tomlinson, and Jones, and Des Warren was sentenced to three years.

The main charge against Des was brought under the archaic 'conspiracy' law. Although the legal niceties could be argued in the courts forever, the statement by appeal judge Widgery, acting on behalf of the Tories and big business through the class-biased courts, made their reasoning clear: "These sentences must be seen as a deterrent."



Much of the pamphlet deals with the victimisation Des Warren suffered in prison. Prison officers told other inmates that Des was inside for 'committing an offence concerning women and children.' He was not allowed to wear a certain type of shoe necessary due to a foot complaint.

The pamphlet draws attention to rule 47 (12) of prison regulations. Des made several complaints about his treatment and other aspects of prison life and each time was reminded of this rule—if a prisoner is found to be making 'false or malicious' allegations he can lose up to a hundred and eighty days of remission on each charge. No prisoner can feel very confident about making a complaint, knowing that he or she could be faced with an additional sentence.

While in Lincoln Prison, Des made a complaint about a senior prison officer who was allegedly carrying out criminal activities. The prison authorities came out against Des (though they did not charge him under rule 47(12)!) so he took his

complaint to the Home Office. Here, after being 'fully considered' by the Labour Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins (now of 'centre party' fame) Des was told the original findings would not be 'interfered with' and instructed not to take the matter any further.

Des also has some sharp comments on the leadership of the Communist Party, of which he is a member, describing them as under 'a stranglehold of reformism.' He questions why the CP's only advice to him while in prison was to co-operate with the regime, wear prison uniform etc. when he was clearly a political prisoner.

These bitter experiences have led to some ultra-alarmist and misguided conclusions, but none the less the pamphlet is worthwhile reading. It should serve as a warning to the labour movement—and also to the Tories: their new anti-union legislation will provoke angry opposition every bit as determined as in 1972, and active workers will well remember the lessons of these battles.

FILM REVIEW 'ISITWALANDWE'

Isitwalandwe is an unusual film. Its subject is the Freedom Charter, the programme of the African National Congress, which is the traditional organisation of the South African workers and oppressed.

The Freedom Charter is also supported by the South African Congress of Trade Unions and the SA Communist Party.

The film contains some lively historical scenes from the mass struggles of the 1950s and shows the Congress of the People at Kliptown (near Johannesburg) where the Freedom Charter was adopted on 26 June 1955. Interviews with exiled leaders of the ANC give an impression of the Charter's contents and how the leadership sees its task.

The Freedom Charter con-

tains all the demands of the black population for democratic rights and an end to national oppression. Under pressure of the workers, it also includes the demand for the nationalisation of the banks, the mines and monopoly industry, and for public control over production.

Unfortunately, neither the Freedom Charter nor the exiled leadership give a clear indication to the militant workers and youth of how the programme for a free and democratic South Africa must



be carried into practice. The only conclusion drawn by the leadership from the blood-thirsty intransigence of the apartheid regime is that the struggle can 'no longer' be carried forward by peaceful means alone.

156 leaders of the ANC and other organisations, who had been involved in the campaign for the Congress of the People, were arrested in 1956 and charged with high treason. The state claimed that despite the ANC's policy of non-violence, the Freedom Charter's aims could only be achieved through the overthrow of the existing regime.

After four years, all the accused in the 'Treason Trial' were found not guilty because of the crime of high treason could not technically be proved. But this did not alter the irreconcilable nature of the class struggle in South Africa.

In reality, capitalism in South Africa is totally dependent for its profits on the barbarous oppression of the mass of the workers. National

liberation cannot be achieved without the overthrow of the capitalist class and their state.

The renewed struggles of the workers and the youth flaring up all round the country at present have turned the question of programme into an urgent practical necessity. The film, like the ANC leadership, is silent on the most crucial questions of the South African revolution—the way in which the workers can defeat apartheid and liberate society from capitalist enslavement.

It is the responsibility of the Marxists involved in the South African freedom struggle to take up these questions scientifically and contribute towards the development of a fighting programme for the workers and the youth, for eradication of national oppression, and the socialist transformation of Southern Africa. If watching the film provokes discussion around these crucial questions, it will serve a useful role.

NO RETURN TO INCOMES POLICY FRAUD

The Special Labour Party Conference of May 31st marked a significant victory for the left. Yet in the weeks following the conference, the right-wing has organised a hysterical attack on all the main decisions adopted by conference, to the gleeful approval of the Tory press.

According to Callaghan's cautiously-worded formula a "settled policy on incomes" would be necessary if the next Labour government were to carry out its programme. And he went on: "If increased productivity is to bring the social dividend we need and a higher standard of life, there must be a more direct relationship [?] between wages and productivity."

In all the fundamentals, the arguments are identical to those of the economists of the capitalist class, who seek to place the whole burden of the crisis on the shoulders of the workers and their families.

The idea of an "incomes policy" is not new. It is the same idea they put forward under the Wilson-Callaghan government of 1974-79. If only the workers would moderate their wage demands, we were told in 1974, then productivity would rise, investment would recover, and unemployment would fall.

What happened in practice? Between 1974 and 1979, there was a fall in real living standards of 9.1%. The workers, believing in the promises of their leaders, faithfully kept their part of the bargain. As a result, in two years (1976-77), there was a drop in average family income of about £10 per week.

There were massive cuts of £8,000 million a year in public expenditure, paving the way for even more savage cuts under Thatcher.

By their policy the right wing Labour leaders gave a bonanza to the bosses, who saw their share of the cake enlarged at the expense of the workers.

Theoretically, this should have meant an increase in investment, production and employment. But did it?

Between 1974 and 1979 unemployment doubled in Britain. By 1978, industrial production was actually 4% lower than in 1974—about the same level, in fact, as at the time of the "three day week" in 1974.

On the other hand, there was an orgy of speculation in property and other non-productive sectors of the economy. Bank profits doubled in one year—1978. £2,000 million was invested abroad in 1976 alone.

It was this policy of "diluted Thatcherism" which caused Labour's electoral catastrophe in 1979. Yet Callaghan and the Labour right, in their Alice in Wonderland world, seriously

By Alan Woods

imagine that such a policy would be a real vote-catcher for Labour in the next election!

It is absolutely clear that if the next Labour government is led by these people, we will be in for a new round of savage cuts both in social expenditure and wages. The reason is that the Labour right, having accepted the capitalist system as the only possible one, are compelled to accept the logic of that system.

Given the catastrophic crisis of British capitalism in the context of falling world markets, a Callaghan-Healey government would not be a government of reforms, but of counter-reforms. In this, they are at one with the Tories and big business.

In fact, despite all the infantile rantings of Thatcher, this Tory government at a certain moment will be compelled to do a 'U-turn' and introduce an 'incomes policy' of its own, probably in the form of a wage-freeze.

For their part, more than one trade union leader would be prepared even to do a deal with the present government—if only it were led by more 'reasonable' Tories of the Prior species. Like the right wing of the Labour Party, union leaders like Duffy have completely swallowed all the economic 'theories' put forward by the spokesmen of big business.

It is not excluded—given the attitude of the present TUC leadership—that some kind of shaky deal on incomes might be patched up for a short while. But once the workers realise what is happening, the explosion of anger which would take place would compel a change of course. The present mood of confusion would give way to new 'winters of discontent' on the industrial front.

The bankruptcy of Thatcherism will probably mean the victory of a new Labour government at the next election. Already, well in advance, right-wingers like Shirley Williams are striving to dampen down any hopes on the part of the workers that a Labour government will mean a reversal of the present Tory economic policies. She has come up with a real electoral 'winner': the Labour Party should not promise anything at all!

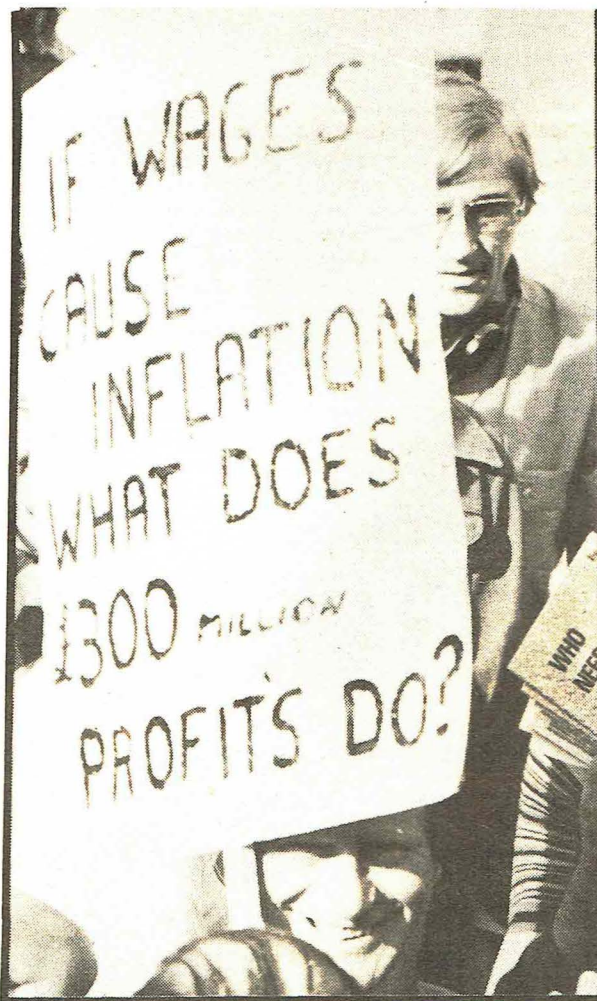
Could one imagine such a recipe for electoral disaster as



Photos: J McKittrick (Militant)

Above: Low paid workers fought for their living wage against the last Labour government's economic policy

Left: So did Ford workers. Only the employers' profits benefited from the policy.



this? Yet Williams and Co. seriously imagine that the mass of workers are going to vote enthusiastically for a party which promises them nothing (and therefore will undoubtedly carry out its programme to the letter)!

Callaghan's 'patent mixture' would succeed only in getting the worst of all worlds both for the working class and for British society as a whole. What neither the right wing, nor the trade unionists, nor the 'Tribune' left, have understood is the fact that tinkering with the capitalist system, far from solving anything, will only aggravate the crisis, causing unemployment to rocket still further than at present.

No matter what 'panacea'

is tried—monetarism, Keynesianism, incomes' policy or import controls—only a nightmare future awaits the working class while the banks and monopolies remain in control of the economy.

Even if the workers were prepared, out of loyalty, to accept an incomes' policy (i.e. a reduction of living standards) under a Labour government, there is absolutely no guarantee that the capitalists would invest their increased profits in productive industry.

Why should the British capitalists invest in costly machinery when they can make quick and easy killings by gambling on the stock exchange, speculating in land, gold or works of art, or

sending their money to South Africa?

Contrary to all the lies of the Tory press about 'high wages' being the cause of the crisis, the British workers are the worst paid in Western Europe. Even in formerly backward Spain, the average hourly wage is now higher than in Britain.

A recent report by Labour Research shows that multinational companies such as Ford, General Motors and Philips pay lower wages in Britain than they do in other European countries: "British workers, doing similar work, or putting in as much effort as their European counterparts were paid consistently less and European workers had longer holidays, better sick pay was arranged and higher special bonus payments."

In spite of all Callaghan's efforts, the next Labour government will not be like the last. The British workers have sacrificed too much already, both under the vicious Thatcher administration and also under the previous Wilson-Callaghan Labour government. There is too much unemployment. Too much inflation. Too much erosion of the social services.

And if Callaghan and Co. believe that the British workers will tolerate further cuts in their living standards just because a Labour Prime Minister, and not Margaret Thatcher, is in Number Ten, that just shows how remote the Labour right is from the thinking of ordinary working people.

Any ambiguity on this question would be absolutely fatal for Labour's future. Yet the position of the 'Tribune' left here, as on other issues, remains far from clear.

Whilst publicly opposing Callaghan's stand in the Special Conference, Tony Benn did not make clear what his own position on incomes policy was, limiting himself to opposition to an 'imposed' incomes policy.

Similarly, Eric Heffer, in an article in 'The Times' (16th June) merely argues that "there will have to be a very different approach" in any future agreement between the TUC and the Labour Party on incomes policy.

The terrible crisis of British capitalism only leaves two alternatives to any future Labour government. One is to bend the knee once more to the pressures of the bankers and capitalists and carry through a programme of further cuts in living standards, with three or four million unemployed.

The alternative is to grasp the nettle and put an end to the domination over the lives and destinies of millions of people by a handful of wealthy parasites, taking over the banks and monopolies and organising production in the interests of the many, not the profit of the few.

No quack remedies and false panaceas will cure the terminal sickness of British capitalism. 'Tinkering' with the system will only serve to make its convulsions more painful and violent.

If the Labour leaders spent one-tenth of the time they spend on discussing ways of saving capitalism on the task of mobilising the movement for the transformation of society, we would have been living under socialism a long time ago. It is high time to implement the policies of real socialism embodied in Clause IV, Part IV of Labour's constitution.

The Press- THE BOSSES OWN IT THE BOSSES CONTROL IT

Those who maintain that Britain's parliamentary democracy is a model to the world use as proof the fact that the press is free of state censorship.

The press is believed to be free to say exactly as it pleases, yet its position on public matters is so predictable that it has become known as the fourth estate of the realm!

Newspapers have on occasion taken on sections of the establishment. The best known case was probably the 'Sunday Times' investigation into the Thalidomide scandal.

The Distillers Co., who produced Thalidomide, tried every trick they knew to prevent publication and failed. But people remember the affair now, not because of its implications, but because of its rarity!

It was the same 'fearless' 'Sunday Times' that later refused to publish an article, painstakingly researched by journalists commissioned by the paper's colour supplement, detailing evidence of covert CIA backing for right-wing journals and groups within the Labour Party.

The editor, Harold Evans, refused to print on the grounds that the material was "unfair". "These," he said, referring to the Labour right,

By Bill Doggett

"are the people we support."

The same paper, though, has never hesitated to print totally groundless reports, with not one shred of evidence, against 'Militant'. But then Marxists are not the people the press barons "support"!

Far more common in the columns of our "free press" are attacks on trade unions and the Labour Party. NUPE's leader Alan Fisher's name and photograph were rarely off the pages of the popular press; he was labelled a murderer and a blackmailer because NUPE members in hospital were forced on strike to try to win a living wage.

Yet when the Tories announced their public spending cuts, hardly a critical voice was raised at how many lives this would cost.

When Dunlop announced the closure of their Liverpool plant, the 'Daily Express' carried lurid exposés of workers sleeping on duty. Yet on Monday March 10, 1980, that

same paper's financial page stated calmly, and no doubt accurately, that closure was due to world-wide over-capacity for tyre production.

These scare stories are soon forgotten, but they serve their purpose of dividing and confusing the workers long enough for the bosses to lock the gates.

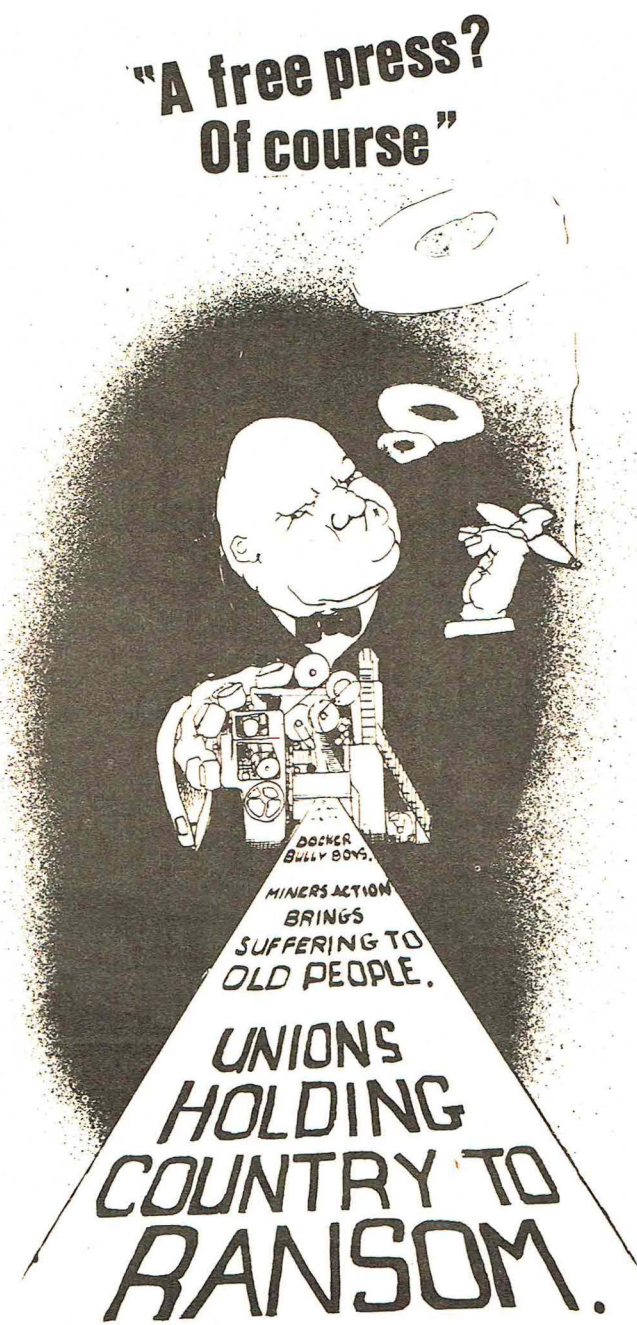
"Press freedom" at present means the freedom of the wealthy to control and the freedom of the rest of us to accept the situation. Lord Thompson of Fleet and the International Publishing Corporation together control 60% of Britain's daily press.

Together with Rupert Murdoch's News International, Lord Rothermere's Associated Newspapers and Victor Matthews' giant Trafalgar House, they control virtually the lot.

The 'Daily Mirror' "supports" the Labour Party but only in the sense of being a publicity machine for Labour's right wing while in the meantime making fine-sounding exposés of some of the more extreme evils of the world.

Nowhere does the 'Daily Mirror' campaign for a mass socialist working class party to take on the Tories. Nor does it ever pose the question of the socialist transformation of society to bring about democratic control of wealth-producing industries so they can be planned to cater for the needs of working people. To do so would be to attack the roots of the system which spawned, and still controls,

the 'Mirror'.



the 'Mirror'.

The 'Mirror' is part of the International Publishing Corporation, controlled by Reed International, an international monopoly with interests in newspapers, book publishing, radio broadcasting, property, newsprint, wallpapers and decorating products, oil exploration, weaving, computers and engineering.

It operates in virtually every capitalist country, and has so many subsidiaries it takes four and a half pages of 'Who Owns Whom' just to list them.

What of starting up another daily paper of labour without capitalist control? This question is brought up at Labour Party conference time and again. Only two years ago conference was told that according to the best available advice, it could not be done for less than a £6 million launch fee.

The future of this proposed newspaper is now being

thrashed out by the Campaign for Press Freedom which should be supported by all socialists. But it is important to bear in mind that in 1977 the Royal Commission on the Press turned down suggestions for subsidies for new newspapers largely on the grounds that there was already too much excess capacity in the industry.

So why should working people be asked to fork out millions of pounds when the plant to produce a Labour newspaper already exists?

The answer is clear. This equipment is owned by half a dozen millionaires, who would be threatening their own wealth and privilege if they helped propagate the ideas of a workers' democracy.

The solution to the problem is equally clear, but Labour leaders have consistently shied away from it: nationalisation of the press faci-

lities. Labour MPs almost to a man see even discussion on nationalising the press as giving the Tories a stick marked 'dictatorship' to beat us with. So they keep quiet and hope the press won't become even more monopolised.

To believe that the monopolies would willingly surrender their assets to a future Labour government regardless of its majority in Parliament or its strength in the country is utopian and fails to draw the lessons of even recent nationalisation.

To leave the press in the hands of the profiteers at a time when their words would, as Lenin put it, "be no less dangerous than bombs or bullets," would in any case be doubly foolhardy. Trafalgar House is a particularly strong instance. It is already a regular major contributor to Tory Party funds, and Victor Matthews sits on the Central Council of the notoriously anti-trade union Economic League.

To charge that nationalisation leads to undemocratic control is unsound, even at face value. Even accepting the Tory premise that this would mean inevitable government control, the Labour Party would then have had control of newspapers for more than 20 years since the second world war.

As things stand, in government or in opposition, the press is almost exclusively under the permanent control of the Tory Party, a situation without any shred of democracy.

Is there any hope that with the press in capitalist hands, its use will be apportioned according to the support political (and other) ideas have in society?

Will the millions of Labour voters be granted the facilities their numbers command, or will the affairs of the Party continue to be shown in the opportunistic, partisan way they always have?

Nationalisation is not a question of curtailing anyone's right of freedom of speech. Rather the reverse. Nationalisation under workers' control and management would mean opinions could be expressed in the press with due regard to their support in society, and matters of public concern debated in a far more rational manner than they are now.

The real issue is not, in this context, press freedom, but press ownership. The right of a few millionaires to control public opinion, versus the right of working people to buy a newspaper they know they can trust.

GOVERNMENT COVER UP 100 TIMES THE DANGER?

245T

'Militant' [25 April and 2 May] showed the dangerous effects of the herbicide 245-T. Together with another chemical, it had been used as a defoliant by American forces in Vietnam.

The active poison in 245T, dioxin, has been shown on numerous occasions to have

extremely harmful effects. Seveso in Italy, where an explosion in 1976 released dioxin into the atmosphere, now has the highest rate of deformities amongst new born babies in Western Europe.

In Britain, 245T is widely used as a spray by agricultural and forestry workers, many of whom have suffered from the effects. In one village in Somerset, where the For-

estry Commission used the spray, wives of forestry workers have suffered a number of miscarriages and deformities in their children.

The government have previously claimed that the amounts involved were very small. Last year the government advisory committee on pesticides claimed that only 3 tonnes were used each year. These figures are obviously bogus.

Even the Minister of State for Agriculture, Earl Ferrers, had to admit in a letter to Labour MP, Dr Roger Thomas, that 58 tonnes of weedkiller containing 245T was sold here in 1979.

Dr Thomas' own investigations through customs showed that the true figure was twice that amount, 116 tonnes. Worse than that, imports of close derivatives of 245T also containing dioxin

were not included in these figures, and he believes the real figure may be 100 times that claimed by the government.

Since May 22, the government has lowered the amount of dioxin permissible in 245T, but this is insufficient. One of its manufacturers, Hoffman La Roche, have admitted that they could remove dioxin from the weedkiller, but that it would reduce their profit

margins, and that they would only take such action if all their competitors did likewise!

The labour movement must fight to ban 245T. The lives and health of workers and their families cannot be sacrificed to boost big business profits.

By Roger
Shrives

Labour History THE YEARS

DAVE BRANDON, PETERBOROUGH LABOUR PARTY, EXPLAINS HOW THE LABOUR PARTY WAS FORMED OUT OF THE TITANIC CLASS STRUGGLES OF 1870-1906

In the mid-1870s, the British economy was facing very different conditions from those it had enjoyed as the 'workshop of the world'.

The end of the Franco-Prussian War stimulated intensive industrial development both in France and Germany. At the same time the USA was recovering from the effects of the Civil War and re-entering world trade markets on a large scale.

Britain soon found her domination of world trade under sustained attack. The long boom passed into a new economic cycle, with severe crises in 1875, 1880 and 1884, from which recovery was slow and incomplete.

British industry continued to make progress, but slowly and with difficulty. Prices were falling, markets being saturated and profit margins squeezed.

Falling prices meant increased real wages but fitful growth and increasing international competition made the chances of unemployment much greater. From 1875 average annual unemployment was over 7% as opposed to under 5% in 1855 to 1875. There were wide differences between various industries; with engineering, shipbuilding, iron and steel and textiles most badly affected.

The sharp change in the conditions of the masses brought about a process of radicalisation, which resulted in the creation of the first socialist party in Britain—the Social Democratic Federation, set up in 1883.

Whilst formally accepting Marxism, the leaders of the SDF had a sectarian outlook, however. It criticised the trade unions for "only" being concerned with their members' living standards. They refused to involve themselves in the struggle for the 8-hour

day, which had mass support in the 1890s, because this was "only" a reform and not the struggle for socialism itself.

While the SDF must take much of the credit for spreading Marxist ideas in this period, its activities showed that Marxism becomes abstract unless it is constantly developed and enriched by the involvement of the Marxists themselves in every aspect of the class struggle. Its sectarianism, isolation and lack of success led to many of its members, including trade union leaders such as John Burns and Will Thorne, becoming infected by the opportunism of the majority of the trade union leadership at that time.

John Burns, for example, eventually had the dubious distinction of being the first trade union leader to sit in a Liberal cabinet. This was shortly after his immortal speech: "I am getting tired of working class boots, working class brains, working class homes and working class margarine. I believe the time has come when we should not be prisoners to class prejudice."

HM Hyndman, the main leader and spokesman of the SDF, was a wealthy businessman converted to socialism late on in life after reading Marx's 'Capital', who then worked feverishly to spread his version of 'Marxist' ideas. Intolerant of opposition from working class members, he came to look on the workers as 'ungrateful' because they would not accept his guidance.

The SDF, in effect, was little more than a propaganda organisation, believing that the contradictions built into capitalism would somehow automatically bring about its downfall. It wanted to convert people to socialism, appealing more to their sense of reason

than by playing a leading role in campaigns on the burning issues of the day, as a vehicle to show why the socialist transformation of society was necessary.

The Fabian Society, formed at about the same time, was led by such people as George Bernard Shaw and Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

The Fabians were a small group of mainly middle-class intellectuals, who set out to provide an ideological justification for reformist and gradualist policies. Hostile to Marxism and denying the existence of the class struggle, they argued that capitalism must be changed into socialism peacefully and in the fullness of time by means of parliamentary reforms and by education, propaganda and the exercising of common sense.

Ideologically, the Fabians were the left-wing of the Liberal Party. Indeed their first aim had been to 'permeate' the Liberal Party and convert it to their ideas. However, as it became increasingly obvious that the creat-

with Liberal sympathies, who were busy carving out careers for themselves in the expanding labour movement.

For the time being however, the increased use of mass production techniques, the elimination of many traditional skills and crafts and the erosion of the differentials between skilled and unskilled workers, were creating the conditions for the growth of mass general unions for the semi-skilled and unskilled workers. In addition, a more-or-less permanent pool of unemployed had been created. This changing situation was breaking down sectional differences among the working class and giving it a new unity and cohesion.

Engels, watching these events, poured out a series of articles in 'Labour Standard' explaining that all the separate but related struggles for higher wages, shorter hours, better conditions and union rights should be seen as part of the wider struggle to end the wages' system itself.

In 1886 he made clear his

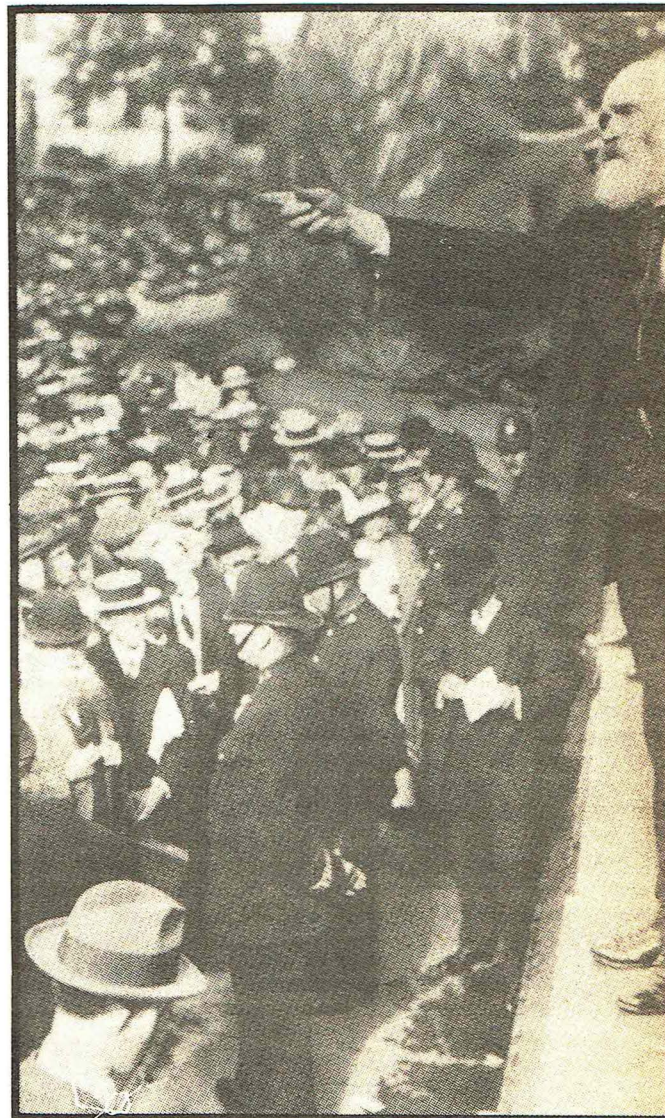
Overnight, thousands of workers saw that the law courts were a weapon in the hands of the bosses—political action was needed to change the state

ion of a Labour Party was inevitable, they changed tactics and tried, with considerable success, to ensure that when the party was formed, it did not take up a real socialist programme.

The Fabians' emphasis on gradualism and intellectual leadership proved attractive to those trade union leaders who opposed mass struggles, yet, at the same time, were coming slowly to recognise the need for a party of labour. From the start, the Fabians set out to influence this new generation of labour and trade union leaders, many

attitude to the formation of a mass working class party. "The first great step...is to constitute the workers in an independent Labour party, no matter in what way, so long as it is a distinct Labour party."

"The masses need both time and opportunity to develop, and this opportunity they will only obtain by having a movement of their own—no matter in what form as long as it is their own movement—in which they will be driven forward by their own mistakes and acquire wisdom by their own failures."



For Engels the priority was the creation of the independent party of the working class. The adoption of a socialist programme would come later. In fact support for such a programme was gaining momentum as local committees of trade unionists in various parts of the country started campaigning for independent working class representation in parliament.

In 1886-1887, the TUC set up the Labour Electoral Committee, to find ways of helping Labour candidates to get into parliament.

Now, out of mass struggles, the need for a Labour party would emerge as a burning necessity. The movement began in London's East End, an area of mass unemployment, festering squalor and misery. It spread to most other parts of the country, in a series of titanic struggles.

The Bryant and May match girls' strike, the organising of the gas workers by Will Thorne and the great London Dock Strike of 1889, led by Burns and Tom Mann, are the best known. All were part of the fight to unionise the mass of unskilled workers. This fight was to pose sharply the need for the working class to arm itself with its own political party as part of the fight to increase its political power.

It was in the struggle to build and defend these 'New Unions' that the Labour Party had its origin. Unskilled workers were usually the hardest hit in periods of economic recession. Without any skills, their wages, conditions and jobs were always

threatened by the queues of unemployed at the factory gates.

In disputes, success depended on effective mass picketing. These tactics often brought workers into headlong confrontation not only with the bosses but with the state machine, which proved far from neutral. The police protected strike-breakers and brutally attacked pickets, while the law courts were manned, then as now, by judges and magistrates who shared the employers' class background, and their hostility to the labour movement.

The ruling class was undoubtedly terrified by the numbers and tactics of these newly-organised workers. They were determined to stamp out the New Unions. Determination, however, was not enough.

Engels, writing in 1892, said "...the New Unions were founded at a time when the faith in the eternity of the wages' system was shaken severely: their founders were socialists either consciously or by feeling; the masses whose adherence gave them strength were rough, neglected, looked down on by the working class aristocracy; but they had this immense advantage, that their minds were virgin soil, entirely free from the inherited 'respectable' bourgeois prejudices which hampered the brains of the better-situated old trade unionists."

This new generation of trade union leaders, men like John Burns and Tom Mann, openly acknowledged the debt they personally owed to Marxism and also the role

S OF STRUGGLE



Above: An early cartoon portrays trade unionists' attitude to law courts—the anti-union measures gave a major impetus to the fight for an independent Labour Party

Left: Keir Hardie addressing a massive anti-war demonstration in Trafalgar Square, August 1914. Opposition to the war opened up new splits among the Labour leadership

that Marxist methods had played in giving the unions a new strength and direction.

The bosses had fought tooth and nail against the organisation of the unskilled workers in the late 1880s and they hit back in the early 1890s with some success, smashing the London gas workers and the dockers. They were less successful against the miners, engineers and textile workers, who had a longer, better-established tradition of organisation.

The bosses' first step was to unite in employers' federations, start systematic lockouts and then recruit scab labour through organisations such as the notorious National Free Labour Association. They were particularly successful in stamping out unions in the shipping industry and, after a bitter strike at Northampton in 1895, in the boot and shoe industry.

Their indirect tactic was to use the law courts. The 1890s saw a series of legal decisions which whittled away at many of the gains made in the trade union legislation of the 1870s. The right to picket and indeed to take effective strike action at all was threatened.

The concerted attack on the trade unions convinced even the most timid trade union leaders that action to defend the movement was necessary. Less for ideological than for practical reasons therefore, increasing numbers of union leaders became converted to the need for independent labour representation in parliament.

The strikes at Bryant and Mays and later at Manning-

ham Mills in Bradford had convincingly shown the Liberal employers to be as bad as any. Little could be expected from a party with supporters of this sort.

The defeat of the Manningham strike was a major impetus for the setting up in Bradford, in 1893, of the Independent Labour Party. This was seen as an attempt to co-ordinate all the local groupings up and down the country committed to the need for a distinct and independent group of trade union spokesmen in parliament.

The ILP argued forcibly and consistently for the creation of a mass party of the working class based on the trade unions and it did all it could to encourage the unions, to build close links with them, to assist in strikes and urge them to give their everyday activities a more political expression.

Engels welcomed the formation of the ILP; like every important advance for the working class, it was the outcome of lessons learnt in struggle. The ILP's membership, while running into several thousands, was localised and it had little support among important groups of workers such as the miners. It also paid insufficient attention to organisational matters and to the political education of its members.

Its members, however, won considerable support in the localities for their determined work in pushing through valuable reforms such as slum clearance programmes and better educational facili-

ties. Through agitating on basic questions such as the 8-hour day, the right to work or maintenance and the legal minimum wage, they built up a sizeable influence, especially among younger working class activists.

The ILP's outstanding spokesman was Keir Hardie. Labour historian G D H Cole, describing him, says, "For Keir Hardie socialism was always the political doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount, a gospel to be preached in God's name and on the assumption that there was a God who cared for all men and would help them if they helped one another."

The ILP's strong basis in religious Nonconformism and its anti-Marxism incurred the mockery of the SDF. They took little part in the ILP's early proceedings and by so doing failed to win any significant support among the thousands of leftward-moving workers. This failure contributed to allowing the leadership of the ILP to pass from the hands of sincere but confused reformists like Hardie, eventually into the hands of far more dangerous disguised Liberals and potential renegades to the movement such as Philip Snowden and Ramsay MacDonald.

Keir Hardie's great strength was his grasp of the fact that any really effective mass working class party must be based on the support of the trade unions. At one TUC conference after another in the 1890s he hammered away at this theme, trying to get the TUC to agree to set up a party

of labour.

The most entrenched 'Lib-Labs' among the TUC leadership continued to pour scorn on the idea and even went so far as to amend the TUC standing orders to exclude all delegates who were not workers at a trade or full-time trade union officials. Needless to say, Keir Hardie was among those who fell foul of this cynical new ruling.

Despite this, the question of a Labour Party would not be buried and events were to force it onto the agenda of the TUC. In 1897 the Amalgamated Society of Engineers lost a six-month lockout and this blow to one of the strongest unions alarmed the old and conservative craft union leaders as well as the rest of the movement. It was obvious that purely industrial action was not enough.

At the 1899 TUC conference the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants successfully instructed the TUC to convene a conference of all sections of the labour movement with a view to finding ways of increasing the number of Labour members in parliament.

In February 1900 a conference of 120 delegates representing 400,000 trade unionists and socialists, set up the Labour Representation Committee. The LRC was instructed to form an independent and disciplined group of Labour MPs who would seek "to promote legislation in the interests of trade unionists and the working class in general." This conference is generally taken as the founding of the Labour Party, although that name itself was not actually adopted until

The House of Lords had just upheld a court ruling (Taff Vale Railway Company v ASRS) that unions were liable for damages incurred by the employers (including loss of trade) during the course of a successful strike. This decision struck a shattering blow at the trade unions and their ability to make effective use of the strike weapon.

Overnight, tens of thousands of workers saw that the law courts and indeed the entire state system was a weapon in the hands of the bosses. Political action was needed to change the state!

LRC membership affiliations jumped from 469,450 in February 1902 to 861,200 in 1903. In 1906, 29 Labour MPs were elected to parliament.

Events are always the best educator and the events outlined had taught the masses that they had to equip themselves with their own political party. Necessity had forced them into action and they in turn forced the leaders into actions which contradicted their theories.

Independent class politics and parties were rejected by most of the leadership for over forty years, until the actions of the employers and the state, following on the slowing-down of Britain's economic growth, jeopardised the continued existence of the unions themselves. Then developed the mass movement out of which the Labour Party grew.

This was all a remarkable vindication of the processes of development worked out theoretically by Marx and Engels many years before.

Marxists played a crucial part in the struggles which created the Labour Party—they will play an even more important role in the struggle to transform it

1906.

The SDF again revealed its sectarianism by instructing the LRC, ultimatum-style, that it must adopt a full-blooded socialist programme. The LRC refused to do so and in 1901 the SDF severed all connections with the LRC.

By walking out at this time, the SDF left the infant Labour Party to the mercies of other leaders, the careerists, reformists and Liberals-in-disguise. Compounding the tragedy, this occurred just as the LRC was receiving a flood of applications as a result of the Taff Vale judgement.

By 1900, the economic and social preconditions for a mass Labour Party had matured in Britain, with the development of a cohesive, literate and politically-conscious working class. The ruling class, although it had tried, could not prevent the spread of trade unions, the growing influence of socialism and the emergence of the Labour Party. Given these circumstances, it then set out to influence the leadership of the labour movement and divert it towards policies which would leave capitalism intact.

Britain's continued relative

prosperity enabled the ruling class to buy the allegiance of small groups of highly skilled workers by allowing them higher living standards. By balancing on this group, using the emerging bureaucracy of the labour movement: conservative careerists and bureaucrats with Liberal sympathies, they looked for the chance to divert the movement into harmless channels.

Ramsay MacDonald was an example. An ex-Liberal, he joined the ILP in 1895. He was astute enough to realise that a Labour Party was going to be set up sooner or later, and ambitious enough to sniff out the possibilities of golden career prospects for himself.

He rejected the idea of the class struggle, saw little difference in practice between Liberalism and socialism, but developed considerable skill in the art of making the ideas of capitalism acceptable to the working class by dressing them up, when necessary, in socialist phrases.

The formation of the LRC in fact launched a tidal wave of opportunism. Will Crook, its successful candidate at Woolwich in 1903, declared himself "an opponent of the claptrap of socialism" and proudly pointed to the industrialists and aristocrats who welcomed his arrival in parliament.

The events of the preceding period, the lessons learnt by the working class and the constant pressure of the socialists had led to the creation of the Labour Party. Only the socialists could now provide the Party with a programme which would distinguish it from all other major parties.

However, then as now, there were those on the so-called 'moderate', in reality right, wing of the Party who wanted to delete all references to socialism in its propaganda, while others wanted to sever the umbilical cord linking the Labour Party to the trade unions.

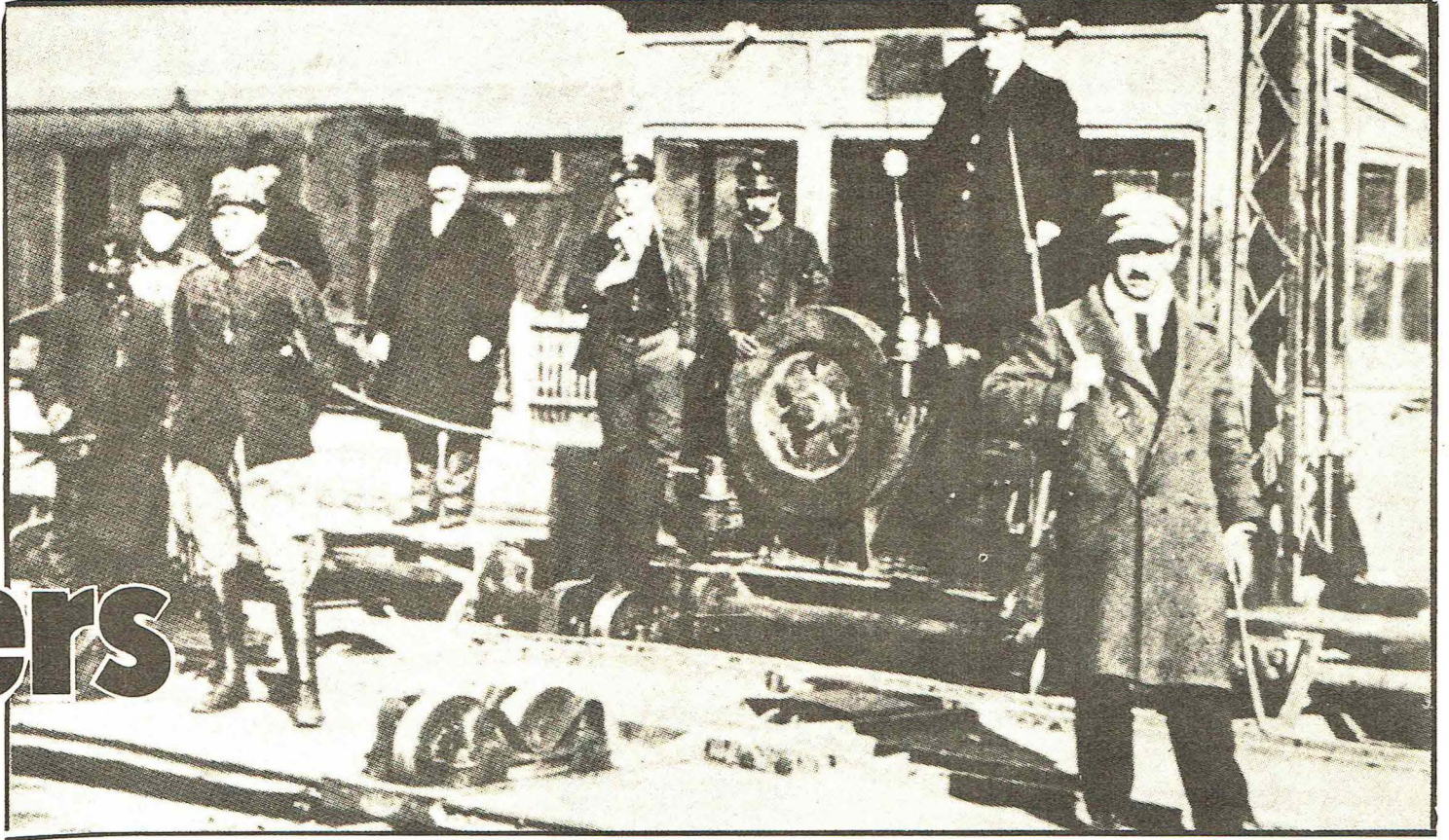
The working class had taken the immensely important step of creating its own mass party, but it did so with a leadership that had the outlook and ideology of capitalism. However, as Lenin said in 1908, the creation of the Labour Party was the first step towards "creating a conscious class party and towards a true socialist Labour Party."

Marxists recognise that the Labour Party, in spite of the lifestyles, social background and political record of many of its leaders, remains the political expression of the trade union movement in this country.

Marxists played a crucial part in the monumental struggles out of which the Labour Party was created. We can be equally sure that the Marxists around 'Militant' will play an even more important role in the next period, leading the struggle to transform the Labour Party into one which really serves the needs and interests of the working class.



Italy- When workers had



Transport workers formed 'Red Guards' and prevented the passage of troops to Turin to defeat the factory occupations

power within their grasp

For over a decade now Italy has staggered from one crisis to another. What 'The Times' has recently called 'Italy's permanent crisis.' The Communist Party instead of campaigning for a socialist alternative, has called for a coalition government with the Italian Tories.

In the following first part of a two part article, Kevin Ramage looks at what happened when Italian society faced an earlier crisis and when Italian workers could have taken power in the factory occupations of 1920. It is essential for all activists to study the lessons of past struggles. In 1920, power was in the hands of the workers.

But a revolutionary socialist party was lacking. And that vital factor meant that the struggle was not carried through. Instead demoralisation set in, eventually paving the way for Mussolini to seize control, with horrific consequences for Italian workers.

The Italian ruling class entered the first World War in 1915, despite the widespread opposition of the working class. The bosses' hoped to gain new markets in the 'share out' of colonies which would follow the war.

Instead the war led to economic crisis. Imports rose sharply, exports fell, no 'worthwhile' territory was gained. By June 1919, industrial production had not returned to its pre-war level.

The budget deficit—214 million lira in 1914—reached 23,345 million lira by 1919—an increase of over one hundred times. The only people who gained were the firms involved in war manufacture who made vast profits.

On the other hand during the war the cost of living rose four times for the working class, while wages were restricted. The peasants of the south also paid a huge price for the war.

Many of the millions of dead, disabled and wounded soldiers came from the countryside. The middle class also suffered, their savings being eaten up by galloping inflation.

Faced with the deepening economic crisis, and the demands of the capitalists for 'sacrifice,' workers turned more and more to their traditional organisations. In November 1918 the CGL (Socialist Trade Union Federation) had 249,000 members, but within a year this had increased to 1,258,000 and by 1920 it had reached 2.3 million.

Similarly, workers looking for an alternative to capitalism flooded into the Socialist Party. Peasants and agricultural labourers organised themselves into 'Red Leagues.' One of the side effects of the war had been the massive growth of heavy munitions industries, and particular metal manufacturers, a process which threw tens of thousands of workers and former peasants together in huge factories, forcing them to organise as a class.

In Turin the numbers working at the FIAT factory increased from 7,000 to over 30,000 in the war years. Strikes escalated, involving over a million in 1919 as workers used their new-found strength to defend their living standards, and increasingly challenged the 'divine rights' of capitalism.

Citizens' committees in towns and villages checked, and enforced controls on prices. In the North, the CGL organised its own labour exchanges, and enforced manning levels on the capitalists. Peasants and ex-servicemen carried through land seizures.

In February 1919 the metal workers won an 8-hour day with no reduction in wages. Emboldened by the success of the metal workers, other sections of the class made similar gains. Ingenious methods were developed to break down the employers' resistance, including sit-down strikes which challenged the very right of the capitalists to control the factories.

With the example of the overthrow of capitalism in Russia in 1917 fresh in their minds, the capitalists made massive concessions in attempts to appease the workers. They were prepared, as in France in 1968 to give almost anything as long as they remained 'masters' of the factories.

The Socialist Party (SP) moved clearly to the left after the Russian Revolution and in September 1918, elected a Marxist majority onto its executive, and proclaimed itself in favour of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat.'

Many of the new Party leaders, while proclaiming themselves to be Marxists were not prepared to challenge and remove the right wing from positions of leadership that they still held in the Parliamentary Party and CGL (Socialist Trade Union Federation). The leaders were what Marxists would call centrists—'revolutionary' in words, but reformist in deeds.

Throughout early 1920 there were a series of strikes and partial General Strikes. On August 13th, the pay talks between FIOM (the metal workers' union) and the management confederation broke down into a go-slow. On August 30th, in a deliberate provocation, the management at the Rome

plant in Milan locked the workforce out.

The employers' negotiator summed up their attitude when he declared: "All discussion is pointless. Ever since the war ended the industrialists have gone on submitting to humiliation. They've had enough and now it's your turn." The employers had decided to fight it out.

"The dictatorship of the proletariat was an actual fact; all that was lacking was to organise it"

—Trotsky

The unions' response was immediate. FIOM ordered 300 other Milan factories to be occupied. The next day the employers declared that all federated members (nationally) should "move to a closure of factories in a manner to be decided by individual consortia." Within days over 500,000 workers were occupying their factories.

The workers began to organise production with the means available to them. When they needed raw materials, the workers turned to the rail workers to 'liberate' trucks from the marshalling yards to the factories!

Inside the factories, tight discipline was maintained. Alcohol was banned and armed red guards posted in and around the factories to maintain order. One reporter remarked: "In every corner there were slogans clearly socialist in inspiration... 'chains and fetters we break; we want not wealth but freedom'."

In the factories the safes were opened, blacklists and business secrets discovered. The state was incapable of intervening. Giolitti, the Liberal Premier, told the Senate: "How could I stop the occupation?... To occupy the factories I would have to use all the forces at my disposal!

And who would (then) exercise control over the 500,000 workers outside the factories? Once the occupation had happened, should I have perhaps cleaned out the factories by force? It would have meant a civil war."

Not that the capitalists were afraid of bloodshed, as they were to show later when they armed Mussolini's gangs. But it would have been a civil war they knew they couldn't win while the working class was mobilised and confident.

Trotsky later pointed out: "The dictatorship of the proletariat was an actual fact; all that was lacking was to organise it and to draw from it the necessary conclusions."

There was no organisation prepared to give a lead in raising the demand for a workers' government, based on the workers' committees—embryo Soviets—to overthrow the capitalist government, and begin the organisation of a workers' republic based on the democratic running of society by the workers and small peasants.

The following telephone conversation between two editors of 'Il Corriere della Sera' (Italy's most influential capitalist newspaper) shows clearly how the capitalists had the measure of the workers' leaders, and at the same time how they were compelled to lean on them as their only hope of keeping the workers in check.

Milan: "There is nothing nothing, absolutely nothing remotely resembling a government."

Rome: "But what can be done in this situation?"

M: "Give power to the CGL (the Socialist trade union)"

R: "But that's the end!"

M: "No, no. It's much better than what's happening now. It's not possible to go on like this my dear fellow."

R: "But what you're saying is—let's make the revolution and goodbye! And its finished! But isn't there anything we can do not to make the revolution?"

M: "Precisely the only way

to avoid the revolution is to give power to the CGL."

Amazingly, while the capitalists were telling each other how hopeless the situation was, the workers' leaders were not making preparations for the seizure of power. Instead, while the workers controlled the factories, their leaders voted not to organise a new revolution, and decided that it was a trade union and not a political struggle!

Incredibly, the centrist SP leadership even refused an offer from the CGL to take over the leadership of the occupations, an action which put the leadership of the occupations back into the hands of the right wing. Subsequently, the right wing organised a compromise deal, and told the workers to evacuate the factories. In disappointment and disarray, the movement broke down.

The Italian workers' leaders failed to understand that the workers' movement is not like a tap that can be turned on and off at will, but on the contrary if a revolutionary opportunity (which may appear for only a few days or weeks) is lost through bad leadership then it may be years or even decades before another similar opportunity arises.

The failure of the September 1920 movement to end in taking power was the turning point in the development of the Italian working class. The movement began to turn into its opposite. Having expended enormous energy to no real avail, frustration and anger and then demoralisation set in. CGL membership fell drastically.

With the working class paralysed, the industrialists felt emboldened and prepared to strike back. They refused to accept the terms of the agreement. They began to prepare an alternative—millions were pumped into building Mussolini's fascist gangs. With the working class in retreat the way was clear for Mussolini to begin his battle for power.

USSR S.AFRICA

CAR WORKERS STRIKE IN USSR

By Alan
Woods

On May 6th, the giant Togliatti car plant, with a total labour force of more than 170,000 workers, one of the largest in Russia, ground to a halt as the result of a strike.

Two days later, the Gorky Automotive Factory, which employs a staggering 200,000 workers, was also closed for 48 hours by strike action.

These two strikes—the most important in recent Soviet history—are symptomatic of deepening industrial unrest and discontent among the Russian workers at the increasingly oppressive rule of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

According to reports in the Western press (see 'Financial Times', 13th June), the strike at the Togliatti works was supposed to have been caused by an order to increase the number of routes for each busdriver with no increase in pay. However, since most of the highly-paid workers at the factory have cars, the bus strike need not have stopped

them from going to work. The causes of this protest clearly run much deeper.

This is shown by the strike at Gorky, which is said to have been "a spontaneous protest against inadequate supplies of milk and meat products in the town." It is a significant fact that the strike was provided by the distribution of 2,000 handwritten leaflets, which indicates a degree of preparation and the presence of at least an embryonic leadership at factory level. It is claimed that the strike at Gorky—the biggest single walkout reported in the USSR—ended voluntarily. Nevertheless, four workers have been arrested in connection with the strike.

These strikes clearly took place outside the limits of official Soviet 'trade unionism' which is neither more nor less than an appendage of the state in Russia. Those 2,000 handwritten leaflets served notice on the bureaucracy. The Soviet working class has drawn the conclusion that, in order to defend its interests as



Discontent with the privileges and parasitic nature of the ruling bureaucracy simmers beneath the surface of Russian society. Above is a demonstration by political prisoners in a labour camp.

a class against the haughty and over-privileged caste of officials which choke the pores of Soviet society at all levels, it is necessary to organise independently of the state and the tame 'trade unions.'

In this context, the call for the creation of independent trade unions in the Soviet Union assumes enormous symptomatic importance. Strikes of these dimensions are an unusual phenomenon in Russia, although many of those which do occur are never heard of in the West, as the result of official policy to maintain strict press silence on such issues.

One or two cases have, however, slipped through this barrier of silence. In 1977 there was a strike of workers in Tula, to the south of Moscow, when workers refused to accept their pay cheques for several months because they argued there was nothing in the shops to buy. Shortages of goods, and the poor quality of those which are available, are a permanent source of discontent in Russia, particularly when the workers see that the officials and their wives, who shop at special stores, have access to all the luxury consumer goods a worker could never aspire to possess,

even if he had the money.

In the recent period, the situation has been made much more acute by the widespread shortages of meat and milk shortages, a reminder of the continuing failures of Soviet agriculture. The latter factor is probably the main explanation for the strike in Gorky. But the fact that Togliatti is one of the best provisioned towns in Russia indicates that the discontent over shortages is only one expression of a more deep-seated malaise and discontent with a society where the benefits of a nationalised planned economy are increasingly nullified by the suffo-

cating control of a corrupt, inefficient and parasitic bureaucracy.

The events at Togliatti and Gorky are only the beginning. The enormous power represented by the massive concentration of 200,000 workers in a single factory is a nightmare for the ruling caste, which feels itself more and more to be a parasitic incubus on the development of the economy, science, art and culture.

Once the Soviet workers become conscious of their power, the road to the political revolution will be open. From one or two day stoppages, on economic questions will spring more serious strike movements, like the general strike in Novocherkassk in 1962, when a protest over the doubling of prices for meat, milk and butter spilled over into bloody clashes between strikers and soldiers, in which many people died.

Once the powerful battalions of the Soviet proletariat are set in motion, no force on earth will be capable of stopping it. In the course of struggle, the new generation will re-discover the real traditions of Bolshevism and the October Revolution and re-vitalise Soviet society, cleansing it from top to bottom of the accumulated rubbish of Stalinism and returning to the authentic traditions of workers' democracy on a far higher level than in 1917, as the first step in a movement towards the construction of socialism in USSR and internationally.

S.Africa- The day of reckoning approaches

"Shoot to kill" screamed police chief, General Geldenhuys, last week. And his orders were carried out.

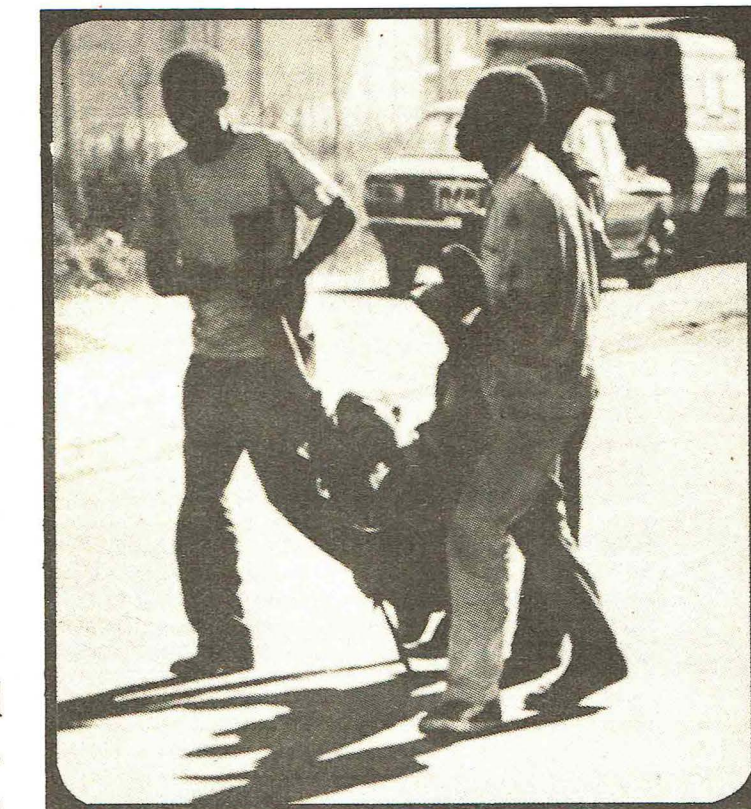
When Coloured and African demonstrators defied a government ban on public meetings to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the Soweto revolt, police opened fire. They were not sure how many they killed.

But their vicious action was a spark which finally ignited an explosion of revolt. For

By Jim Chrystie

months Coloured school-students have stage protests against apartheid education (see 'Militant' 6, 13 June). Last week's police murder was the final blow.

In the past Coloured (mixed race) workers and students have been less militant than



The South African ruling class is totally indifferent to how much suffering it inflicts in its losing battle to stay in power

African. But the apartheid rulers have in the last thirty years removed virtually all the minor privileges Coloureds had vis-a-vis Africans. Those within the Coloured community who preached compromise and reform were unable to deliver the goods.

The youth now identify with the oppressed Africans in black solidarity against the regime. And many of them have gone beyond this, and in the aftermath of Soweto, seen the vital need for basing the struggle for freedom and

democracy upon the workers.

In leaflets which have been circulating in Cape Town, school-students have asked who really maintains 'the whole system of racist oppression and capitalist exploitation'. The first responsibility, they state, is the vicious forces of state repression, the police, army etc. Secondly it is the collaborators and black stooges who try to fool the people.

The leaflet however goes on to state who has real power in South Africa and points the way to a new future:

'But there is another part to the answer to this question: who makes the system work?

It is none other than our parents who make the system work. Not because they want to but because they believe that they have to make it work. Our parents are workers. It is the workers of this country who produce its wealth.

If the workers could be put in a position where they could say for a few weeks: we will not work to maintain apartheid and capitalist exploi-

tation, the present loud-mouthed, kragdadige government would be shaken to its very foundations.

Our parents, the workers, are therefore strong. They have power. We, the students cannot shake the government in the same way. We can only warn them; we can serve notice on them that the youth will not tolerate the old order.

They know, as we know that the future belongs to us. But we have got to get our parents on our side. We have got to link up our struggle with the struggle of the black workers.

Our parents have got to understand that we will not be 'educated' and 'trained' to become slave in an apartheid-capitalist society. We see our future in our parents. But if things go on as they are now, that future is hopeless.

So we, together with our parents, must try to work out a new future. A future where there will be no racism or exploitation, no apartheid, no inequality of class or sex.

Last week the South African ruling class renewed its declaration of war against the mass of the people. They will not succeed. The defeat for imperialism and its plans in Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe has emboldened black workers in South Africa. And the mass armed struggle of the workers, together with other oppressed sections, will bring down the horrific apartheid regime and open up a new future for all of Southern Africa.



**VIEWS? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES?
CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO:**

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

South Africa explosive

Dear Comrades

In the last few weeks the TV cameras of the world have focused yet again on events in South Africa, bringing to our screens the destruction of the Sasol [oil from coal] plants and the school students' protests throughout South Africa which has now spread to parts of Namibia.

Meanwhile, away from the glare of the TV cameras, a wave of industrial unrest has been unfolding throughout South Africa. For instance 6,000 textile workers in a group of mills based around Durban have been fired for striking against poor pay and working conditions.

In Cape Town more than 3,000 workers in the meat industry are on strike,

bringing the industry to a standstill. This strike is also being supported by a consumer boycott of red meat. Coloured students entering supermarkets in white areas have been overturning counter displays and trolleys.

Another 4,500 black miners are on strike in Stilfontein in the very important gold mines.

It is these strikes and especially the two three-day general strikes in 1976 in protest at the Soweto shootings, that the apartheid regime fears most, not guerrilla activities like the Sasol plant bombings. The workers, by organising in factories, mines and townships, are forming the embryo of a new socialist society run and controlled by workers and their families.

Yours fraternally
Alan Turner
ASTMS 507

A nail in the coffin

Dear Comrades

I was shocked but not at all surprised to read a report on the front page of the Bristol 'Evening Post' [7.6.80] about the poverty that still exists in Bristol, and every city today.

It mentioned an old woman who had not had a Sunday joint for 59 years; she could not even afford one to celebrate her diamond wedding anniversary. This is a real indication of the bankruptcy of the profit system in which we live with thousands, probably millions of people below the poverty line. Even the article in this Tory rag says that the number is growing.

The lot of people like this has not improved one bit over the years, as this article shows. It should put the nail

in the coffin of the Tory idea that there isn't really that much poverty nowadays—what has capitalism done for this woman during her 60 years of marriage?

Even after the boom years the ills of capitalism have not been cured, as some of the right wing labour leaders would have us think. And with this government more and more families are going to the wall, cutting down to bare essentials—and beyond in many cases, although the 'News of the World' would tell us that they 'squander' their money on cigarettes and drink.

We can only solve this worsening poverty by transforming society. We will do to capitalism what it has done to us, namely trample on it until it gives out.

Fraternally
Marcus Rattray
Bristol South East LPYS

How to change things

Dear Colleagues

Many of us are agreed that the Day of Action on May 14th and the TUC demonstration on March 9th were a success but did not receive as much support as we would have liked to see.

The problem is gaining the support of the hundreds of workers who are not committed to the labour and trade union movement.

Many people, often paid-up members of a union, have little idea of how government policies affect them unless it immediately hits their pockets, like the pay policies did. They are not easily convinced that taking a day off to demonstrate will change anything.

Politics is something that is thought about every four or five years during a general election campaign when the media makes it number one news item.

The workers we need to reach out to tend to get their opinions from their daily newspapers and TV reports. As a shop steward, I have often been told by members that the trade unions have too much power and are ruining the country with excessive wage demands and restrictive practices.

They tell me that unions should stay out of politics and then ask me why I haven't managed to get them the same rate of pay as the lads have just down the road. They complain that their pay doesn't go as far as it did a few months ago and urge me to press the

Tory cuts— Labour council

Dear Comrades

Three years ago I started travelling between my home and Kircaldy, twelve miles in all, to my work.

At this stage I travelled by train. Then almost exactly a year ago the train I caught was cancelled due to cuts. I then started travelling by bus.

This was fine until April, when the bus timetable was altered to suit one-man services. This was also a Tory cut to reduce bus conductors.

Fortunately there was another bus. This took slightly longer but still I got to work on time. Now this bus is being cut. This means that I and other workers are unable to get to work on time.

The local TGWU is

now has 100 (33%) more branches than in 1977, the number of Labour Clubs has declined!

This is the consequence of the bureaucratic strait-jacket imposed on clubs by the present leadership, in order to retain control. Name any other labour movement organisation which requires 26 pieces of information before membership is allowed.

If NOLS really has been built to a size bigger than the LPYS we ask, what are its members doing? The fact is that the NOLS constitution has been changed to encourage large paper mem-

management for an increase. The next day they tell me that it is wage demands that cause inflation.

The problem is education (political rather than standard school education). The Tories have the support of most of the press, as we know to our cost. We must develop our own newspapers and ensure their wider distribution.

'Militant' is a good example of a well-presented paper, although unfortunately a weekly, not a daily paper. One of the main problems papers like 'Militant' face is the political bias in our distribution system.

Why is it that, unless you order them specifically, 'Militant', 'Morning Star' and 'Gay News' (to name but a few) are not available at your local newsagents? They are equally unobtainable at the large newsagents like W H Smiths.

An article in the 'New Statesman' (30.5.80) noted that W H Smith sells the 'Dental Technician' (3,000 copies) but not the 'Leveller' which sells 7,000 copies. The article points out that in France the right to have newspapers and magazines distributed is guaranteed by law.

Perhaps we too should be trying to ensure that the right of distribution is guaranteed to all publishers regardless of their politics.

Keep up the good work.
Yours fraternally
Gordon Smith
Secretary, Blyth &
District Trades Council
(personal capacity)

fighting the cuts but the attitude of the transport managers is that they are not running a service but a profit-making venture. This has been amplified by the cut in grant from the regional council.

This same council also makes up the bus timetables. They have introduced a snack service in schools to replace school meals. These are just a few of the cuts made.

The council have now produced a broadsheet designed to promote these cuts as a way of giving more efficient services for the money paid by ratepayers.

This council, by the way, is Labour-controlled. Until we get a Labour Party committed to socialist policies and we get a socialist state atrocities like this will continue.

Fraternally
Peter Lockhart
Dunfermline CLP

bership (at 30p a year) and this rush for paper members has resulted in the disintegration of even large clubs such as Glasgow.

The open splits now appearing in the reformist leadership are a result of this opportunism. If the labour movement is to have a genuine student wing then it is clear that 'Militant' supporters in the colleges must strive to transform NOLS and replace the rotten scaffolding that is leading to its ruin.

Fraternally
Phil Frampton
Hackney Central CLP

A new force for 'moderation'

Dear Comrades

On Monday 16 June the 'Birmingham Evening Mail' featured an article titled 'The Men who Tackled the Might of the Militants' about the Workers' Aid Association which grew up out of the strikes in Birmingham at the end of last year.

The WAA believes in secret ballots, is against the closed shop, secondary picketing and unofficial strikes. Generally, they are against what they would call the bullying trade unions, who, they say, "rule by fear".

One of their leading members is Mike Savage, the ex-Longbridge worker who resigned after the AUEW strikes of last year. Another is Mr Ken Lowe, ex-Cadbury's shop steward, who lost his post after scabbing and urging others to do the same. Mr Lowe was reinstated but had to resign his union position because, he says, he was sent to Coventry. Yet the WAA maintain that the "lefties are in a minority"; how, we might ask, can someone be effectively sent to Coventry by a minority?

The WAA have, we are told, produced leaflets urging moderation at Longbridge, and have given advice to people who have supposedly 'fallen foul' of their union officials.

At first glance it seems that this organisation is a growing threat to the unions of this country and a force for moderation to be reckoned with in the future. Yet this great, campaigning body has, at this time, a staggering total of six paid up members!

When this organisation finally dies its dismal death, perhaps Messrs. Savage, Lowe, etc. will realise that working people have no time for those who wish to handcuff the only weapon they have in the fight against the powerful Tory bosses.

Fraternally
Alun Evans
Secretary,
Sparkbrook LPYS

Iron Heel

Dear Comrades

I was appalled to read in a Sunday publication that a community health official proposes that cash should not be wasted on major surgery to keep pensioners over 65 years alive. "In some cases it's better to let them die and put the money to better use."

Police warning

Dear Comrades

One morning at 4.40 am I was running to catch a bus when I was attacked by a police dog. I am a postman and was wearing my uniform and carrying my bag.

The policeman came running up, pulled the dog away, and said "sorry." He said he thought I was a villain that they were after. That's why they set the dog on me.

I was off work three

The builders' axe

Dear Comrades

As you walk down the street tomorrow, cursing the muck and inconvenience caused by the building workers, look on the bright side. By this time next year there will be hardly any to be seen—we'll all be on the dole dreaming of the days of bricks and mortar.

I do contract maintenance on building plant throughout the north east of England and this time last year I was working up to 14 hours a day, six days a week. This year we are down to an average of 10 hours per day, 5 days a week and we've had a smaller team of fitters than we had last year.

This time of year is usually the busiest for the building industry, with just about every plant hire firm advertising vacancies. But on every site I go to now the only thing the lads talk about is redundancies and moving to another area for work.

Sunderland council, for example, announced that

It makes me shudder that people supporting these Nazi-type policies should hold such positions. What will the next step be: extermination of the handicapped, then those who have small handicaps, such as myself?

What about the millions wasted under capitalism being put to better use by the transformation of society to socialism? The fairer

weeks, and also had more time off because of a bad back as a result of the attack. My union (UPW) has taken up the case. They have worked out that I have lost £286.57 in wages and overtime.

The police denied all liability, but a couple of months later they offered £50 which the union turned down. Then they raised it to £100, which says to me that they are liable. They have also changed their story, saying I did not stop when

distribution of wealth could ensure that all elderly and infirm could spend their lives in comfort. It is society's role to protect the weak, or it should be.

Yours fraternally
K Moore
Selly Oak CLP

they shouted.

The union's solicitors have advised me to accept the offer of £100, as they see no way of winning the case, because it is only my word against the police.

Does this mean the police can let their dogs loose on anybody and get away with it?

Fraternally
John Estella
North Nottingham LPYS

no more council houses would be built after the ones in progress and the same week 250 building workers were made redundant. Most other councils in the area are limiting or cutting completely the money available for council house revitalisation schemes.

Unless what's left of the building industry gets organised then the axe of profit will smash them to

pieces. Building workers must organise around a socialist programme to build a million homes a year, to build for need and not profit.

This is the only alternative to walking the streets and the dole queue.

Yours fraternally
Mick Richardson
Winlaton Branch GMWU
(in personal capacity)

Transform NOLS

Dear Comrades

The letter in 'Militant' (issue 506) from Dave Smith, the chairman of the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS) disgracefully claimed that an increase in the LPYS budget to £50,000 would mean a cut in finance for the Labour Party women's section. That the NOLS leadership should stoop to such divisive tactics and ally with the right wing of the party is a warning to all Labour students.

There has been overwhelming support from the constituencies to the Labour Commission of Enquiry for the LPYS to receive their claim. They at least have no doubt that the money would be available without attacking any other section of the party and furthermore would be repaid by the subscriptions of thousands of new LPYS members.

Smith, in a fashion typical of the right wing, then goes on to assert that the Marxist-led LPYS is 'stagnant' while NOLS is booming. However, Smith's statistical acrobatics conceal the fact that while the LPYS

3 WEEKS TO GO KEEP US ON TARGET

With only three weeks to go until July 12th, many areas are pulling out the stops and sending their lines on our chart to within striking distance of 100%.

How is your area doing? Have you persuaded all the regular readers you know to make a donation each week, and have it recorded on a collectors' card? Have you not just sold all the raffle tickets you have for our Summer Draw, but sent the money here? (Raffle proceeds will be added to the chart on July 12th.)

This week's £1,769 is very good, but not quite enough to reach the £45,000 figure in three weeks.

Eastern readers need £568, after donations from Harlow, Southend and Ipswich.

East Midlands are now £918 short of their ¾-year target—thanks this week to J Brown (USDAW), J Bennett (AUEW) and J Kileavy (NUB Executive) amongst others.

Hants & IOW are £409 short from the target—we had cash in this week from Poole and Portsmouth.

Humberside are picking up after a slow start at the beginning of the year, but they are £506 behind at present. A seasonal worker in Scarborough, sponsored walkers, M Clark (TASS, Hull) and C Hicks were a few of the sources.

East London only have to raise another £229—this should be easy: what about aiming for £3,000? Thanks to N Ashton, G and M Darvell, G MacDonald, and Anon (who gave us £40).

West London's line is slowing down, by contrast. But readers such as R Bedoux (EETPU) have promised us £1 per week. We could do with a few more like that! The £448 required can be reached with hard work!

South London supporters have only £294 to reach their ¾-year figure.

Comrades in Croydon, Woolwich and Lambeth assisted us this week, with an excellent £4.03 collection from the recently-formed East Lewisham LPYS.

Manchester and Lancs are just over £1,000 behind. This week £18 came in from T-shirts and a donation from Mrs Clucus (Blackburn housewife), while workers at Chloride Batteries, Swinton, donated £35! Another £18 from a day's pay (May 14th) added to a jumble sale and pizzas made up a tidy total.

Merseyside supporters need only £600 more for the target. M Smith (Old Swan LP) gave us £25, and NGA supporters collected £10.15.

Via Chester we had a fiver from V Livesy and £2.57 collected at the LPYS meeting and Bootle LPYS sent a smaller sum.

Northern readers also are just over £1,000 off target—£1,074 to be exact. Supporters in Wallsend, T Huges, K McHugh, P Mole, A Turnbull and students at Newcastle ULC, along with two more

'May 14th' gifts moved the line along.

Scotland East are pushing ahead now, with £22 from Perth (£12 raffle and £10 union expenses), also £15 donation from Newbattle LP YS, £6 from J Greer (EETPU) and more union expenses from M Jamieson (Edinburgh). £452 more will be possible with this sort of momentum.

How you may ask (if you watch this column) have Scotland West reached fifth place? Well, unfortunately J McGregor (Kilmarnock LP YS) was made redundant, but was thereby enabled to make us a large donation to help the fight against other redundancies in the future.

Other contributors were T Williams (Paisley) £30, J Laird (Glasgow) £8, Bunsmore and school student M Curran (Provan), with £15 from P Lavery (CPSA) and £4 from B McCrossan (NALGO). £352 to go.

Southern readers need to get another £610, having been aided by Anon (Brighton) £50, Con McGregor (Surrey) £20, Gillingham Marxist Discussion Group £7.50, jumble sale £41.50, Reading LPYS picnic £7, and S Goldbacher £7.50.

South West have been helped to fourth place by Bristol student (£20), J Sharp (paper extras £4.67), Bath and Swindon readers, M Paull (Yeovil T&GWU) and D Sandbrooks (Exmouth LPYS). Keep going—only £171 needed!

Wales East are still propping up the table, and they will need to get a number of tenners (or twenties, even) in the next three weeks to reach the £598 outstanding.

Wales West have a similar sum (£588) to raise—but it's possible if the comrades emulate Aberystwyth supporters—£30 raised at a barbecue on the wettest day of the year!

West Midlands are just within £800 off their target as a result of money raised at the Militant meeting at Regional Labour Party Conference, tote and donations from Handsworth, with individual sums including those from J James (Stratford-upon-Avon) and A Dodd (AUEW) and M Hamilton (FBU) both of Coventry.

Yorkshire need £1,295 but the cash is coming in faster now (especially from Leeds). Keep this speed going! Thanks to C Harker (G&M WU) for his £1 weekly. Shipley folk-singers, Huddersfield sponsored paper sale, a Sheffield treasure-hunt, and donations from York readers D Lawton, M Thorne and A Beynon all combined to boost the total.

Others this year has been mainly trade union conference collections, and this week we had £125.99 from ASTMS Conference Militant Readers' Meeting in Brighton.

On with the fight to build Militant into the biggest socialist paper in the world! Don't take no for an answer!

Build Militant

Area	Received	Percentage of half-year's target achieved	Target half-year	Target for year
Eastern	1,682		2,250	5,000
East Midlands	1,748		1,710	3,800
Hants & IOW	1,346		1,755	3,900
Humberside	619		1,125	2,500
London East	2,561		2,790	6,200
London West	1,667		2,115	4,700
London South	2,506		1,800	4,000
Manchester & Lancs	1,292		2,295	5,100
Merseyside	2,100		2,700	6,000
Northern	2,211		3,285	7,300
Scotland East	988		1,440	3,200
Scotland West	1,898		2,250	5,000
Southern	2,045		2,655	5,900
South West	1,269		1,440	3,200
Wales East	662		1,260	2,800
Wales West	807		1,395	3,100
West Midlands	3,252		4,050	9,000
Yorkshire	1,990		3,285	7,300
Others	6,659		5,400	12,000
Total received	37,302		45,000	100,000

TARGET FOR JULY 12th £45,000 TARGET FOR YEAR-£100,000
THIS WEEK £1,769

ads

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

MILITANT MARXIST WEEKEND SCHOOL June 27th-29th

COURSES ON:
Introduction to Marxism Speakers: John Pickard and Brian Beekingham.
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 Beekingham 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.

GREENWICH Militant Public Meeting. 'The Employment Bill and trade union rights'. Tuesday 1 July, 7.30 pm, Clockhouse Community Centre, Dockyard Estate, Woolwich Road, S.E.18. Speakers: Bob Wright (Candidate, 1980 AUEW Presidential Elections), Brian Ingham (Industrial Editor, 'Militant')

AT LAST! The Plunder Woman Badge. 20p each plus 12p postage or £10.00 per 100 plus £2.00 postage.
 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, Maprographics, 32 Worpole Road Mews, London SW19.

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.

DEBATE: Labour Party Young Socialists v Young Fabians. 'Reform or Revolution?' Wednesday 2 July, 8.00 pm, Grand Committee Room, House of Commons, S.W.1. Young Socialists' speaker: Martin Elvin (ASLEF), Chairman, London LPYS. Young Fabians' speaker: Nick Butler, Ex-National Chairman of Young Fabians.

GREET LABOUR PARTY 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

MILITANT SUPPORTERS ASSOCIATION

MILITANT SUMMER DRAW

1st Prize — PORTABLE T.V./RADIO/CASSETTE
 2nd Prize — Electronic Wallet 3rd Prize — Electronic Clock

This draw is open to all members of the Militant Supporters Association. All cash contributions and unpaid tickets to be paid to 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN by the date 15th July 1980. Tickets cost 10p. Tickets available from 1st July 1980.

MILITANT SUPPORTERS ASSOCIATION, 1 MENTMORE TERRACE, LONDON E8 3PN

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

Nottingham Youth Campaign Against Unemployment demonstration and rally: 'Fight back against the Tories'. Saturday 5 July. Assemble Victoria Embankment, Nottingham. March to Albert Hall. Speakers: Laurence Coates (LPYS National Committee); Alf Parker (NUPE, Save the General Hospital action committee); Brian Harrison (ASTMS Plessey); Roy Bennett (sacked AUEW convenor, Alan Smith Group)

MAESTEG Area Engineering Workers' Rally. Hear: Bob Wright (Candidate AUEW presidential election). Saturday 28 June, 11.00 am, Old Parish Hall, Maesteg, opp. free car park

SWANSEA Engineering Workers' Rally. Hear: Bob Wright (candidate, AUEW presidential election). Friday 27 June, 7.30 pm. Elysium buildings, High Street, Swansea.

NUR Conference must insist NO JOBS FOR SALE

By Tom Doyle
(Vice-Chairman,
Sheffield City NUR
branch, personal
capacity)

Railway workers may be forgiven for feeling confused at our recent pay agreement.

We got a 20% rise and a nominal increase in holidays, with apparent ease.

"The best wage rise we've ever had," "If they can give us twenty per cent without a fight what could we have got?" These are just some of the comments of Sheffield members.

Trade union activists, however, realise that there is more at stake. The British Rail Board have made their intention clear: higher productivity, closures and redundancies.

The full horror of their intentions has not been fully realised: the NUR NEC rejected the initial offer of 16% plus 4% at a later date, depending on a productivity agreement. This rejection was based on last year's decision of the NUR's Annual General Meeting, that wages and productivity should be discussed separately and that the union should not enter into any negotiations or consultation over productivity until the wage agreement had been settled.

The NUR leadership has now agreed to lift the ban on consultations however, to discuss the management's proposals for rationalisation and closures of marshalling yards and the closure of 200 of the 250 parcel depots. These consultations spell untold dangers.

Tinsley marshalling yard where I work has been designated a 'terminal' yard by the BRB. This would result in partial closure and a loss of jobs. Coupled to the BRB's

attempt to close the Manchester-Wath-Sheffield electrified line, this would result in a loss of up to 500 jobs.

Up and down the country lines are being neglected: essential maintenance and repair of non-passenger lines and alternative routes is being cut back or stopped completely, thus rendering the lines closed. Local and regional management use the excuse of cash flow problems—the ultimate aim in most cases is closure.

After a derailment near Deepcar in February, no repair work was started for at least a month. Management claimed cash flow shortages but it would be nearer the truth to say that they were anticipating the closure of the line being announced by the BRB. Thanks to the campaign and threat of strike action by local rail branches, the BRB have been forced to defer the announcement and the NUR nationally have been forced to take action.

The pay settlement may have been won without a fight but we cannot be complacent.

Management aim to negotiate the abolition of the guaranteed day for train crews, in effect a return not to the 1930s but to the nineteenth century. A driver or guard could be booked up to twelve hours one day and four hours the next.

They want to 'buy out' established status. We have won an extra day's holiday with pay for each bank holiday we work: management intends to try and buy this out, too.

In the NUR's 'Railway-

men's Charter' Sid Weighell, general secretary, talks of the need to recognise 'meaningful productivity'. With the government insisting that BR must take a profit and work within strict cash limits (BRB receives the lowest subsidies of any European rail network) the future for all rail workers is extremely uncertain.

The NUR has a policy of 'no redundancies'. An NEC member recently reported that discussions have begun on the BRB's proposals: "if we accept we will want a lot more money for our membership." This flies in the face of our policy 'not to sell jobs for money.'

The three rail unions must recognise and face up to the battles ahead. Every member must be made aware of the BR's intentions and mobilise to fight the productivity proposals.

We are not opposed to new technology if it means a shorter working week without loss of pay and more leisure time through increased annual leave; but when it means throwing up to 50,000 men and women into the ranks of the unemployed then we must, without any hesitation, say 'no'.

Like many unions the NUR has in its rule book a socialist clause committing us to "the defeat of capitalism and its replacement by a socialistic form of society." The time is now ripe for a campaign against closures and job losses, linked to raising the socialist consciousness of our members so that railway workers can not only defend their living standards, but assist in the bringing down of this Tory government and its replacement with a Labour government pledged to a full socialist programme.

MFI - Make blacking bite

Bob Faulkes, Hackney Labour Party, spoke to MFI workers

The strike at MFI's warehouse in Stratford, East London, is now in its sixth week. At last it seems the power of the trade union movement is being mobilised for trade union recognition.

Dockers at Gravesend, where most MFI supplies are unloaded, have agreed to black them. The T&GWU is contacting trade unionists internationally for assistance: much of MFI's material is manufactured in East Germany.

This represents a giant step. The battle now is to

unionise MFI as a whole, forcing the reactionary management to recognise the union.

Ray, the T&GWU shop steward at the Stratford depot, pointed out that management lied, saying they would recognise the union if half the workers joined. Yet at the Portsmouth depot, where there is 100% membership, management still refuses to recognise the union.

The battle at MFI is vital for millions of unorganised workers in London, after the setbacks at Grunwicks and Garners. The lessons seem to have been learned; the enormous power that the labour movement can command can ensure that this arrogant and miserly firm, where as Gary Hope, one of the strikers, told me "I get more on social security than in wages," can be forced to their knees, bringing the strike to a speedy and successful conclusion.

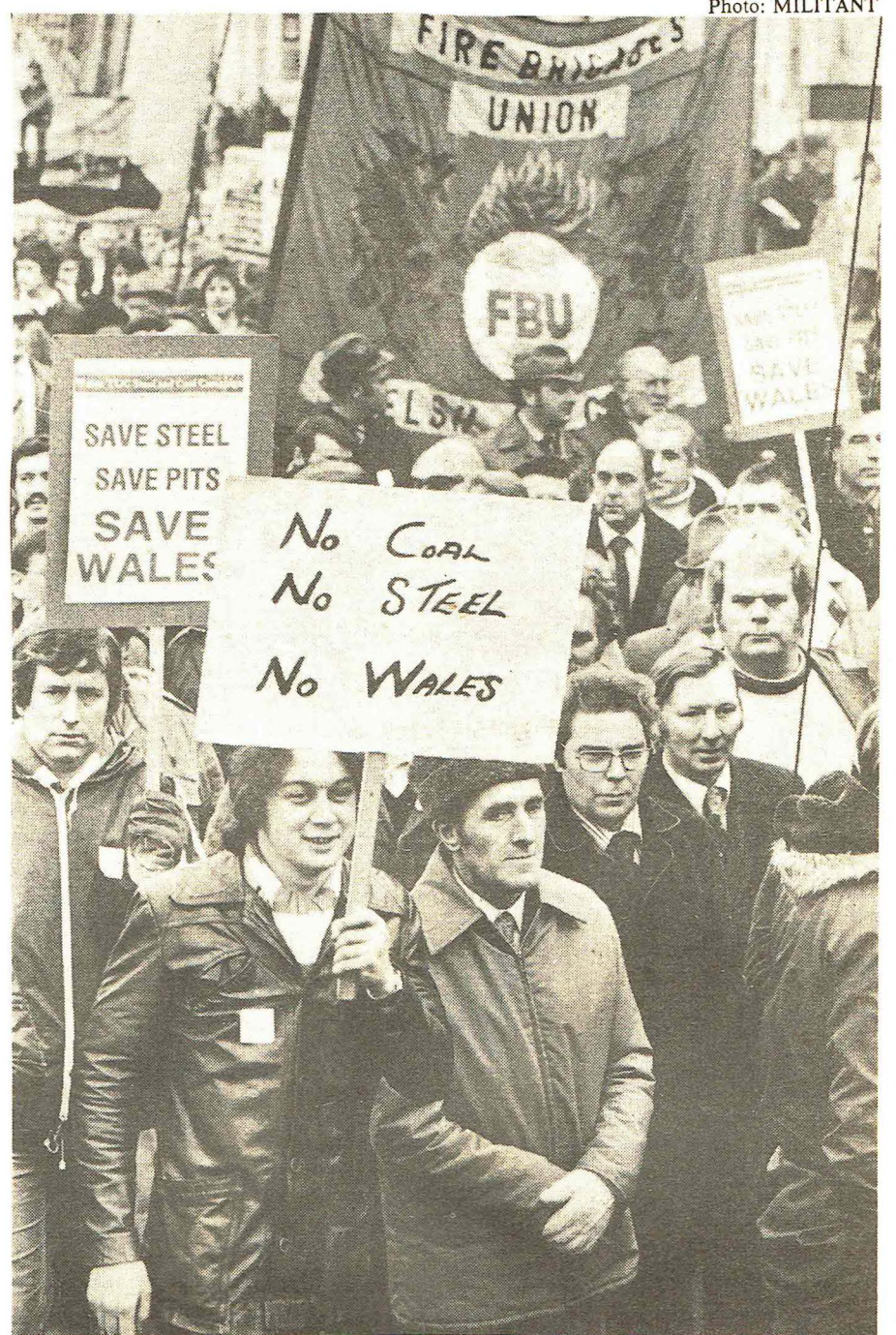
Due to the shortage of pickets—they are also cover-

ing the docks—any help at the Stratford depot would be appreciated. Finance which is also vital, should be sent, along with offers of help, to the MFI Strike Committee, c/o F R Higgs, District Official, T&GWU, 43 West Ham Lane, Stratford E.15.

Engineering employers in the Nottingham area seem intent on provoking confrontation.

About 300 workers at Sintered products, Sutton-in-Ashfield, are in their sixth week of strike action. Recently taken over by GKN, the firm still claims there is "no money in the kitty."

The workers, they said, were producing 'too much' so they unilaterally decided to drop a productivity



Miners spell out the bleak message on the Wales TUC demonstration against steel closures,

January '80

REPRIEVE FOR WELSH PIT

The Tymawr/Lewis Merthyr combine has had a reprieve, for a month at least.

By Anthony Tynan
(Tymawr Lodge, South Wales NUM, personal capacity)

Joe Gormley, the president of the NUM, on a visit to South Wales, informed local NUM lodge officials that he had spoken to Derek Ezra, the chairman of the NCB, on the telephone and they both agreed to hold a month-long investigation into the viability of the combine.

Mr Gormley said, "So much emotion has been generated over Tymawr/Lewis that the inquiry will short circuit the situation and enable us to get a true picture."

Both the NUM and the NCB will be nominating mining engineers from out-

side the South Wales area to look at the pit, where Mr Gormley hoped the engineers would find ways of making it economically viable. "We know there is coal in the pit," he said.

This new proposal, so readily agreed by the NCB who have seen the support for

Tymawr/Lewis Merthyr grow and grow, still has to be agreed by the Area Executive of the NUM who meet later this week.

The South Wales Area NUM are at present refusing to have further talks with the NCB over the future of South Wales pits because of the disgraceful and undemocratic way which the NCB announced the closure of Tymawr/Lewis Merthyr.

The announcement was made at the Cwm-Coedely colliery. It was noticeable that Mr Gormley did not go anywhere near the Tymawr/Lewis Merthyr combine which was what the visit was all about. We should be demanding an inquiry into the appalling bureaucracy at the National Coal Board.

Notts engineers fight wage cuts

Jack Scothern [convenor] and Brian Potter [senior shop steward] spoke to Tony Cross

scheme agreed last year, meaning a drop of about £20 per week in 200 men's wages. So much for the Tories' claims that higher productivity will bring higher wages!

On top of this, they have dropped the night shift (worth about another £20

in allowances) and declared 24 redundancies.

The workers claimed 25% increase in wages to compensate but were offered nothing. "We're just learning what life's all about," convenor Jack Scothern told a meeting of Alan Smith Group engineering workers, who have themselves been involved in a bitter dispute for over 20 weeks. Starting with £25 from the ASG workers' funds the Sintered workers are now setting about collecting money and

support.

Evidence that the strike is biting comes from the Engineering Employers' Federation who have tried to prioritise settlement of this dispute over the Alan Smith Group strike. But they will have to settle up with all Notts engineering workers if GKN want production, on any scale, to start again.

Messages of support and donations to Bro. J Scothern, 89 Walesby Drive, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire.

NGA CONFERENCE PRINTERS PLEDGE TO FIGHT ANTI-UNION BILL

The National Graphical Association, after its very effective wages and conditions campaign over the last few months, demanded an aggressive campaign next year.

Although we have just achieved a 37½-hour week, conference reaffirmed its aim for a further reduction to 35 hours.

Tony Mulhearn, Liverpool, moving the composite, showed that although only half a percent of members are unemployed, the true figure is concealed by the many leaving the trade. In the two years up to 1978 there was a 5,000 drop in the number of under-18s coming into the trade. The ratio of apprentices to journeymen declined from 5.6% in March 1978 to 4.9% just two years later.

The union will also campaign for five weeks' holiday, on time and a half for all holiday leave. The platform assured us that future wage increases will take account of current inflation. This will once again mean a confrontation with the employers and

By Peter Jarvis
London Region NGA
(personal capacity)

perhaps the government.

In the face of our action for the last claim, the Employers' Federation (BPIF) collapsed. It won't be so simple next year. Just prior to this dispute the employers launched a £2 million fighting fund to use against the print workers.

General secretary Joe Wade, introducing the resolution opposing the present government's industrial legislation, demanded that the TUC join with the NGA in pledging support for any section of trade unionists attacked under the new laws, not just with moral support, but with strike action if necessary. If he and the

president had to go to jail, he promised, then so be it.

As he pointed out, this government could provoke a general strike. 'Militant's' demand that the events of 14 May are seen as the first step in preparation for a 24-hour general strike is therefore crucial. This requires serious ground-work, rather than the holiday mood of the day of action, with union leaders, area and branch officials holding meetings and rallies to draw all workers into action.

The other major debate was on re-election of union officials. The debate was once again won by those calling for officers to be subject to the election procedure. In the voting, however, it was defeated, but only by 214 votes to 148. By the next conference, with just a few more branches convinced of the need for democratic control over our officials, this measure should be passed.

Meanwhile, the examination system for selection of officials, a black-spot in our union rule book, has finally been removed. Members can now stand for positions based not on their academic performance but on credentials won in the labour movement's struggles.

SHAND KYDD JOBS v BOSSES' COMPUTER



At the Shand Kydd wallpaper factory in Christchurch, the fight goes on to save 400 jobs. The multinational bosses Reed International, wish to close the mill in order to inflate the already massive £99m profits they've accumulated over the last year.

Local LPYS branches have been at the forefront of the campaign to let everyone in the surrounding community know the consequences of butchery of this kind. After a successful public meeting at Christchurch Town Hall, another one is planned.

Leafletting and petitioning continues, and lots of support (in words and cash) has come in from local Labour Parties, trade union branches and various meetings held recently. A 'Save Shand Kydd' fund is now set up.

Our Tory MP, Robert Adley had the audacity to visit the mill, no doubt to chart the progress of his government's policies, which are responsible for wholesale unemployment the like of which we are now facing at Shand Kydd. He didn't have the nerve to come down on the shop-floor, probably anticipating the welcome he would have got! All he promised to do was

have a word with his capitalist friends in London, Reed International.

Redundancies offer misery for workers, and they won't sort out the dire crisis of capitalism. The wallpaper industry must be immediately nationalised under workers' control and management, with an £80 minimum wage tied to a 35-hour week, in order to provide decent secure employment.

This is what one worker feels about the situation; he has only been at Shand Kydd's a few months, and is likely to be thrown on the dole without a penny redundancy pay:

"This cut is not caused by a government democratically elected, although Thatcher and her henchmen haven't helped the situation. This cut is caused by a board of directors, who probably fed information into a computer, were told that Shand Kydd, Christchurch is no longer profitable, and therefore should be closed. That is the only reason and motive for the closure.

As socialists, the question we put to our computer should be—do the workers still want to produce wallpaper? Do the people still want wallpaper, and do we still have the raw material for the production of wallpaper?

If the answer is yes to all these questions, then we must

By Dave Lovett
(NGA Deputy FOC,
Bournemouth East
Labour Party)

find some way of paying for it. For while a worker is producing something, anything for the community, he has a right to a home, food and as many extras as the community can afford.

If Reed get their way, there will be some workers who will lose their homes, some people will probably see the bailiffs coming for the TV, stereo, car, etc. They might manage to eat—and all this decided by probably less than ten people, possibly by one person.

Let's hope that we as the working-class and creators of wealth win this battle to keep Shand Kydd open, and eventually win the battle for freedom, democracy, the right to choose what we want to produce, and how we are going to pay for it. In other words, the right to organise our lives the way we want to, and not the way a small minority wants us to. 99

Save the Barclay workshop

The East Sussex County Council plan to close down the Barclay Sheltered Workshop for the physically handicapped as part of a ten per cent cut in all services.

This brutal act will have devastating effects on the 25 people who work here. Suffering from dystrophobia and other serious conditions, these workers have been able to do useful jobs at Barclay, marketing their own products and living an independent life.

Over the past year or two they have organised in the G&MWU and have won many improvements in working conditions. Earlier this

month the terrible news came. After many Tory promises that Barclay would not be touched by the cuts, the sudden decision to close was announced.

Already one of the workers has become very ill following the news, such was his anger and dismay. He and all the others will be thrown out of a regular job and forced to go into homes or on to social security, without any possibility of proper work.

Their lives will undoubtedly be shattered. At what 'saving'? Just £32,000—but the social costs will be far greater. The East Sussex Tories have cast off the financial respon-

sibilities but the grim future for these workers will be blood on the Tories' hands.

This heartless closure must be fought. The G&MWU have organised a picket, led by the Barclay workers, of the East Sussex County Council social services committee. Brighton Labour Party and the Labour Party Young Socialists are mobilising support and taking round a petition demanding that Barclay stay open.

We are determined to stop this Tory cut and we demand that no other cuts be made in its place if Barclay is saved.

By Alan Huyton
(Brighton LPYS)

Tandy joins recognition battle

The American Nasty Disrespectful Yankee Scrooges

Take-home pay of £142 for a month's work—£36 a week—at Tandy explains the anger of this picket line placard.

£748 take-home for the month; 'we are on both sides, but please come through the picket line' sums up the one-sided 'neutrality' of the police. Throughout the dispute, now in its fifth week, the local constabulary have been at the beck and call of management.

'TGWU: we won't give in, we're gonna win'; 'Help us to win: don't come in.'

These were two of the many posters used to greet the annual visit of the big white chief from America, Mr Roach. No expense was spared to clear up the rubbish from the car park. All the grass was mowed.

Shop steward Kathy Jukes described the working conditions in the warehouse: "In the summer there's no ventilation: it's like a greenhouse. In the winter, it's really cold—we come in with two cardigans. It's always under the working temperature:

once it went down to 24°F.

"To do our jobs we have barrows and have to pick from order forms from the shelves. We have to lift stereos and speakers, some of which are a tidy weight. I have had a stacker truck across my foot and also a strained back."

Kathy went on to say, "We will only go back with the union recognised."

It is essential that trade unionists black all 120 Tandy stores and dealerships.

By Brian Debus
(Erdington Labour Party)

METRO CAMMELL - MAKE THIS STRIKE OFFICIAL

"We were sacked on 6 June and due to management intimidation, media distortion and the union officials' role, eleven members scabbed and went into work today."

Pat Brennan, chairman EETPU shop steward' committee and Dennis Squelch, senior steward at Metro Cammell's Birmingham site, gave their views on the dispute;

"The 'Evening Mail' said we are technicians: fact—we are electricians; that we are on £200 a week: fact—we have a basic wage of £57.80 and with bonuses, can earn a top line of £130."

It is now six weeks since the 146 electricians came out on strike leading to 1,500 layoffs. They came out to resist

the imposition of a new bonus scheme by GEC, who have these workers on permanent contract at the Metro Cammell site in Washwood Heath.

GEC's proposals would mean throwing out the original bonus scheme and reducing the workforce by 25%.

Two weeks ago the EETPU members unanimously decided to continue the strike. In spite of this their national officer, Roy Sanderson, called for a return to work before negotiations with management were started.

Not to be outdone, the local EETPU full-time official, Bob Wright, has told the workforce to accept management's original offer, even though the workers feel he did not understand the impli-

cations. GEC have declared their intention to be 'selective' in who they take back, but Wright has said he would recommend nothing if anyone was victimised.

So far, nine EETPU branches in the Midlands area have passed resolutions condemning the officials' attitude and calling for the strike to be made official. This needs to be taken up by all EETPU branches nationally, as part of a fight for a representative leadership in the union.

Donations and messages of support c/o Dennis Squelch, 33 Hereford Close, Frankley, Birmingham B45 LBQ.

Metro Cammell workers spoke to Yasmin Barry and Brian Debus

STEEL WORKERS FIGHT FOR THEIR FUTURE NO TO STEEL CLOSURES!

“This is the most important decision of your life,” Dennis Meadows, ISTC joint branch chairman told 2,500 Consett workers, as they voted unanimously to oppose the death sentence on the town.

The mass meeting pledged “to fight with all our resources to secure a profitable long-term future for the works and thereby save the whole community.”

The Consett area already has 4,000 on the dole, chasing less than 100 mostly part-time vacancies. In the town itself 46 jobs are being advertised, and in the next two months 1,400 school-leavers will join the scramble for work.

The steelworkers know that the town's whole future hinges on the BSC works. They are ready to fight—they are not prepared to let their town die.

In Newport, South Wales, an action committee has been formed to fight the devastation proposed as a ‘solution’ to the ills of the British Steel Corporation.

The huge modern Llanwern works is to go on half-production, with the loss of 3,500

By ‘Militant’ reporters

jobs—an economic nonsense. Llanwern needs to work flat out to achieve maximum efficiency. But there is method in this madness.

An inefficient Llanwern, with the workforce already run-down, will then be nominated for total closure: the real aim of British Steel management. It was with this in mind that the meeting declared its determination to fight back.

The NUM regional executive was represented at the meeting by Don Hayward, who gave the miners’ full support. The South Wales coalfield is a major supplier of fuel to BSC and cuts in steel mean cuts in coal production. The future of the steel industry is of vital concern to



Workers in steel towns have been fighting for jobs and a future for some years. The rest of the movement must rally to their support

the NUM and to every Welsh worker.

A demonstration against the ‘slimline’ proposals was organised outside the gates of Llanwern, as the start of the fight to save steel.

Soothing talk of redundancy and severance pay is no consolation to steel workers.

Will it tide them over till they die? For there is little chance of finding other work in the unemployment blackspots of the North East and South Wales. Will the payments be any consolation for their sons and daughters? Every job lost now will be another school-leaver committed to

a life sentence on the dole. The trade union and labour movement must rally round the steelworkers in their fight.
 ★ No to closures!
 ★ For a 35-hour week without loss of pay—share out the work!
 ★ Take over the parasitic private steel firms—for an

integrated, nationalised steel industry!
 ★ Sack the BSC board—for workers’ control and management!
 ★ Bring down the Tories!
 ★ For a Labour government committed to socialist policies to re-vitalise industry!

Parents occupy school

The first known occupation of a school by parents has taken place. Parents are angered at the cuts Gayhurst Primary School in Hackney will suffer, with two teachers’ jobs going and another transferred against her wishes.

Together with spending cuts, these mean cut-backs on teacher helpers and the possible loss of the nursery. Parents have decided to sit-in at the classrooms overnight to take direct action to reverse the position.

Edmond Taylor, one of the parents co-ordinating the occupation said: “We’ll stay in as long as it takes. We’re going to win, and we’re fighting for all the schools in Hackney.”

By Bob Faulkes (Hackney Labour Party)

SAVE OUR HOSPITAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

crazy logic! Ambulancemen bitterly oppose the move as there are no proper facilities for ambulances at St Cath’s. The Children’s Hospital has extra space for 100 people plus prams.

Mothers can sleep at the Hospital overnight with their children, which medical staff believe greatly helps a child to adjust to hospital life and aids quick recovery. All these are absent at St Cath’s.

The Childrens Hospital has facilities for non-accidental injuries, i.e. child battering. St Caths has not. How many times have surveys shown the terrible effect that unemployment has on families, increasing stress, increasing physical and mental illness in the family—and increasing the likelihood of child abuse?

It is the very same people who caused the jobs devastation on Merseyside who are causing the demise of the medical facilities we need to cope with the effects of unemployment.

The bosses’ party, the Tories, have instructed local health authorities to ‘economise’, in effect, cut services. The budget of the Area

Health Authority seems shrouded in secrecy, but there is talk of the government giving the AHA £7 million less than previously. ‘Saving’ money in this manner is incompatible with the saving of lives.

Unfortunately only a few of the doctors are objecting to the scheme. The general surgeons are too busy opening up private practice in Thingwall Hospital, another local hospital which was closed as an NHS facility and has now reopened on a private basis. Too many of the doctors can not be bothered about the sick children of the ‘ordinary’

PUBLIC MEETING
 Monday June 30th, 7.30 pm. Oxtan Congregational Church Hall, corner of Balls Road and Woodchurch Rd. [opposite Childrens Hospital]. Speakers: Sister Wilkinson [Campaign Committee] and a Parents Committee member. Chairman: Brian Keys.

people of Birkenhead. The AHA may reckon that sick children are weak and as such are easy pickings for closure. But staff and the parents of the children are determined to prove them wrong. A massive campaign has

been launched, which has collected over 87,000 signatures since April 25. A campaign committee has been elected bringing together the unions. The committee are organising a public meeting with the full support of the Labour Party Young Socialists.


The staff and parents must not be left to struggle alone. The labour and trade union movement have the strength to put enormous muscle behind the campaign. All the labour movement organisations in the Wirral must support this fight, and put pressure on the AHA to change its policy.

The Labour Party members on the Area Health Authority must fight this closure and all other cuts this vicious anti-working class government try to force on us.

The fight is only beginning. The LPYS have been helping in spreading this struggle, and have visited workplaces and union offices for support and financial help.

Support us in our struggle to keep the children of Wirral alive and healthy.

Resolutions of support to Brian Keyes, Children’s Hospital, Woodchurch Road, Birkenhead. Financial help to ‘Birkenhead Children’s Hospital Fighting Fund’, c/o June Chambers, Birkenhead Childrens Hospital, Woodchurch Road, Birkenhead.



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