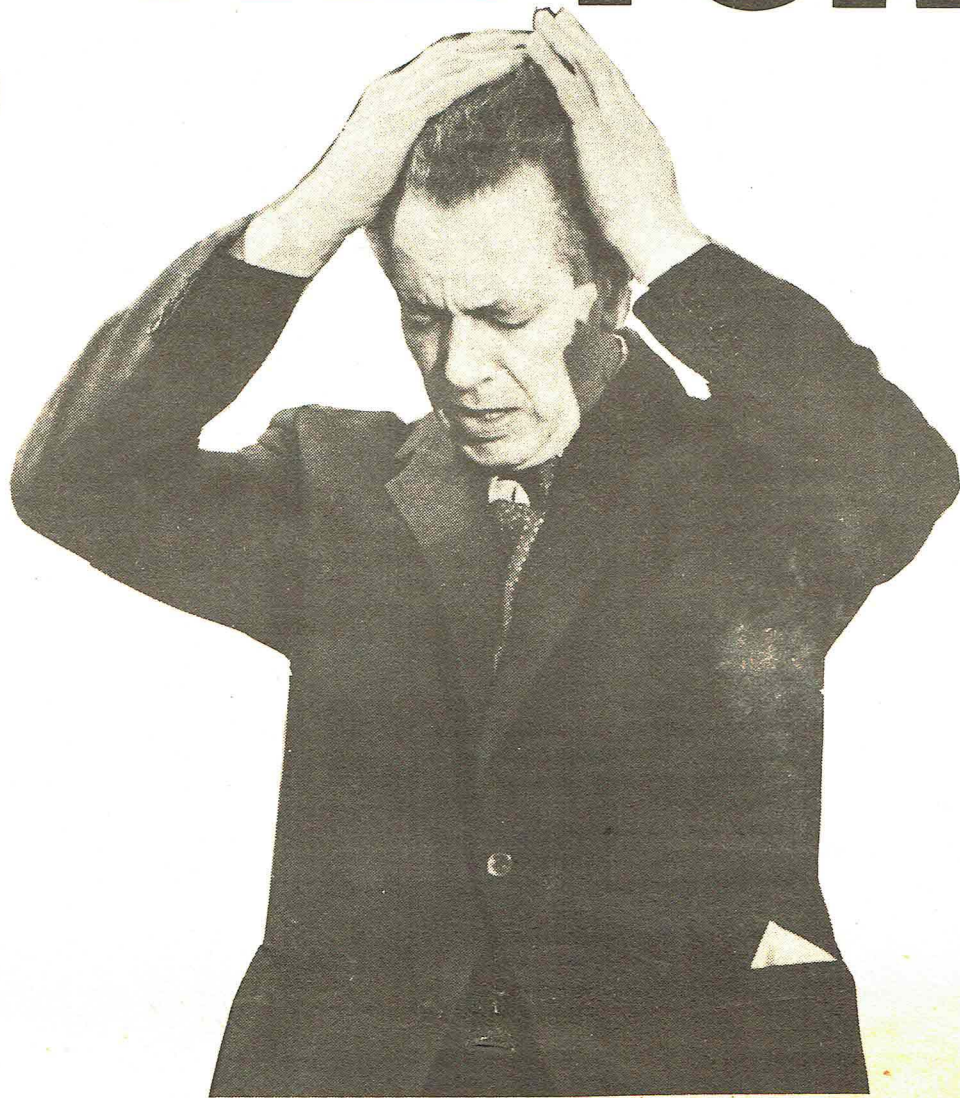


SCRAP THE TORIES

and their rotten system



The Tory Industry Secretary, the Mad Monk Sir Keith Joseph, is peddling the old myth that mass unemployment is all the fault of the workers.

That is the only answer the Tories have to the 1,650,000 officially unemployed, and to the hundreds of thousands of school leavers facing an empty future.

By Bob Wade

With bare-faced audacity, Joseph demands that young school leavers and those already employed should take a cut in wages. Then, he says, people "would not price themselves out of jobs!"

Yet just recently, he was touring America speaking to the giant monopolies, trying to get them to set up in Britain. His main plank was that labour costs in Britain were so cheap!

With 712,000 youngsters leaving school over the next five weeks—many joining the 2 million already unemployed—the situation is growing steadily worse.

With such a mass of unemployed, no doubt the vultures of big business will attempt to force down wages even further, scaring workers with the prospect of long term unemployment and closures.

For youth it is particu-

larly grim—50,000 people under 24 have been out of work for over a year. The 'News of the World' [29 June] pointed to Consett where at the moment there are 750 school leavers, and only six jobs vacant. And this before the Consett steel works closes down, leaving another 3,000 jobless!

The Tories' brutal 'austerity' policies have only worsened the crisis

CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE

SAVIOURS OF PRIVATE
ENTERPRISE BANKRUPT
257 FIRMS IN 1 YEAR

2,000,000 WORKERS
THROWN ON SCRAP HEAP

INSIDE CONSETT

Death of a steel town page 9



Northern Ireland Prisons

page 2

ITALY 1920-22

page 10

NUM Conference
page 15

AUEW
page 14

Parents occupation halts school cuts



Action by the parents of children at Gayhurst Primary School, Hackney, who staged the first reported parents' occupation of a school, successfully pressurised the ILEA into withdrawing threatened cuts at Gayhurst.

Parents went into the school last Wednesday [25 June], with the teachers' co-operation, and occupied the class rooms. All the children stayed in their classes.

The action was in protest at the Inner London Education Authority's plans to move a teacher, Miss Eastwood,

to another school. She had already been moved three times in three years, and she was unwilling to change schools again. AUR money [extra provision to the schools that are harder up] was to be cut, and a junior teaching post was to be cut altogether. This is

when numbers at the school are on the increase.

The ILEA responded to the parents' protests by inviting a representative to the meeting [26 June] where the decisions were to be made. As a result of the bold action by parents, however, the ILEA has now decided that Miss Eastwood will be kept on, the AUR money will be given back, and the position of helper for the kindergarten will be restored. The drawback is

CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE

Militant

1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

NORTHERN IRELAND - LABOUR MUST GIVE THE LEAD

The passing of a resolution by Labour's National Executive on Northern Ireland—deploring the appalling conditions which exist in NI prisons, opposing the oppression and torturing of prisoners, and calling for the NEC's Human Rights study group to consider a number of basic demands for prisoners' rights [*'Militant'*, 13 June]—has provoked a concerted campaign by the capitalist press to prevent this question from being taken up by the labour movement.

By completely distorting and misrepresenting the resolution concerned, the press, on behalf of the ruling class, is attempting to maintain the wall of silence around the role of the British state in Northern Ireland—and to prevent the labour movement from revealing to workers what is really going on.

Taking their cue from the capitalist press, Labour's leading right-wingers—like William Rodgers and two former Secretaries of State for Northern Ireland, Roy Mason and Merlyn Rees—have deliberately tried to give the impression that the NEC's resolution gives support to the IRA, when the resolution clearly states:

"The NEC is implacably opposed to the programme and methods of terrorism." They are using these dirty tactics in an attempt to prevent discussion of this crucial issue within the Labour Party.

Noting that this resolution was initiated by the LP Young Socialist representative, Tony Saunois, *'The Sunday Times'* maliciously accuses the supporters of the motion of "a Stalinist attitude towards the manipulation of facts." But *'The Sunday Times'* is well aware that it has itself published evidence of repression, torture and [to say the least] gross abuse of legal and democratic rights in Northern Ireland.

"Newspapers," *'The Sunday Times'* concedes, "had printed allegations to this effect, which, if they have real evidence, it is their job to do; but which hardly justifies a majority on the NEC putting their names to words whose accuracy they have not yet troubled to investigate."

Yet they are denouncing an NEC resolution which is precisely calling for an investigation into reports and allegations of brutality and torture. They condemn the NEC for being "already prepared to use such terms as repression and torture." But are they seriously trying

to deny that there is repression and torture in Northern Ireland?

Only this week [*'Guardian'* 1 July], a teacher detained under the notorious Prevention of Terrorism Act on suspicion of being an "IRA god-father" was awarded £5,000, with costs, in compensation as exemplary damages for maltreatment during interrogation at the Royal Ulster Constabulary's Castlereagh interrogation centre.

The judge claimed that Bernard O'Connor's allegations of beatings, half suffocation, being smeared with excreta, being forced to drink water from the floor, and being questioned naked were "grossly exaggerated"—although many other suspects have made similar allegations.

Nevertheless, the judge recognised that his interrogation—one session of which lasted 15½ hours and ended at 5.15 in the morning—was excessive and caused O'Connor substantial mental stress and disturbance. O'Connor gave evidence that he was interrogated for 51 hours 5 minutes out of 108 hours in detention by a relay of 25 detectives—even if that was all, does it not amount to totalitarian, police-state methods of repression?

In the same day's *'Guardian'* [1 July] it was also reported that three officers in the RUC's Special Patrol Group in South Armagh were given only suspended sentences—after one had been convicted of kidnapping a Roman Catholic priest and the other two had been convicted of taking part in an attack on a pub in which one man was shot in the stomach and a bomb was planted [which fortunately did not explode].

Another RUC Constable who pleaded guilty to wounding the customer was given a 7-year sentence; another accomplice, also an RUC Constable, was given a 3-year sentence—but then he is already serving a life-sentence for the murder of a grocer.

Anger at the incredible leniency of these sentences in marked contrast to the sentences meted out to other prisoners, will be strengthened by the Judge's breathtaking comments that he could understand the compulsion which led to the RUC men to carry out the kidnapping and their frustration that ordinary police methods had proved relatively ineffective!

These two incidents alone give just a glimpse of the scale and systematic nature of the repression that goes on all the time in Northern Ireland!

What, for instance, has been done about the Bennet Report which last March [*'Militant'*, 23 March] gave ample evidence of systematic brutality at RUC interrogation centres? In truth, little or nothing has been done!

While this repression goes on, it is inevitably carried over into the gaols—to which many of the prisoners have been condemned by the non-jury 'Diplock courts,' on the basis of 'confessions,' anonymous accusations, and the uncorroborated testimony of policemen.

'The Sunday Times' says that the NEC does not know the facts. But it is a fact that prisoners in Long Kesh [the Maze] are denied even the rights which are allowed to prisoners in other British gaols. They are locked in cells for 24 hours a day; they are forced to cover themselves in blankets, they are denied proper clothing, and they are prevented from using toilet and bath facilities. It is absolutely clear that such an extreme form of protest on the part of Long Kesh prisoners can only be the result of extreme pressure and extreme provocation by the prison authorities and by the warders.

The labour movement must stand on principle for the defence of the basic rights of prisoners, whether in Northern Ireland, Britain or elsewhere. There can be no justification for the brutal, inhuman treatment

of prisoners, whatever their crimes—or alleged offences.

Defending the basic rights of prisoners is not to "give succour to the IRA" [*'The Sunday Times'*]. Nor is opposition to "Westminster Bi-partisanship" on Northern Ireland—i.e. Labour support for Tory policies and a tacit agreement to prevent discussion of Irish issues—to "encourage terrorism" [*'The Observer'*].

The *'Militant'* has consistently made it clear that it is implacably opposed to the policies, and particularly to the terrorist methods, of the Provisional IRA leadership. Their policies can provide no solution to the intolerable social grievances from which sectarianism and violence arise. The Provisionals are incapable of mobilising the working class in organised, united action. Their methods of struggle, moreover, as we have many times pointed out, actually play into the hands of the state and allow it to strengthen its repressive apparatus.

Nevertheless, military rule in Northern Ireland will never lead to a solution. As long as repression continues on the streets and in the prisons the Provisional IRA will continue to find new recruits, who turn to terrorism out of desperation.

Above all, however, it is the failure of the labour movement to provide an independent, socialist alternative to the problems of Northern Ireland which have allowed a sharpening of the sectarian divisions and the escalation of bloody sectarian fighting.

Jim Callaghan has himself warned that the Provisionals may be planning a new bombing campaign in Britain. But far from being a reason for perpetuating a pact with the Tories on Ireland and continuing to suppress information on events in the six counties and discussion of the issue, the threat of new bombings is an urgent reason for the labour movement to put forward its own policies in order to offer the working

class a way out of the morass created by centuries of British exploitation and oppression.

Recent action by the workers in Northern Ireland—the magnificent strike on the 2nd April, for example, and the overwhelming support for the TUC's Day of action on 14 May, demonstrate that in spite of the bitter sectarian fighting of the last eleven years, the basis of class unity remains intact in the trade union organisations. This must be built on as the basis of a mass working-class campaign for socialist policies to tackle the horrendous social and economic problems of British capitalism—which have taken on a special intensity in Northern Ireland.

The representatives of the British ruling class, echoed unfortunately by their shadows in the labour movement, are particularly alarmed at this latest initiative of the NEC—not because they really think that it is "reckless" and "will do no good" but precisely because they know that there is a growing feeling among the workers in Northern Ireland and also among the rank and file of the labour movement in Britain for an independent initiative from the labour movement.

The activists of the labour movement—as was shown at last year's LP Conference and at the Special Conference—have begun to understand that the workers' own class interests demand we oppose repression in Northern Ireland. It is being realised, with the Thatcher government's increasing use of the law and the police against trade unionists, that the methods of repression being tested in the six counties today pose a threat to the whole of the labour movement tomorrow.

That is why the Tories, the capitalist press, and the pro-big business right-wingers within the Labour Party fear a campaign on this issue within the labour movement.

Defence fund statement

Our issue of 18 April 1980 contained a statement by the organisers of the *'Militant'* Defence Campaign in which they indicated an account would be published when all expenses had been met and that, in accordance with the aims of the campaign, the residue would be donated to the *'Militant'* Fighting Fund, subject to any individual or organisation requiring the return of their proportion.

No such request having been received, the campaign was wound up on 30 June 1980 on the following basis:

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Income | £ |
| Donations [net] | 7,612 |
| Interest | 681 |
| Total | 8,293 |
| Expenditure | £ |
| Legal fees | 638 |
| Printing | 1,365 |
| Speakers' travel and expenses | 1,966 |
| Administrative expenses [inc. postage, freight, phone, etc.] | 1,179 |
| Total expenditure | 5,148 |
| To fighting fund | 3,452* |
| | 8,293 |

(*NB This amount will appear in our chart next week—ed.)

TORIES GET HAMMERED

The people of Glasgow Central have made one thing absolutely clear—no Tories here!

The by-election result was a disaster for the Tories, a real smack in the face for Thatcher, who was quick to assert, of course, that the constituency is "unrepresentative". These are words of hope rather than reality.

The Tory candidate attracted a derisory 707 votes, 8 percent of the poll, was relegated into third place by the SNP, and suffered the humiliation of the first ever Tory lost deposit in Glasgow Central.

Bob McTaggart, Labour Candidate, won, but Labour's share of the poll was 11% down on the General Election and the majority was reduced from 6605 to 2780, due to the unexpectedly good showing of the SNP candidate, who captured second place with 26% of the votes.

This has produced cries of a resurgence of nationalism and an SNP revival. These hopes will be shattered if Labour makes a radical socialist appeal to the electorate, particularly as class battles between bosses and

workers develop.

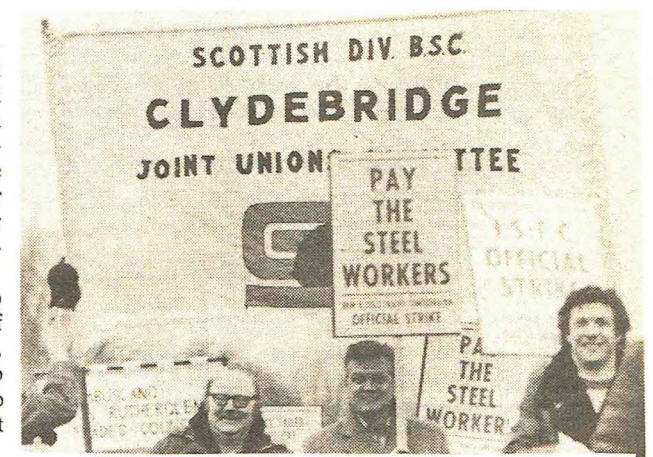
However, the votes captured by the SNP, do represent a warning. The electorate will have to be presented with something more than anti-Tory propaganda if they are to be won decisively to Labour and away from the blind alley of nationalism and sectarianism.

The Labour candidate, Bob McTaggart places himself firmly on the left of the Party, but his campaign showed no commitment whatsoever to radical socialist policies that this man should represent.

The campaign was controlled largely by the full-time officials from the local Scottish Party headquarters who seemed determined to ensure that the 'socialist monster' in Labour's breast would not raise its ugly head.

The tenor of all the propaganda produced, almost without exception, was anti-Tory and "McTaggart's your local man." The Labour Party Young Socialists for example were refused their request for a meeting. This bland, milk and water approach produced an equally low key response from the electorate.

The other parties standing included the Social Democra-



Glasgow steelworkers demonstrate against the Tories on May 14th

tic Party, with a programme aimed to catch the middle ground—they got 10 votes! The NF standing on a bigoted sectarian programme got only 148.

The majority of voters decided not to vote at all. The total poll was only 42% in the most deprived constituency in Britain.

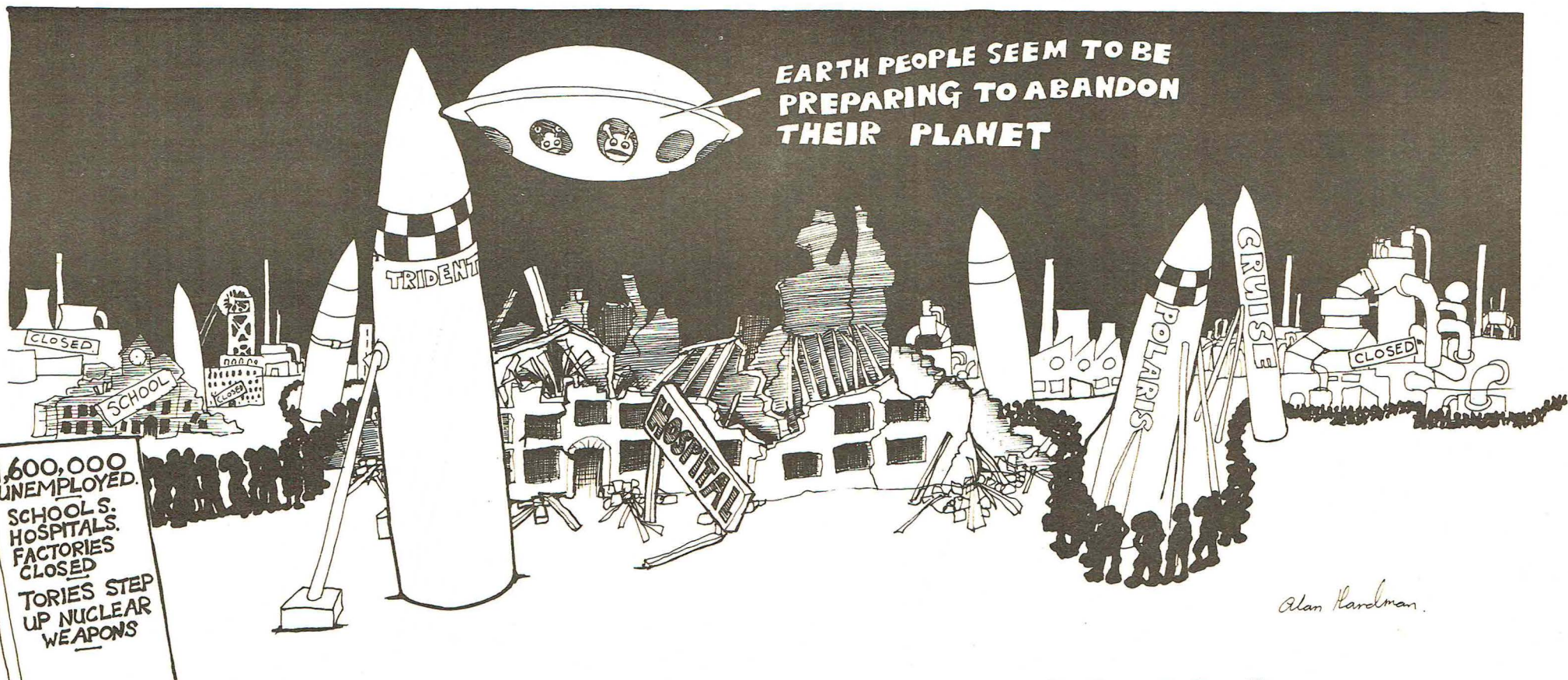
Glasgow Central takes in the GEAR project. The Glasgow East Area Renewal is literally rebuilding Glasgow's east end.

In one street, LPYS members went to canvass and found it had been demolished a few weeks earlier as the houses were unsafe. This was

brought home to the authorities when at one house the floor boards were so rotten that two girls in their bed fell through the ceiling and landed in the pub below!

The people of Glasgow Central showed their cynicism for all the politicians who in the past have delivered only broken promises. If Labour is to rally this massive section of the population behind its banner is must adopt bold socialist policies that will make deprivation and poverty obsolete.

By Bob Wylie and Willie Griffin



Alan Handman.

MARXIST WEEKEND SCHOOL

The Practical Importance of Theory

Militant's Marxist Weekend School in London last weekend was a huge success. Over 300 people attended and took part in the discussions on a wide number of topics.

All the courses were well attended, with three-part seminars on Marxist economics, introduction to Marxism, the life of Trotsky, and China. The overwhelming opinion was that the weekend was the best and most rewarding so far, and a tremendous boost to the enthusiasm and determination of all those who attended.

The high point of the weekend was the debate on the lessons of Chile. Probably more than anything else at the school, it showed the practical importance to labour movement activists of the study and understanding of Marxist ideas.

Previously, we had seen the film, 'Battle for Chile', showing the enormous and determined support for the advances made under Allende's government from 1970 to 1973. Even a week before the overthrow by the military junta, 800,000 workers were parading in the streets in support of the Popular Unity government.

How could such a government be toppled so bloodily?

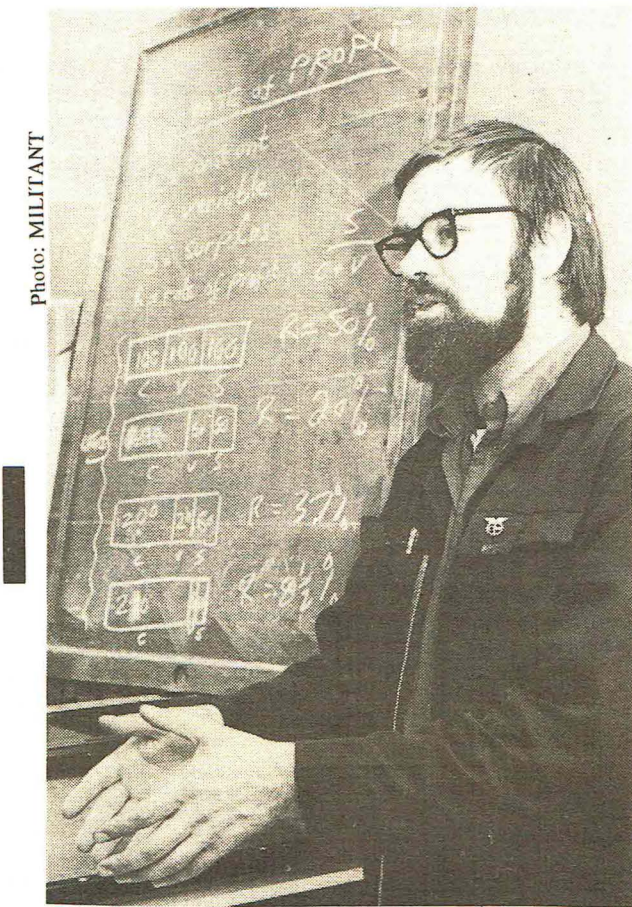
By Roger Shriver

How could a repeat be avoided in the future not just in Chile, but other countries including Britain?

Mike Gatehouse, a member of the Communist Party and the Chile Solidarity Campaign, pointed to the achievements of the Allende government in cutting poverty and unemployment, in nationalisations and in redistribution of wealth.

These were enormous steps of revolutionary nature, said Comrade Gatehouse. The government however, did not control the judiciary, or the army or police. They only argued for "partial control of the state." Popular Unity did not reject the struggle outside parliament but were determined to use portions of the state machinery.

Lynn Walsh for Militant agreed that there had been



Brian Beckingham speaking at one of the excellent seminars.

gains under Allende for the Chilean masses, but these had unfortunately been wiped out by the junta. The Popular Unity programme was similar to the 1973 Labour Party programme and that of the Tribune left of the Labour Party today.

The British ruling class had shown by their reaction to the Chilean coup that they would be prepared to crush in the manner of the Chilean junta, any moves to implement such policies, if they were allowed to.

The Popular Front policies of the Allende government had allied the workers' parties with groups like the Radical Party, a small capitalist party which acted as a brake, a foothold for capitalism in the Popular Unity.

The policies carried out were of a "transitional stage," partial steps within the constitution, acceptable to the ruling class. The aim was to avoid bloodshed—an aim which tragically but predictably failed.

Experience had shown that the middle class would not be won over on the middle ground of half measures but through resolute action by the workers' parties. Half measures only allowed reaction to sabotage the economy and prepare for a reckoning with the working class.

The key sections of the military were not only not disbanded. They were taken

into the cabinet, and Allende used the Army against independent initiatives of the working class and peasantry. The failure to act against the forces of the capitalist state allowed the armed forces to seize power in September 1973.

As speakers from the floor said, workers and peasants were clearly demanding arms to defend Allende's government from the armed forces, but were denied, with the Popular Unity leaders depending on fétting and increasing the pay of the generals to defeat the military challenge. The mobilisation of the mass of the working class, and a class appeal to the ranks of the troops was the only way Chile could have been saved.

Speakers from the floor pointed out that not only in Chile, but in countries like Italy, similar policies to those of the Popular Unity leadership are being carried out today.

The tragedy was that Militant had predicted the horrific end of Allende's government before the coup. The workers of Chile are already recovering from the horrors of Pinochet's regime and rising to their feet again.

If they and workers in other countries are not to suffer more and worse Pinochets, the lessons of Chile would have to be learned and taken into the labour movements of the world.

LPYS Summer Camp BOOK NOW!



The Labour Party Young Socialists' Summer Camp is only a few weeks away. Where else can you get a week's holiday in the countryside, a week's political discussion and sports and social activities rolled into one.

Over 800 young workers, from LPYS branches, trade unions etc. will converge on the camp in the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire from July 26th-August 2nd.

Big evening meetings include the Socialist Youth rally and meetings on Northern Ireland and Chile, and a debate between speakers from Militant, Tribune and the Manifesto

Commissions and seminars are being held on a wide variety of subjects of interest to LPYS members and trade unionists. Fuller details will be given next week. On top of this, sports activities of numerous kinds, discos, club nights and films make a really worthwhile week.

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 Chairman)

S.WALES SUMMER CAMP

August Bank Holiday 1980 Horton, Gower, West Glamorgan. Friday August 22-Monday August 25.

Come to the Wales Summer Camp! For the fifth time we are organising our highly successful camp in the beautiful surroundings of Horton in the Gower [10 minutes walk from Port Eynon and Horton beaches]. It will provide not only an excellent introduction to the basics of Marxism, but provide a superb holiday for the family.

First class entertainment is being organised as well as sports and fancy dress for the children. Creche facilities will be available. Snacks will also be provided. Campers will need their own tents etc.

POLITICAL EVENTS

- Sat 10am-12.30: Introduction to Marxism.
- Sat 6pm-8.30: Theory and practice of the General Strike.
- Sun 10am-12.30: What is Stalinism?
- Sun 6pm-8.30: The threat of World War.
- Mon 10am-12.30: Marxism and the Labour Party.

COST

- £8.00 per person [snacks provided].
- £2.50 per child 5-12.
- Free to under 5.

Money to and details from: R. Sewell, 99 Pendery Road, Penlan, Swansea. Tel. Swansea 584542.

NOTTS LPYS SAYS- 'WE WANT JOBS'

When Tony Trendowicz was on the dole, he was too keen to get off it.

"You're coming here too often," he was told at the Job Centre, "you've got to give others a chance."

He was one of last year's crop of school leavers in Nottingham. This month, Notts County Council's Careers Service expect over 7,000 school leavers to be looking for jobs. With 400 more young people on the dole already than this time last year and vacancies down 50%

**By Tony Cross
and Andy Zaple**

(Notts LPYS)

they won't have to visit the Job Centre too often either!

LPYS branches are hammering home the situation facing youth in Nottingham, Mansfield and Rushcliffe. We

hope a newly established branch in Maggie's own birthplace — Grantham — will take the message into Lincolnshire and we hope to see new branches in Beeston and Matlock soon.

On the way to work each morning I pass a Job Centre on the other side of the road. Here are boards for advertising jobs in the window. There are eight of these boards in all, and one bright spark decided to spell out 'Clerical' with the cards advertising clerical job vacancies on these boards. It looked quite impressive from my side of the



Photo: MILITANT

**Nottingham Youth Campaign Against Unemployment
Demonstration: Saturday 5 July 12.00 noon.
Assemble Victoria Embankment, Trent Bridge,
March to rally, Albert Hall**

street.

Jobs in Nottingham are scarce. Plessey, one of the largest employers, are axing 5,000 jobs in the next five years. In the last six months over 1,000 hosiery and knit-

wear jobs in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire have been lost. On top of this Nottinghamshire County Council have axed more jobs than any other in the country.

These facts explain the

reality of the Job Centre's imaginative plan—most of the cards were blank! For example, the last 'L' consisted of ten white cards, seven of which had no job to advertise!

Labour Party invites Militant speaker

On Monday 9 June Clare Doyle, a prominent 'Militant' supporter, came and spoke to the General Management Committee of Thurrock CLP. Clare's invitation to speak came after a motion was put by the Chadwell branch at the time of the attempted witch-hunt of 'Militant' in the Tory press.

By Bill Bridger

(Basildon Branch,
Thurrock CLP)

Clare spoke for about 30 minutes and during this time she outlined the crisis facing British capitalism when profits have slumped to about a 4% return on investment, and where investment is 18% lower than ten years ago. The strategy of the Tory government and their three-pronged attack on the working class was explained, firstly the cuts in public expenditure, secondly the Social Security Bill, and thirdly, the keystone of the Tory attack—the so-called Employment Bill.

Most people agreed wholeheartedly with the proposal to restore all jobs and services which have been cut by the Tories, and Clare explained the need for an extensive programme of public works to house the homeless, build hospitals for the sick and schools for our children.

The need to plan the economy was spelt out, but as was explained, you can't control what you don't own. Consequently there is a need to nationalise the 200 leading monopolies together with the

banks and insurance companies as this would give us the opportunity to control the economy and ensure that production was geared to need and not to profit.

Finally Clare explained the 'Militant' approach to Labour Party democracy and said that mandatory re-selection was a reform which must be defended if the Party was ever to have democratic control of MPs.

After this the chairman threw the meeting open to questions and there were one or two quite interesting responses. One delegate said that what Clare had explained was nothing more or less than socialism and that surely no Labour Party member could disagree with that.

Another delegate asked why, given that what 'Militant' proposed was in the main Labour Party policy, we needed to produce a paper like 'Militant' and Clare answered that although it was mostly Labour Party policy, some in the Party didn't seem too keen on implementing it when in office.

After the meeting 13 copies of the paper were sold to delegates along with about 6 or 7 pamphlets. One delegate, a county councillor, placed a year's subscription for the paper and all in all it was a very successful meeting and one of the best GMCs I have ever attended.

'Young Jobless and Black'

Hackney LPYS is organising a month long campaign of leafletting, petitioning, and days of action, against police harassment in Hackney, and for the ending of 'Sus' law. A central part of the campaign is to include visits to black youth clubs, record shops, discos, etc. We are aiming to present a petition to Hackney council, combined with press releases to local papers and London radio stations.

The combination of rising unemployment and the use of the Special Patrol Group on the streets of Hackney is making life a misery for black youth. The LPYS locally have called for the Council to provide a Day Centre for the unemployed, organised by unemployed people themselves. So far the Council haven't agreed, but we'll be raising the issue again in our month of action.

Every section of the labour movement and Black and Asian communities are going to be approached to assist us in the campaign, for which 5,000 special leaflets are being printed.

The police have been trying to dampen down the anger of black youth, but to no avail.

When local police Commander Mitchell visited a black youth club, he was booed and jeered for the



Photo: MILITANT

Kevin Fernandes [Hackney North LPYS] speaking at anti-fascist demonstration in London's Brick Lane

whole 40 minutes he spent attempting to 'discuss relations between the police and West Indian youngsters.' According to the 'Hackney Gazette,' this latter day missionary 'appeared to have some difficulty understanding the accents of many of the West Indian lads'!

After the meeting he confessed to being 'a little disappointed' at the hostile reception and the difficulty he found communicating with the youths. No wonder! Youth in Hackney are more than disappointed at the harassment that is handed out daily by the police.

**Hackney Public Meeting
'Scrap Sus:
End Police Harassment'
Wednesday 23 July, 7.30 pm
Speaker: Bob Lee [Secretary,
PNP Youth-UK], Hackney
Labour Club, Dalston Lane,
Hackney.**

Owen debates with LPYS

Two contrasting views of what policies the Labour Party should adopt were put forward when David Owen MP accepted the LPYS invitation to debate.

By Mike Sheaff

(Chairman, Plymouth
Devonport LPYS)

Mick Whale (South Western LPYS Regional Committee) began the discussion by portraying the crisis facing workers and school leavers under the Tory government. A truly socialist programme was needed as the last Labour government had only carried out capitalist policies. This had led to a trebling of unemployment and public

expenditure cuts.

David Owen dismissed the LPYS alternative as "bullshit". But he offered no viable alternative. He was against more nationalisation, thought the demand for the 35-hour week unrealistic.

He attacked the trade unions for being unable to

agree on a minimum wage—thereby ignoring the winter of 1978-9 when the public sector unions were united in the fight for £60 and the only section out of step was the Labour government.

Owen had his recipe for the Labour Party, though. It needed its own 'Bad Godesburg' Conference—a reference to when the German Social Democrats dropped their commitment to socialism at their 1958 conference.

When questioned on this, Owen denied that this meant he was attacking Clause IV, the Labour Party's socialist

statement of aims. Perhaps Owen remembered what happened to Gaitskell's attempt to erase Clause IV.

Owen argued for workers to have faith in the capitalist "mixed economy". But however much he might try to ridicule the LPYS, it is he who is the real utopian. Capitalism can no longer deliver the goods to workers, and only its replacement offers a way forward for working people and their families.



■ The Tories not only represent very rich people, they are mostly very rich people themselves—or married to wealthy partners. Mr Henry Myer Oppenheimer, late husband of Tory Consumer Affairs Minister, Sally Oppenheimer, left [according to his will published on 28 June] £507,760 gross, £473,115 net. It is not surprising that Mrs Oppenheimer is so strongly opposed to price controls. People like this are hardly bothered about the price of things in the shops, are they?

■ Visiting the Warwickshire Royal Show on Monday [1 July], Unemployment Secretary Jim Prior put on his old-fashioned country-squire hat. One of the great joys of agriculture, he expounded, was that the workers welcomed productivity. "When a new combine [harvester] comes into the yard they can't wait to get on it and drive it. That's what we want in Britain. I think agricultural workers have done a very good job." We asked Chris Kaufman of the Agricultural Workers Union [NUAAW] for his comment: "It's nice of the ex-minister of agriculture and wealthy farmer [380 acres near Lowestoft] Jim Prior to pat us on the back in best paternalistic, farmer fashion—but we would prefer to have money in our pockets!" Agricultural workers' basic wage is £58 for a 40-hour week. Despite the productivity rising twice as fast in farming as in industry, a larger percentage of agricultural workers than any other industrial group are forced to claim Family Income Supplement. This is not what we want in Britain.

■ Mrs Thatcher is committed to a massive nuclear power programme for Britain. The Plutonium blonde should note recent developments in Pennsylvania, where Metropolitan Eddison have just begun a test "venting" of radio-active Krypton-85 gas trapped in the containment area of their Three Mile Island plant after the near catastrophic partial "melt-down" of the nuclear pile last March. Venting the gas is a necessary prelude to cleaning up the plant for a possible re-start. The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission says that there is "minimal health consequence" from the partial gas venting. But the local population are far from convinced. Last Friday [28 June] venting was postponed by yet another accident, the leakage of 10,000 gallons of radio-active water! When the venting started—soon tripping a NRC radio-activity alarm—hundreds of people fled from the area—or left the streets to shelter in their homes. Few people now trust the nuclear "experts", and fears for health and safety are causing widespread stress. A recent State government study indicated that 20,000 to 40,000 residents are still so anxious after last year's accident that they suffer from recurring headaches, insomnia, and other disorders.

■ 'Red face for Jim!' proclaimed the front-page banner headline of the 'Daily Mail' last Saturday [28 June]. 'The Times', too, reported the source of Callaghan's "acute embarrassment" with two-and-a-half inches on its front page. But the 'Mail' felt that "a coup by the left in his local Labour party" required bigger, and more sensational treatment. So what was this sensational "coup"? 'Militant' supporter Andy Price had been elected by the general management committee as the constituency party's delegate to Annual Conference. This, as the 'Mail' noted, was the fifth time Andy had stood. He has argued a consistent, Marxist position in the Party for years—and a majority of the GMC have democratically elected Andy as delegate. But for the gutter press this is a "left wing coup" and the excuse for another front-page tirade against the left in the Labour Party.

WHEN THE POLICE CHANGED SIDES

"The country has reached the precipice, and courageous action is needed to pull it back from the brink. The nation is facing a great peril...The working class is up in arms against the government, and its wrath is mounting every day as the government takes recourse to harsher measures to stifle their voice..."

"On top of everything else, the recent revolt of security forces has raised serious questions about the survival of the democratic system."

Thus one of the more intelligent strategists of the ruling class describes the impending crisis facing India today, quoted in this new 'Militant' pamphlet by Roger Silverman.

Social relations are so tense that the whole capitalist class are terrified of any movement by the working class. The pamphlet gives many examples of the revolutionary mood of the Indian workers, not least the great police strike in the summer of '79.

It began with a small incident in the Punjab: a policeman was reprimanded for not saluting a superior officer. With lightning speed the whole Punjab police force was on strike—2,000 were

arrested.

The strike quickly spread. 7,000 jawans (ordinary bobbies) stormed the police headquarters in Gujarat. Pitched battles took place in Delhi and Bodara the steel city in Bihar, where 28 were killed as troops stormed the barracks.

Higher ranking officers, notably the Special Reserve Police, joined the strike. At least half of the 900,000 ordinary policemen had their first bleeding, in action as workers, rather than against them.

As the pamphlet shows the police identified themselves as workers. Chants of "workers, teachers, students and policemen unite, we will not allow ourselves to be slaves anymore," were used by striking policemen.

The consciousness of the Indian Police was raised considerably through this

strike, but there was no revolutionary lead provided to unite the police with the Indian working class, and some sections reverted back to their old prejudices. But the summer of '79 has left scars which will not be forgotten easily.

Many other examples of the explosive state of Indian society can be found in the pamphlet. A ministry computation estimated that by 1978 there were nine riots every hour—216 a day—three murders an hour and more than 35,000 violent crimes a week—often arising from land disputes.

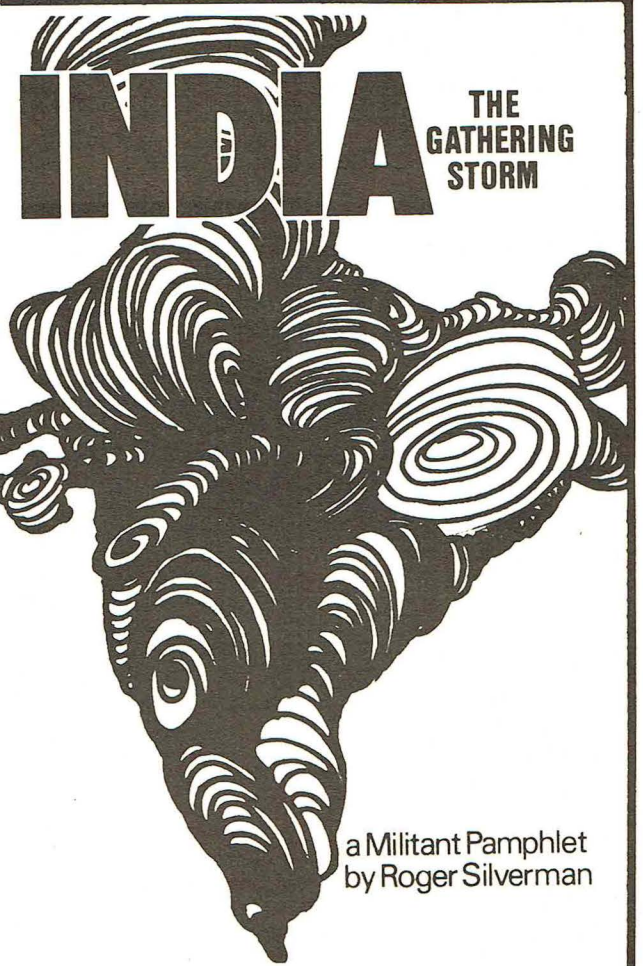
Outside of the industrial areas, the most important struggles have been those mounted by the harijans (the so-called 'untouchables', mainly landless labourers). Faced with murders and other atrocities, harijans have seized and defended their land—

realising that this could not be done through a gracious act of parliament.

All the conditions now exist in India for socialist revolution. Yet, as Roger Silverman points out, there is no revolutionary party capable of uniting the whole working class round it and providing the necessary lead to the workers and peasants to transform Indian society—the urgent and unavoidable task facing every thinking worker.

The workers of India, together with the rural population will not easily be disinherited, as the pamphlet makes clear. It would take a bloodbath to set back their struggle. As the author concludes:

"The experience of the Indian workers will enrich the consciousness of the international working class. And an Indian October will shake the world as never before."



New 'Militant' pamphlet 'India—the gathering storm' reviewed by Suri Krishnama [Hackney Central LPYS]

Trust the Chief Constable

By Jim Chrystie

Who controls the police force and what kind of force will it be in the future? These were some of the questions touched on in last week's Jonathan Dimbleby documentary on the police.

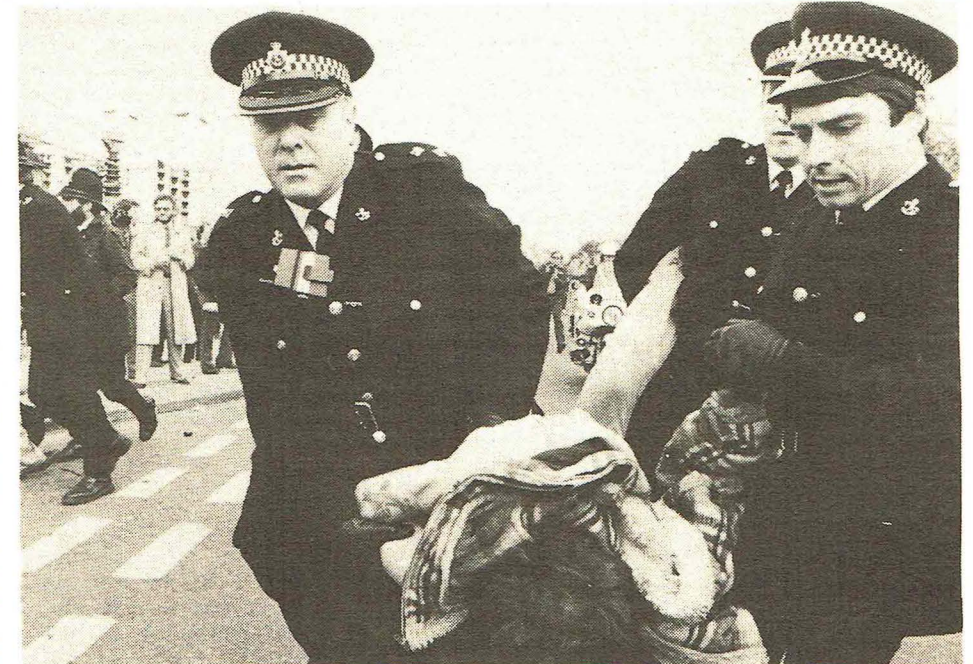
The hatred of black youth in Hackney for the continual police harassment came across vividly. With the Special Patrol Group's two recent visits, no one in Hackney needed reminding of their brutal methods.

And what was the response of Hackney's police chief, Commander Mitchell, to the expressed hatred towards the police?

He said that young people shouldn't be out on the streets at 11 pm, 12 pm, or later! "They should be at home. What are they planning?"

Who controls what Commander Mitchell does? He saw no reason to consult representatives of the black community before the police did anything. Even Hackney's Labour council only "allegedly represent" local people, according to Mitchell.

The programme showed a West Midlands Police Committee meeting. This appointed committee's only



The heavy hand of the law at the Isle of Grain mass picket in May

Photo: MILITANT

functions were to approve the size of the force and the budget. There was no real accountability.

Former Labour Home Office Minister, Alex Lyon MP, showed that Parliamentary control was in effect purely nominal. It consisted of the Home Secretary telling Parliament, "You've got to trust me and I trust the police."

If the police tops have a free hand today, what are their plans for tomorrow?

A senior police Commissioner at Scotland Yard

spoke of how society has "to think about the advantages and capability of rubber bullets and water cannon."

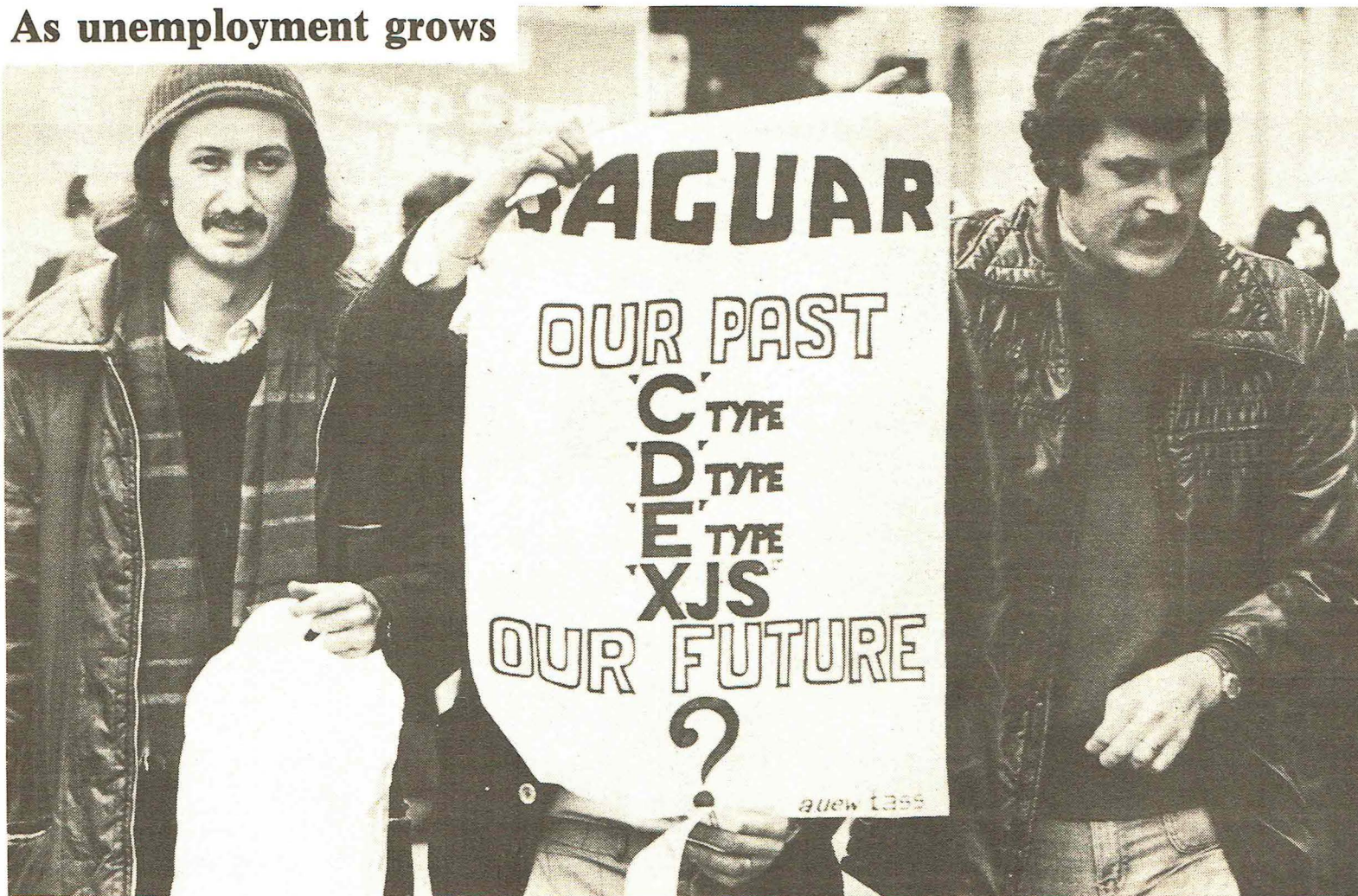
He thought they would have to introduce such measures, but only gradually. That is undoubtedly the plan of many of the police chiefs and the capitalist class they represent. Yet they are worried about taking on the labour movement.

Kent's Chief Constable was asked what he would have done if the mass steelworkers' picket at Sheerness had

continued past the first day. He said he would have arrested all 1,500. And if that resulted in thousands of trade unionists coming to Sheerness he would have arrested all them too.

The chief constable has apparently forgotten what happened when dockers were jailed for defying the Industrial Relations Court under the Heath government. The legal machinery had never moved so fast as when these men were released to avoid a general strike!

As unemployment grows



The West Midlands is no longer an affluent, full employment area. Can NHS cope with the health problems caused by unemployment?

HOW THEY ROB THE OLD

By T A Hare

(Secretary, Bradford Branch, BPTUAA)

People on social security benefits are being bled white and are unable to tackle this government as the trade union and labour movement are doing at the present [although there is room for improvement there.]

I wonder how pensioners will react when they realise they are being robbed of their entitlement by £7.70 for the single pensioner and £12.30 for the married couple by the simple process of paying social benefits two weeks later in November this year than last year?

Another way to rob the old to give to the rich is by Patrick Jenkin's 'brilliant' financial scheme of cancelling the decision of the previous government to link pensions with earnings or prices, whichever went up faster. Now it is only linked to prices.

No doubt if there was a future wage restraint policy, then pensions would be brought back in line with wages and not with prices! This scheme 'saves' the government 37p a week for single pensioners and 67p for married couples.

These government moves and the rising cost of food, shelter, heating, travel costs, are creating misery and worries for the pensioner on basic pay. Food and shelter are essentials, not luxuries he or she may have earned during their working lives.

At a recent meeting I attended of 150 representatives of the British Pensioners and Trade Union Action Association (BPTUAA) at Westminster, one Labour MP, Frank Field, said we must convince the electorate that better pensions are a priority. He suggested that people now working take a cut in their relative living standards in order to pay improved pensions as they would then get better pensions on retirement.

I would like to know workers' views of the suggestion as my branch of BPTUAA find it well nigh impossible to organise a 1p a week collection or donation from our trade union branches in Bradford.

We have, though, received donations from a few trade union and shop stewards' organisations which we appreciate, and the local TGWU have entered the 1p per week members scheme. Without this we would not survive.

CAN THE HEALTH SERVICE COPE?

"Wage Bill curb hits patients" was the headline in the local paper a few days ago. The Regional Health Authority has tried to save money by cutting back overtime work for the ambulance crews.

In one five-day period 200 outpatients missed vital treatment because there were no ambulances to take them to the hospital.

A few days earlier the Coventry AHA had sent a strong protest to Health Secretary Jenkin, pointing out that the financial year had started with a deficit of £500,000. For every 1% rise in inflation the AHA needs an extra £250,000 each year.

The protest letter said "it is doubtful whether a basic minimum level of health service to the people of Coventry can be maintained."

These worries have been

By Arthur Dodd
(President,
AUEW No. 2,
personal capacity)
and Darrell
Cozens
(Chairman,
Godiva Branch
Labour Party)

heightened by the rise in unemployment. Medical experts say that high unemployment in the city will affect the health of many workers and their families. Will the health and social services be able to

cope with the social consequences of joblessness?

Research carried out for the United States Congress shows that a 1% rise in the unemployment rate—sustained over a period of six years—leads in America to an extra 36,887 deaths (including 20,240 from heart diseases), 920 suicides, 648 murders, 495 deaths from cirrhosis of the liver, 4,277 mental hospital admissions and 3,340 prison admissions.

A small survey in Coventry in 1975 found that hospital admission for children was twice as high for those with unemployed fathers.

Dr Mary Brennan, specialist in community medicine for the West Midlands RHA stated that "the people most at risk are those in high-risk occupations, such as manual workers, who live in bad housing, become unemployed and have to live on a low income."

She went on to say that rather than stopping hire purchase payments on the

car, furniture or washing machine, because they might be repossessed, families tend to spend less on food and switch off the heating.

The poorer diet and living conditions will cause illness, while the depression often caused by being out of work can be translated into physical decline.

Things are likely to get worse as the Tories abolish earnings-related benefits and the link between benefits and inflation.

The services are already under pressure and unemployment is on the increase. Coventry is no longer the escape hatch for the unemployed workers of the North-East, Scotland and Wales.

Over half the jobs in Coventry are controlled by 14 multinationals. Since 1971 twelve of them have cut their workforce. From 1971 to 1976 an estimated 40,000 jobs disappeared in Coventry. Some 20,000 are expected to be jobless by 1981, compared to about 12,500 now.

Many job losses are not reflected on the unemployed register. Those taking voluntary redundancy, such as the Leyland Canley workers, don't register as being unemployed. But the job has gone, so the youth leaving school face a bleak prospect.

The future looks black. Yet local labour leaders seem to have no answer. The Labour Chairman of Coventry's Social Services was reported as saying "I don't know where we'll get the extra money from to deal with the unemployment—we've got our hands full coping with the elderly. It will mean that social workers will have to be more selective in the cases they deal with."

What kind of answer is this? Instead of fighting the plant closures and the cuts only some of the worst affected families will get any help. The rest will have to fend for themselves.

The crisis of capitalism is coming home to roost with a vengeance. A socialist response is urgently needed.

Death at the Bad End

Yesterday, a man shot himself, a tragic useless death, an expression of despair. He was 26.

In the ugly maisonette window that was seen on TV there was a hole. The police marksmen, no doubt inspired by their colleague's grandiose Iranian 'success' waited in the night—though in the end there was only one shot.

I lived in the road last year. Even then the view from the window of my flat could only be described as an amalgam of Colditz and Pontin's at its worst. The local press centred on the story that one of the marksmen was the son of a mayor of Solihull—the

By Martin
Ward

turn down.

It was always easier to live there with the curtains closed—most did even in summer. The man who shot himself had no job, he lived down the road, but not many round here have a job.

The litter blows about; there's no personality about these flats, they're square and noisy. And everyone here's a social problem. It's one of the three worst council estates in Birmingham—and Birmingham is big and lonely for the jobless.

A woman at work said today she thought it had been another lad, who was very depressed, jobless, up on the bad end. It wasn't. It could have been, it could

have been a lot of people.

The stray cats and dogs wail and scrap among the bins. Nobody bothers anymore. There's no point, if you weren't a social problem before you arrived, you quickly become one.

The lonely aged live on, locked into bare, dirty rooms, sometimes telling you their lives of poverty—but then they're all poor on that end. No one's bought their flat or maisonette up there.

The kids are wild, they climb through the fences, but they are leaving school jobless, without hope—and they live up the bad end. The man who killed himself had no job.

There's one pub up there, and one newsagents and

young man who shot himself was not the son of a mayor. It's the end of the estate—the bad end as everyone says. No one wants to live there; it's all maisonettes and tower blocks, the gardens are like a marked out car park, and the roads are narrow. They didn't think workers would need wide roads.

The flats and maisonettes are dull and somehow forbidding. On a sunny day they still make your stomach



UPW members need to hammer out an alternative to job losses

Photo: Laurie Sparham (IFL) (II)

The UPW executive has for some months had copies of a special report, commissioned by the union, on the impact of new technology on its members.

Although the press has managed to obtain copies of this report, the members of the union have not yet seen it.

By a UPW member

Post Office- What kind of work? What kind of future?

The report describes the likely threat to Post Office jobs from electronic mail, System X and other new technology. The UPW should make this vitally important information available to the membership without further delay, so we can fully discuss its implications and our strategy and tactics.

By 1983 the Post Office plans to have completed the mechanisation of letter sorting that was begun in 1973. By the end of the year the Post Office hopes that 70% of letters going through mechanised letter offices will be handled by machines (although it has not yet succeeded in persuading enough people to use post codes).

If the Post Office reaches the targets it has set itself, 4,000 jobs will be 'saved' (that is, lost) by 1983-4 and 6,000 by 1988-9. Management hopes to thus save some £70 million in costs. A few hundred additional jobs have already been lost as a result of parcel mechanisation and containerisation.

In the USA, 60% of mail was being sorted mechanically by 1977. In the five years 1972-7, 40,000 jobs were lost by workers collecting, sorting and delivering mail, even though the total mail traffic

increased. In Germany, where the number of sorters is about the same as here, the Post Office plans to reduce jobs by 12,000, twice the reduction predicted so far for Britain.

Office automation

Operators have already suffered considerable job losses as a result of the introduction of STD. From 1973-8 there was a 32.3% reduction in employment of operators. In the USA, where technological advance has been more rapid than here, the number of operators declined from 213,600 in 1960 to 114,500 in 1979 (that's 46%).

In 1977 alone, 10,500 jobs were lost. Today, American operators handle about 2½ times the number of calls handled by British operators.

System X is the new, fully electronic, computerised exchange and transmission system developed by the British Post Office. It should provide fast and trouble-free transmission. The operation of the exchange is controlled by a computer programme.

In addition to the reduction in jobs for engineers, 80% of operator traffic system is likely to be replaced by automatic services. Further operator jobs will be lost by the introduction of Automatic Call Recording Equipment (ACRE) and a computerised retrieval service for directory enquiries.

One of the biggest impacts of silicon chip technology is automation of the office. Companies like IBM that became big and profitable by developing microelectronics under defence contracts from the US government, have now begun applying and selling microprocessors in a range of machines for non-defence uses.

Since the end of the post-war boom, companies have been under pressure to cut costs by rationalising and reducing labour. Offices have become one of the most attractive targets for the bosses' cost-cutting: it is an area where very little automation has been introduced up to now, and office workers have, in the past, been less well organised and militant than other groups of workers.

The most significant bit of office automation is the word processor, an electric typewriter which can store and edit text. Where they have

been introduced, on average the number of typists have been halved.

The significance for postal workers of this development is that an increasing number of word processors installed are communicating word processors: linked up to a computer and to other word processors in other offices, possibly miles away, a message or letter typed on one word processor can be printed out on another one.

The Public Switched Telephone Network or a private wire link up the communicating word processors. Sending messages in this way is a form of 'electronic mail'. Other forms are telex, facsimile (which is like remote photocopying) and (once it is possible to send messages to the computer) Prestel.

Communicating word processors (CWPs) will be introduced by companies, government departments and local authorities primarily to reduce the costs of producing messages. However, the cost of sending them by CWP rather than by postal mail will also drop. By 1986 it will cost an organisation that sends 2,000 A4 pages a month 11½p per page using first class post, and 2½p using a CWP (1976 prices).

The Post Office has predic-

ted that an increasing proportion of from zero to 5% a year of letter mail will be replaced by electronic mail over the next 10 years, and that by the year 2,000, 25% of letter mail will have been replaced.

Today 116,000 people handle the mail. In 1978-9 it was 126,600. In 10 years' time the Post Office calculates that a further reduction of 13% or 14-15,000 jobs, will have occurred as a result of automation and decline in mail volume.

However, the Post Office also says that, if various events do not take place as it forecasts that the decline in letter mail could be up to 33% within 10 years.

And such a level of decline is very possible, as their labour estimate depends on an average growth in GDP of 2.9% a year.

The prospect of economic decline and crisis in the next few years rule out the possibility of such a growth in the economy.

On the other hand, in making its prediction of job losses, the Post Office has not taken into account any reduction in working hours. The 116,000 postmen and women and PHGs mentioned above do the equivalent, through

overtime, of around 142,000 people's jobs, in other words, 18% overtime.

The Post Office has assumed, in making its predictions, that postal workers will still be doing long hours of overtime in 10 years. It expects that about 101,000 workers will be doing the equivalent of around 117,000 jobs. Elimination of overtime could save every single postal job that the Post Office is planning to cut out.

Tom Jackson said at the special conference on the 17-18 March that electronic mail will only knock a hole in the postal business if we let it. His solution is to improve the service and encourage the Post Office to improve its marketing. UPW members want to give the public good service.

But if we allow technical change to reduce our numbers, service will deteriorate, not improve. Tom Jackson is right to say that the future is in our hands; but what we must do is campaign for the elimination of overtime (and decent wages to make it possible), a reduced working week, longer holidays, and leave for study and other purposes to protect and improve our jobs, which is the only way to give a good service.

WORKERS NOTEBOOK

● British industrialists have become increasingly worried about some of the spending cuts favoured by the Tory government. Not those in health and education which don't affect the bosses, but in aid to industry.

The National Economic Development Office believes more money should be provided for research and development by the government. They are casting envious eyes at W Germany

where a government data processing programme and research and development scheme totals about £350 million per year compared to £90 million in Britain.

Even Joseph's own Industry Department have prepared a study calling for a re-consideration of regional aid to industry to maintain jobs. The CBI have also put pressure on the government for regional aid.

It is a sign of the

weakness of British industry that it is unprepared to maintain jobs and lessen the political time-bomb of unemployment without massive aid from the government. It is also no substitute for socialist measures of public ownership, workers' control and management. But it is a sure sign of the pressures for a u-turn from the very employers who got the Thatcher government elected just a year ago.

● Not only are British workers suffering a vast increase in unemployment, but under-employment, usually thought of as a characteristic of the so-called Third World is a growing feature. The Low Pay Unit have shown that four-and-a-half million workers work part-time [ie. less than 30 hours a week], about 20% of the total workforce.

This compares with 10% in West Germany and

7% in France. In fact half of the part-time workers in the EEC area work in Britain. 80% of these workers are women who still have limited job opportunities. The rest are low paid male workers. For many, in particular single parents, the shortage of nursery and child minding facilities will restrict the number of hours which can be worked.

At the same time, the wages are so low that they can not earn a living wage on short time. Three-quarters of the part-time workers in Britain earn less than £1.50 per hour, which is equivalent to supplementary benefit level.

On almost every score, unfair dismissal, maternity leave, redundancy pay, holidays, sick schemes, they are worse off than full-time workers, particularly if they cannot show they have been in 'continuous employment.' The Equal Pay Act also excludes many part-time workers.

As the Low Pay Unit conclude, the legislation has not been able to combat the problems of part-time workers. The trade unions have a responsibility to organise and represent the interests of this growing group, particularly in the poorly organised private sector.



Photo: MILITANT

FIGHT FOR LABOUR PARTY DEMOCRACY

The 1980 Labour Party conference will be the most important since the 1959 conflict over Clause IV, when Gaitskell attempted to expunge the party's commitment to socialism expressed in Clause IV, part 4 of the constitution.

Today the issues are accountability and democracy. In reality they are part of the same struggle over the fundamental aims of the party. The realisation of radical policies and the socialist aspirations of the party is what the demands for increased accountability are about.

By Tony Saunois
(LPYS representative on Labour Party NEC)

stagnation and slump, however, such ideas have been shattered. Mass unemployment, a sharp fall in living standards, and attacks on the "welfare state" have turned the ranks of the Labour Party back towards socialist policies.

On policy, the right wing have been defeated. They are now fighting a desperate battle to cling to their dominant positions in the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Last year's Party Conference backed moves to increase democracy within the Labour Party. Having lost the argument, right wingers worked to reverse the gains made at conference and change the constitution in order to guarantee themselves a built-majority on the NEC. Their vehicle for these manoeuvres was to be the Commission of Enquiry.

Yet all has not gone according to plan. A defeat was suffered by the right wing over its composition. They were given no clear majority. More recently, its findings have not totally favoured the right wing.

Mandatory re-selection has been upheld. Attempts to change the NEC composition and rig a right-wing majority have not been included. The proposals for an electoral college to elect a leader, although still an unrepresent-

MANDATORY RE-SELECTION NEC CONTROL OF MANIFESTO ELECTION OF LEADER

What the CLPs want

| | CLPs | TUs | LP Regions | Socialist societies |
|---------------------------------|------|-----|------------|---------------------|
| Re-selection: | | | | |
| (a) mandatory* | 190 | 7 | 5 | 2 |
| (b) optional | 14 | 6 | 0 | 1 |
| (c) against change | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Manifesto: | | | | |
| (a) for NEC's authority | 133 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| (b) against change | 4 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Leadership: | | | | |
| (a) electoral college | 72 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| (b) election by conference | 52 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| (c) every member in the country | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| (d) National Council of Labour | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| (e) no change | 13 | 5 | 0 | 0 |

* 53 CLPs wanted mandatory re-selection through a mass meeting of members and 137 wanted it through general management committees.

ative proposal, is a tacit acceptance of the complete lack of democracy under the present procedure.

However, the struggle for genuine democracy within the Labour Party must be stepped up.

It is vital that the Labour Party is transformed into an effective voice of workers and their families. A mass, democratically run socialist party must be built.

If the 1980 conference is to assist in that, the NEC must now strengthen the Commission's findings. This applies in relation to membership, finance and organisation. A mass membership flows from policy. The accusation made by the right wing that the radicalisation of the Labour Party has "frightened away" members is devoid of fact. All the evidence indicates that the failure to implement a campaign for socialist policies has reduced party membership. The greatest drop occurred between 1964 and 1970 (from 830,116 to 680,191), that is, precisely when the right wing had a majority both in parliament and on the NEC.

Today's critics on the right of the current NEC majority

have contributed little towards building the party. Those currently engaged in denunciations of GMCs as being "unrepresentative cliques" would in many cases do well to look at their own houses. They have in fact been content to preside over some of the smallest "cliques" in the country.

Bill Rodgers, leading spokesman for the right wing, had a reported membership in June 1977 of a mere 176 in the safe Labour seat of Stockton. Roy Jenkins, after 30 years as Labour MP for Stetchford, left a CLP membership of little over 300. Donald Dewar MP of Glasgow Garscadden was estimated in one report to have a membership of 160.

With over 12,000 applications to party headquarters since the general election and 2,000 resulting from just the LPYS broadcast in March (the highest ever), it is clear that radical socialist policies serve to recruit members to the party.

One element in the right wing's proposals throughout the debate on party democracy has been an attempt to counter-act active and non-active party members. This is

raised again in the Commission's proposals to establish "supporters' clubs".

In effect, a second level of membership would be introduced—potentially a dangerous step in dividing the party membership. It detracts from the need for a thorough campaign to recruit new members and encourage them to be active through regular activity and socialist policies.

Improving party finances and staffing levels is of critical importance in building the party. The Commission's report correctly proposes a raising of subscription to £5, an increase in trade union affiliation fees and more full-time agents, "where they are most needed."

It must be ensured that GMCs have the right to decide on the appointment of agents, and that these are fully accountable to them in the areas. It is, however, on the remaining two issues of Labour Party democracy, i.e. the drafting of the manifesto and electing the leader, that the Commission's report is weakest. Evidence presented by the vast majority was ignored on these questions.

The proposal for an electoral college is a tacit

acceptance of the undemocratic nature of the present procedure, which explains the opposition to it by some of Labour's right wing who are insisting on the status quo, and nothing less, on these two issues.

The British Labour Party is one of only three parties in the Socialist International whose leader is elected by the MPs alone, a comment in itself. Even the German SPD, admired so much by the right wing, has a more democratic method of electing the leader and also deciding the content of the election manifesto. (The Chancellor's candidate is recommended to the party Congress from a 36-member Executive. Contents of an election manifesto are decided by Party Congress which has the right to amend or reject a draft submitted by the executive.)

In the form proposed by the Commission, which would create a new body counterposed to conference, the electoral college is fraught with danger. But the representatives of the NEC's left-wing majority on the Commission have proposed a different form of 'electoral college', which would essentially be a method of voting at annual conference. This would mean that a third of the total votes for the leader would come from the constituency parties, a third from the trade union delegation, and a third from the PLP and prospective parliamentary candidates. This would be much more representative of the Party than the method proposed by the Commission.

While election of leader by conference according to the normal method of voting would be the most democratic method—as has been advocated by 'Militant'—the form of electoral college now being proposed by the left-wing members of the Commission is the main alternative at this stage and should be supported by the left as a whole.

An "electoral college", which includes MPs, Prospective Parliamentary Candidates, trade unions, CLPs and affiliated organisations, as a voting mechanism at annual conference, is what the NEC must ensure is presented to conference.

"The Commission's recommendation to allow a separate college, which would become a standing body between annual conferences, to determine the content of a rolling election manifesto, must be opposed outright. Such a change would pose a direct threat to conference. Meeting after conference to decide the content of the manifesto, this new body—in which the PLP would have a disproportionate weight—would in effect have a veto over conference. The supposedly supreme policy-making body would be reduced to an advisory capacity to a college, half of whose members would be MPs.

The NEC is elected by conference and accountable to it. It must be given the final decisive say on the content of an election manifesto based on conference decisions. This is the clear wish of the vast majority of submissions to the enquiry.

To ensure that conference has the opportunity to endorse changes which will make the PLP more accountable and the Labour Party more democratic it is essential that the NEC tables constitutional amendments along these lines.

CONSETT DEATH THREAT TO A STEEL TOWN

If the Consett steel works close in September, as the British Steel Corporation and their Tory masters plan, it will mean the virtual destruction of the town.

The whole exercise is all the more bitter for the steelworkers who know, beyond doubt, that the Consett steelworks is a valuable and viable works. Consett is a fully integrated steelworks. It has all the main production departments necessary to make iron and steel—from the blast furnaces to the billet rolling mill.

The workers have co-operated in trying to make the works as efficient as possible—with the result that the workforce has shrunk from 6,500 to 3,700.

By the end of 1979 the works was making a profit even by the BSC's own strict criteria. Production records were repeatedly broken. Estimates prepared by independent economists predicted that Consett would have made a profit of several million pounds over the next few years.

Before the national strike at the beginning of the year, Consett produced steel even more efficiently than the average West German steel plant: in excess of 240 tonnes per man year, compared to the German average of 237 tonnes per man year. The steel workers in Consett have bent over backwards to try to make their works viable and by every criteria laid down by the BSC itself they have succeeded. Their reward—a massive kick in the teeth.

The steelworks is the biggest employer in the Consett area—80 per cent of its workforce live in Consett and 96 per cent

live in the Derwentside area. Unemployment in Consett, at over 12 per cent, is already the second highest in the Northern region.

Other employers have been shedding labour recently: in May, two textile companies paid off a total of 113 workers. Lee Hill hospital has been closed and units from the local Shotley Bridge Hospital [the next biggest employer in the area] are being transferred to Newcastle. The local authorities in the area are already talking about more redundancies.

The Consett steel works provides indirect employment for at least as many workers outside the works as inside. Shops, pubs, transport, haulage, the British Oxygen Company works—all will suffer if the Consett works is closed.

In an area already facing mass unemployment, the closure of the steel works would be a devastating blow. Trade unionists and Labour Party members in the whole region should be rallying now to fight the closure.

If the grossest incompetence and mismanagement by BSC bosses can be blindly ignored by the Tory government, there is nothing to stop a repetition, eventually meaning the end of every industry in every part of the country. Britain will become a banana republic, without a banana-growing climate!

Workers must demand that the Consett works be kept open.



NO JOBS FOR SALE

The position in the town is heart-breaking for anyone looking for work.

Most employers are paying workers off, not taking them on. Jobs have been lost recently in textiles, mining, hospitals and local authority work.

The latest figures show almost 4,000 out of work in

the Derwentside area and a grand total of 93 job vacancies! Consett itself had only 46 vacancies.

If the steel works closes, unemployment will soon reach 40 per cent, as jobs directly and indirectly dependent on the works disappear.

John Pickard
[Newcastle Labour Party]
talks to Consett workers

Against this background, the grants being offered by the government are nothing more than a sick joke! Keith Joseph is reported to be talking about investment worth £12 million over five years—but this is a tiny drop in the bucket.

He is talking about special training for setting up businesses—as if Consett could somehow regenerate itself with four or eight thousand new tobacconists or fish-shops! In case the mad monk hasn't noticed, there already is a business in Consett, a viable one—it's called a steel works.

BSC Industries are also trying to pretend that they can regenerate jobs to make up for those lost. In their document presented to the unions on the announcement of the closure date (in which they made not the slightest attempt to refute the arguments of the trade unions that the works were viable) they projected that BSC Industries will create as many as 800 jobs over two years.

This is bad enough—800 jobs in two years, for an estimated 12,000 on the dole—but there is absolutely no reason to believe that BSC intend or are capable of keeping their promise.

The BSC workforce in Consett has fallen by 3,000 in the last few years and how many jobs have BSC industries provided so far? The magnificent average of 55 a year!

If the Consett works is closed on 30 September there will only be one boom industry left in the area—conscription. Young workers will be forced and lured by flashy sales talk into the army, the navy and the air force. "Temporary" sites with mobile recruitment caravans will become a permanent feature of Derwentside.

The youth will suffer hardest from mass unemployment in the future—either way they will be conscripted: into the army of the unemployed, or the military variety. We cannot afford to sacrifice a whole generation on the altar of profit.

Hollow Tory Promises

The Tories and BSC are well aware that their so-called 'job creation' measures are meaningless.

The real aim of the announcements about grants etc. is to lull the workers into believing that there is no need to fight, with lullabies about new industry, new jobs and so on.

These promises must be seen for what they are—a cynical attempt to stop the fight. If the works closed next week, these gentlemen in Whitehall wouldn't give a damn what happened to

Consett!

BSC are backing this up by trying to con steelworkers into believing that redundancy and severance payments will be generous. Once again, they are only concerned to prevent any fight to keep the works open. Workers who may be tempted to take their 30 pieces of silver should ponder the real facts.

Nearly 3,000 of those presently employed at Consett are under 55 years old and they will need a job within a year in order to live decently. The average payment made by BSC last year was £3,500, about enough for a year at most. What happens after-

wards?

Do 12,000 workers take turns applying for the 93 vacancies in Derwentside? Do 12,000 window-cleaners or tobacconists or fish-shops make a living out of thin air? After a year of reasonable living, Consett would become an impoverished disaster area!

The Tories are holding back unemployment benefit to a level well below the rate of inflation. Dole money will decline in value by at least 20 per cent, from already miserably low levels. By 1982 they threaten to end Earnings Related benefits.

A few young single workers

will manage to escape from the area to find work, though dole queues in other parts of the country are growing; where will a steel-maker sell his skills? But what about those who are left, the school leavers, workers with families, workers with mortgages and rent to pay?

Redundancy and severance payments are designed only to speed up closures! Workers should take the advice of their brothers and sisters from other works and industries who have accepted redundancy in the past and soon regretted their decision.

HOW TO FIGHT THE CUTS

- For an organised fight against redundancy—no selling of jobs!
- A national conference of shop stewards and local elected officials from every plant to organise solidarity and draw up a plan of action to save steel.
- The ISTC must call an emergency conference to pledge official support for the plan of action.
- Share out the work between the plants—no job must go unless alternative work is provided on equivalent pay.
- Replace the present board of BSC incompetents—for workers' control and management.
- Nationalise the private steel parasites—for one integrated, nationalised steel industry.
- Join the fight to kick out the Tories—for a Labour government committed to socialist policies, to replace capitalist anarchy with socialist planning of industry and the economy.

The experience of redundant workers from the Hounsgill Plate rolling mill near Consett, provides a grim lesson.

A worker, sitting in the bar of the Democratic Club, told us of his own feelings after losing his job at Hounsgill: "I know of a worker from quality control—with good qualifications—who has applied for jobs all over the place, without any success.

"They think that when they get a lump sum in their hands they can go away and enjoy it, but it's not like that. You sit in the house in the morning just waiting for the club to open, then you go for a pint. You sit at home in the afternoon waiting for the club to

open again after tea and you go for another pint. And so it goes on, day after day.

"I would take my redundancy pay, all my severance pay, double it, and take it all back in if I could get my job back."

We should learn from the miners in their fight against pit closures: their threat of prompt, national industrial action has made the Coal Board think twice about taking them on. Now, with pits facing run-down as a result of steel closures, we must link with the NUM and all the other unions whose members would be affected—that means every union—in a solid fighting front. Industry needs steel—not the Tory closures.



In last week's article Kevin Ramage described how Italian workers occupied the factories in 1920 and had power within their grasp.

ITALY 1920-22 THE PRICE WORKERS PAID BY NOT TAKING POWER

The failure of their leaders to organise the taking of power, led to demoralisation. This week's concluding article shows how the missed opportunity of 1920 paved the way to the Fascist seizure of power two years later, opening up a long night of reaction for Italian workers.

Seeing the fear and inability of the workers' leaders to take the power which had been in their hands, the ruling class regained their previously shattered confidence, and turned themselves to the task of restoring profits and dealing with the labour movement.

They increasingly turned for support to the fascist gangs of Mussolini. These gangs were first organised in 1919 as anti-labour, strike breaking militias. After September 1920 they were given a new role. Only the crushing of the workers' organisations—which had grown ever more powerful since 1918—could enable the ruling class to drive down living standards.

This, for capitalism, was a last resort. While fascism means the crushing of the organisations of the working class, and therefore a regime of uncontrolled capitalism, it also means the handing of power over to the uncontrolled small crooks and murderers of the fascist gangs.

For its task of crushing the working class, fascism relies on a 'battering ram' based on a wide movement of peasants, the middle class, and the 'lumpen proletariat'—petty crooks etc.—all elements which are crushed by the crisis of capitalism and despairingly look for a way out of their situation.

The middle class and particularly the peasants had supported the workers' struggles in 1920. However, when they saw that it resulted in no real gains, they began to vacillate, and turn the blame for their problems from the capitalists to the workers.

In the eyes of the middle class, the workers who had won wage concessions, became the cause of inflation, which destroyed their savings.

Likewise the peasants. The Socialist Party not only failed to support the peasants in their struggle for land and in land seizures, but it actually warned them that 'the proletarian revolution would take the land from them.' This crude ultra-left approach turned the peasants against socialism, and made them an ideal breeding ground for the fascists who promised 'action.'

They used slogans such as 'land to those who till it' and demagogically advocated the

expropriation of the banks, which Mussolini borrowed from his past as a former editor of the socialist paper 'Avanti.' Of course the 'socialist' slogans of the fascists were to be dropped as soon as they gained power.

Initially, after September 1920, the fascists attacked rural areas where the working class was weakest. But from the beginning of 1921, as their confidence and numbers grew, 'Action Squadrons' of black-shirts attacked labour exchanges, offices of co-operatives and workers' newspapers.

Daniel Guerin, a French Socialist, described in 'Fascism and Big Business' the support which the fascists received: "An important fact is that the fascist squadrons had at their disposal, even in this period, not only the subsidies of their financial backers, but the material and moral support of the repressive forces of the state: police, carabinieri, and army..."

Unfortunately, the leaders of the labour movement again failed to match up to the situation. They persistently refused to mobilise workers against the attacks. Union leader Matteotti, later murdered by the fascists, appealed: "Stay home: do not respond to provocations. Even silence, even cowardice are sometimes heroic."

It was these appeals for 'heroic cowardice' which allowed Mussolini to build a mass movement by 1922, from a rag-bag of 54 individuals in 1919.

What can stop fascism?

A 'peace pact' was signed on August 3rd 1921, but this was soon denounced by the fascists. When the fascist attacks resumed, the Socialist leaders looked to the state to disarm the fascists. Who was to do it? The Army which was supplying them with weapons?

These questions never entered their minds! The legislation which was eventually passed was used almost entirely to disarm the few workers' militias that existed.

Only its own strength and organisations can effectively defend the working class, not the police and army—organisations of the capitalist state. This lesson has been repeated in Britain, with the 'Public Order Act,' supposedly introduced in the 1930s to curb fascist activity, has today been used on several occasions to disrupt labour movement demonstrations.

The Communist Party, which was formed as a result of a split in the SP after the betrayal of 1920 was born in a difficult period, on the revo-

lutionary ebb-tide, with the movement in retreat. Unfortunately the CP which could have become the decisive force in the workers' movement, failed to understand the real nature of fascism.

They looked on it merely as 'capitalist reaction', and did not discern the new and particular traits of fascism. They didn't recognise the threat of the mass mobilisation by big business of the middle class and peasants as a battering ram against the working class.

From this false beginning, they failed to recognise the burning need for unity of all workers' organisations in the struggle against the fascists, and influencing the rank and file of the Socialist Party.

After two years of timid, vacillating leadership, constant appeals not to act, not to 'provoke' the situation, and to rely on 'public opinion,' the leaders suddenly, without preparation, without organising in the factories, called a general strike for August 1st 1922. The 'powder' having been dampened for so long failed to go off. It was no wonder that the general strike was half-hearted.

The fascists counter-attacked within 24 hours and the strike was abandoned. From the summer of 1922 onwards, the fascists began to organise for the seizure of power. On October 27th they seized arsenals, police headquarters, railway stations etc throughout Italy. Mussolini began his 'March on Rome.'

As a military force, Mussolini's motley crew army would have been no match for the armed forces—except that the army and police chiefs supported him! October 27th the King agreed that martial law should be declared to stop the fascists, but following 'consultations with his advisors,' ie. the leaders of the ruling class, he refused to sign the declaration.

Despite the fascists only having 35 deputies in a parliament of 600, on October 29th Mussolini was granted the power to form a government.

After the fascists formed a government, they set about systematically destroying the organisations of the labour movement. Political parties were systematically suppressed. Labour unions were crushed. Shop stewards representation in the factories abolished.

What then could have been done to stop fascism's rise to power? In Hitler's words, 'only those who understood completely the nature of fascism from the very beginning could have stopped it.'

Workers' militias, vital in defending workers against fascist attacks, could not alone have taken this up. Likewise, a 'general protest strike' could not stop the

unrest of the middle class and the peasants, unless it took up a socialist alternative, leading to the taking of power by the workers. Only in that way could the problems confronting the middle class and peasants have been confronted, and thus breaking these layers from supporting Mussolini.

Analysing the historical experience of fascism in Germany and Italy, Leon Trotsky wrote in 1940: "...fascism is each time the final link of a specific historical cycle composed of the following: the gravest crisis of capitalist society; the growth of the radicalisation of the working class;

"The growth of sympathy toward the working class and a yearning for change on the part of the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie; the extreme confusion of the big bourgeoisie its cowardly and treacherous manoeuvres aimed at avoiding the revolutionary climax; the exhaustion of the proletariat;

"Growing confusion and indifference; the aggravation of the social crisis; the despair of the petty bourgeoisie, its yearning for change; the collective neurosis of the petty bourgeoisie, its readiness to believe in miracles, its readiness for violent measures; the growth of hostility towards the proletariat, which has deceived its expectations. These are the premises for a swift formation of a fascist party and its victory."

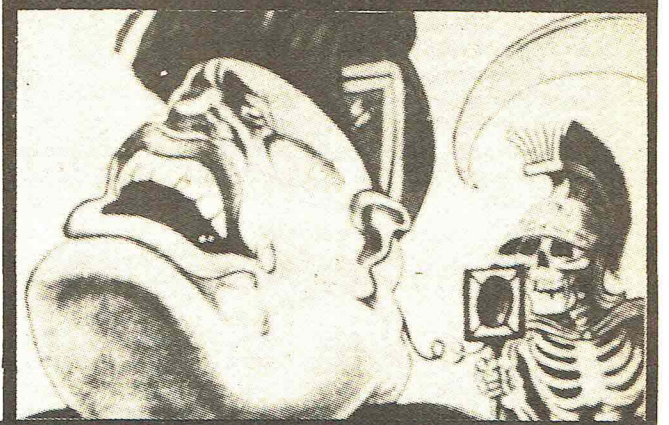
Today the position of the working class in society is immeasurably stronger. Thousands of peasants have been moved from the land into the big factories, and under the banner of the organised labour movement. Likewise many layers in society such as teachers and clerical workers are increasingly organised in the trade unions.

Thus in Italy today, the ruling class, whilst facing a desperate crisis, prefer at the present time to bide their time than to risk a civil war in which they would probably end up on the losing side. Instead they prefer to use the fascist bands such as the MSI as an auxiliary to the forces of the state, the police and the army.

Many 'terrorist' bomb attacks and outrages which have been followed by intensified repression have been proved to be the work of right wing provocateurs. Because of the strength of working class in the present epoch perspective, is ruled out, but the threat of military dictatorship could emerge once again if the working class fails to end the crisis of capitalism by taking power, as the ruling class desperately search for a way out of the crisis in their system.



Two views of Mussolini: Above the strutting Caesar, Below, a Communist party cartoon.



Caribbean and Central America

'REVOLUTIONS IN THE MAKING'

The alarm bells are ringing in Western capitals over what is happening in the Caribbean and Central America.

The 'Financial Times', 25 June, described how the past month's news "has emphasised as never before that the region is rapidly becoming one of the world's major trouble spots."

In the past the area was seen as safely under the dominance of US or British-backed regimes. But most of the regimes were only kept in office by repression.

They were unable to develop the societies even during the post-war boom. Now as

recession batters the economies, unrest has grown to hurricane proportions.

Last year saw the overthrow of the hated Somoza regime in Nicaragua, and Eric Gairy's repressive rule on the island of **Granada**.

Now in Nicaragua's two northern neighbours, **El Salvador** and **Guatemala**, two

juntas are fighting to stay in power. So far this year over 3,000 people have been murdered in El Salvador by the regime. Recent reports have told of a further 600 refugees coldly shot by the army in May.

But they have not ended the unrest. Last week saw a general strike called in El

Salvador.

Jamaica last month saw a different process. A leader of a right-wing party tried to organise a military coup to overthrow Michael Manley's People's National Party government. The plan was to assassinate the Chief of Staff, and install in power Edward Seaga, leader of the mis-

named Jamaican Labour Party.

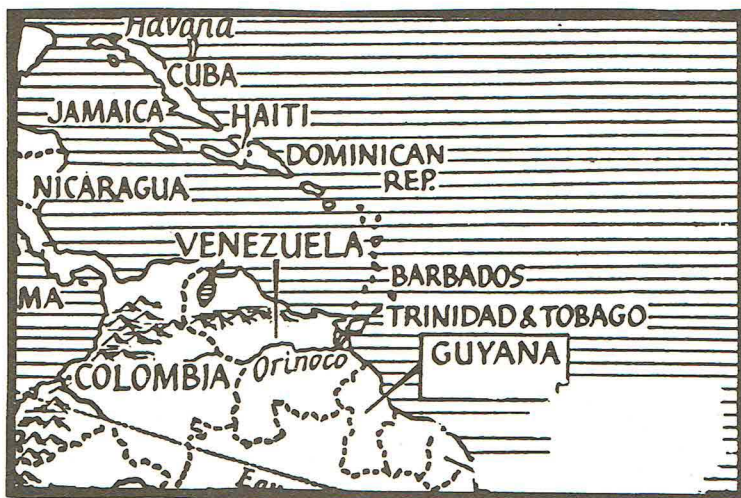
The JLP dissociated itself from the coup, but undoubtedly sections of the capitalist class are plotting a further coup, if it is necessary to stop Jamaica moving to the left. At the moment they probably place their hopes in the JLP winning the election in Octo-

ber.

But if anyone doubts the ruthlessness of the capitalist class, they only have to look at **Guyana**. Two weeks ago the left-wing opposition leader, Walter Rodney, was assassinated by a car-bomb. Rodney was a leader of the Working Peoples Alliance, which has supported the recent battles of Guyanese workers against the corrupt, CIA-installed Burnham regime.

Capitalists believe that by killing the workers' leaders they can crush a revolution. They are mistaken. Guyanese workers will recover from this blow and already Rodney's murder has resulted in plunging Burnham's regime into deeper crisis.

Repression or attempted repression in Guyana and Jamaica can act as a spur towards the left. No wonder the 'Financial Times' entitled its editorial survey of the Caribbean and Central America as 'Revolutions in the making.'



Sanjay's Death disrupts Indian Bosses schemes

The death of Sanjay Gandhi is a setback for the plans of Indian capitalism. He was being groomed as a future dictator.

When Indira Gandhi returned to power this year, all charges against the crimes her and her son committed during the 1975-7 Emergency were dropped. Officials investigating the cases were put on forced leave or demoted.

In the six months since his mother came back to office, Sanjay virtually operated as Minister for Home Affairs. He acted as election manager, of the Congress Party, and many of his supporters were elected in the recent state elections.

Sanjay was openly dismissive of the political constraints operating in 'parliamentary democracy'. He wanted to cut down the (limited) freedom of the press, and the power of the civil servants and parliament.

The capitalists recognise the rising explosive fury of the oppressed masses of India (see page 5). They want to play a strong dictatorial hand if necessary.

Indira Gandhi has already re-introduced preventive detention. It will not be long before she is in even more open confrontation with the working class. In the last fiscal year (1979/80) there was a 3% decline in gross



The demonstrators Sanjay was being groomed to quell

By Colin Barber

national product, and more recently there has been a sharp fall in industrial output.

Sanjay's role in the coming struggles was clear. He was to act as Napoleon, demagogically denouncing injustice, whilst accumulating more power.

His death has temporarily left a vacuum. The 'Financial Times' commented on 24 June "Without Sanjay India is potentially back to the squabbles of the late 1960s or the post-Emergency period."

The vacuum will only be for a short period. Other would-

be dictators wait in the wings. Such aspirations are not confined to the Gandhi family.

But any attempt to impose such repressive rule in India would be short-lived. Both the workers and the rural population will not be easily pacified.

This will not prevent the Indian capitalist class from trying to introduce constitutional Bonapartism. They will have to try to quell the whirlwind. Mighty battles lie ahead for Indian workers in their struggle for a new, socialist society.

ELECTORAL SETBACK FOR JAPANESE WORKERS

In one recent Japanese opinion poll only 1% said they trusted conservative politicians, slightly below the 1½% who trusted professional fortune tellers. Yet in last month's election the conservative Liberal Democratic Party [LDP] was returned with an increased majority. Why?

Partly it is because the capitalist recession has not yet hit Japan with the ferocity experienced in Western Europe and the United States. Although Japan has not returned to its heady pre-1973 days of 10% plus growth, in recent years it has recovered from the blows it suffered in the 1974-5 recession.

Over the last three years economic growth has been between 5½% and 7% a year, inflation has come down to 4% and unemployment is low.

Yet this will not last as Japan is dependent on the growth of world trade and its slowing-down coupled with oil price increases mean future storms are ahead for Japanese capitalism.

In the recent election no clear class approach was put before Japanese workers. The

| | STATE OF THE PARTIES | | | Total |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | Lower House | Upper House | Seats won | |
| Liberal Democratic | 284 (258) | 69 (58) | 135 (124) | 135 (124) |
| Japan Socialist | 107 (107) | 22 (27) | 47 (52) | 47 (52) |
| Komeito | 33 (58) | 12 (14) | 26 (28) | 26 (28) |
| Japan Communist | 29 (41) | 7 (11) | 12 (16) | 12 (16) |
| Democratic Socialist | 32 (36) | 6 (4) | 12 (10) | 12 (10) |
| United Socialist Democratic | 3 (2) | 0 (1) | 2 (3) | 2 (3) |
| New Liberal Club | 12 (4) | 0 (0) | 2 (2) | 2 (2) |
| Independents | 11 (4) | 10 (6) | 15 (11) | 15 (11) |
| Vacancies | 0 (1) | 0 (5) | 1 (6) | 1 (6) |
| TOTAL | 511 (511) | 126 (126) | 252 (252) | 252 (252) |

Figures in brackets show party strengths at the time of dissolution of Parliament. Only half of the seats in the Upper House were up for election.

'Communist' Party tried to portray how reasonable it was and put forward a programme to the right of the British Labour Party. The only industry it proposed nationalising was energy.

The CP proposed a coalition with capitalist parties. This proposed Popular Front failed to win middle-class support. Indeed the CP lost 30% of its MPs.

The Japanese Socialist Party fared slightly better, returning the same number of MPs as in last year's election. But this will not resolve the growing crisis within the JSP, as its share of the vote is still down one-third from 1963.

They totally failed to campaign on a bold socialist programme. They too tried to cling to the capitalists' coat-

tails in a Popular Front. And the capitalists did not want them.

As Ischio Asukata (Chairman of the JSP) remarked: "We the opposition leaders talked about a grand coalition government before the election. The voters knew it was a fantasy and they turned to the conservatives."

Right-wing parties such as the Democratic Socialist Party and Komeito lost seats.

Japanese socialists must draw the lessons from the election defeat. It is no good trying to outmanoeuvre the LDP on capitalist ground. A new approach around a fighting socialist programme of class unity is the only way forward.

USSR More workers strike

Last month saw another strike in the Soviet Union, as workers at the giant Kama lorry factory stopped work in protest against food shortages. This comes after walk-outs at the Togliatti and Gorky car plants (see 'Militant' 26 June). The Russian bureaucracy has denied that these strikes ever existed.

Officially of course there are no strikes in the Soviet

Union, as all workers are 'happy.' But so far even the corrupt bureaucratic caste which rule the USSR has not denied the Kama strike. When this strike occurred there were Western businessmen visiting the factory.

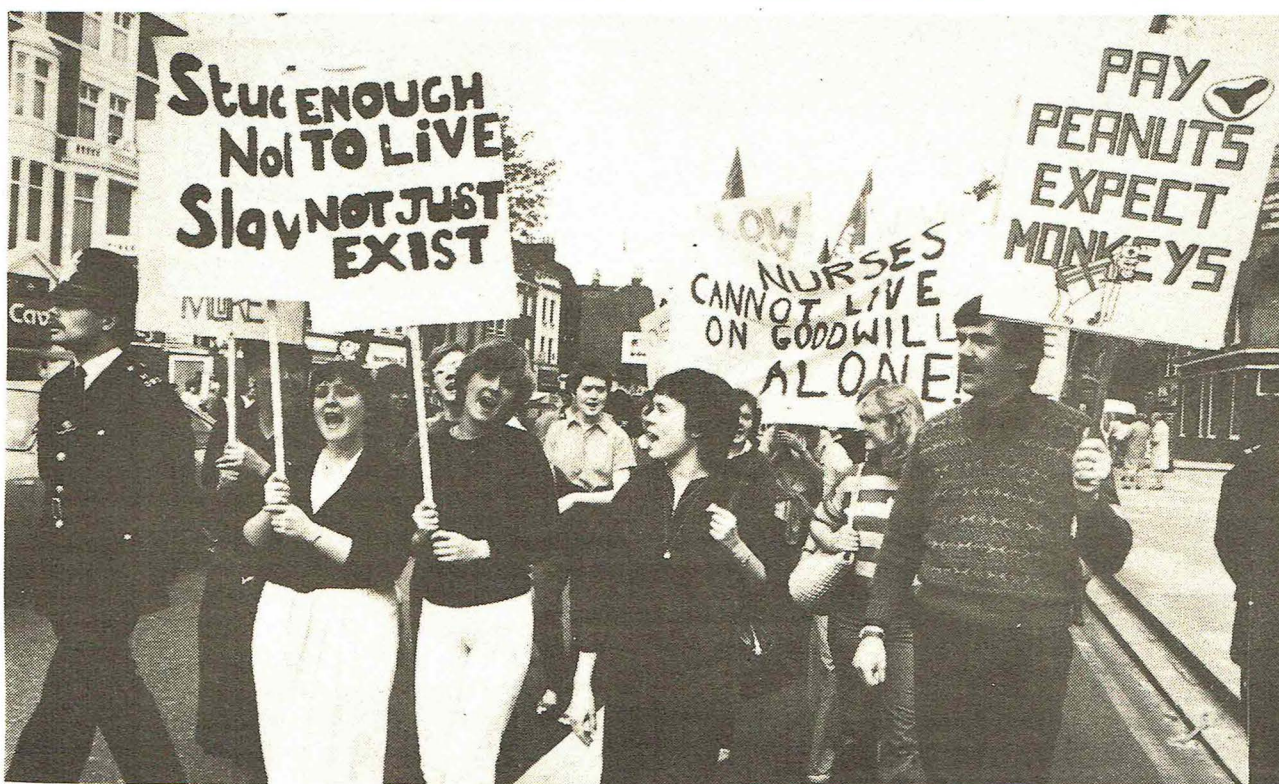
Undoubtedly the vast majority of strikes go unreported in the USSR. The recent strikes are merely the top of an iceberg.

And as the Russian economy stagnates, because of bureaucratic misrule, there will be more strikes and protests in the years to come. Only the overthrow of the parasitic bureaucratic caste who cannot effectively plan the economy, and the re-establishment of workers' democracy offers a way forward for Soviet working people.

Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



The Tories force all sections of workers into battle: nurses march from Whitechapel, East London to Whitehall, in protest at their measly 14% pay offer

Tory plans for Labour

Dear Comrade

Seeing in the papers today that Duffy and Chapple have told the Labour Party they may cut union funds if the Party does not "abandon its silly policies" reminds me of a passage in a book on Britain and the Labour Party which Trotsky wrote in 1925:

"Will the Conservatives make peaceful concessions? ...It is hardly probable. On the contrary, if the question of power is sharply raised, (in other words making Labour a really socialist party and putting into effect Clause 4, part 4) the Conservatives will attempt to split the workers by utilising the Thomases (substitute Duffy and Chapple) and those trade unionists who refuse to pay the political levy."

Trotsky went on to warn that the Conservatives—very class conscious people—would even possibly attempt to bring about clashes in order to put them down by force and so frighten the

Whistle while you work

Dear Comrades

At a meeting of Drake & Skull electricians on the Barbican site, it was reported that one of the men had had a heart attack on the site and was now in hospital.

This had been brought to the attention of management—Laings—by the site committee. They pointed out that this was one example of the hazards of the isolated working conditions. The Barbican is a maze, and there was no way

Fighting the warmongers

Dear Comrades

Here are some incidents from the peace rally in London yesterday. Immediately after the speeches finished two of us went to the rear of the platform where Tony Benn and Eric Heffer were signing autographs.

They both cheerfully signed copies of 'Militant', but when we approached Robin Cook with the same request he retorted that he "would sign anything but a 'Militant'."

Strange that he could not identify with the clear policies of last week's front page article: End all arms spending; Withdraw from NATO; No US bases or

Sick news

Dear Comrades

After returning home soaked, tired and hungry from the Labour Party march against nuclear weapons, I sat down in front of the TV to watch 'News Review' on BBC 2, and was 'treated' to one of the worst examples of bad taste I can remember.

Following an item which showed the terrible starvation millions of children are suffering from in the Horn of Africa, the newscaster [Kenneth Kendall] announ-

right wing leaders of the Labour Party. These words were written 55 years ago. Are we going to let liberals and right-wingers continue to shackle workers by allowing Tory puppets to rule the Labour Party?

We got rid of Prentice and Taverne and a number of undercover Tories, but there are still a whole lot more of them in important position in the labour movement to clear out yet, before this party can bring about the transformation to a socialist society which all true socialists want.

What amazes me is that these people are not rumbled by their members earlier in their careers. Perhaps now they are getting even bolder in speaking out with their conservative policies for Labour, they will hopefully be seen by the membership for what they are, and with the help of the Tory 'Sun', 'Express' etc—who are continually praising them—be cast all the sooner into the 'dustbin of history.'

Fraternally
John Grant
West Sussex

that a worker could get quick treatment by a nurse or doctor if he had an accident or, in this case, a heart attack.

Management came up with the brilliant idea: whistles! The result: loud laughter with piercing whistles dying away as the men used their imagination. Falling off a scaffold, whistling on the way down? During a heart attack, with your last gasp, whistle?

Needless to say, that suggestion wasn't taken up. Fraternally
Bob Faulkes
Hackney Labour Party

missiles in Britain; End all arms sales to reactionary regimes, when he is an acknowledged unilateralist. He appears to share the same opinion of 'Militant's' ideas as William Rodgers; 'strange bedfellow' indeed!

We then approached Martin Van Traa, international secretary of the Dutch Labour Party, who said he was a revisionist, but bought a copy of 'Militant'.

I wondered how many of the speakers who won rousing cheers of agreement when they propounded international disarmament and peace, are really committed to a programme which can overcome the warmongering interests of big business?

Yours fraternally

A Saunders

Hampshire

ced that the next item would be on "a lighter note"—a look at Ascot week. There we saw a number of hard-working bosses and their families taking a rare day off from ruining British industries, quaffing gallons of 'champers', and wearing daft hats [both sexes].

Although, as I said, I found this all in bad taste, nevertheless the contrast did bring home the gulf between rich and poor in this world—a situation which will only be solved by international socialism.

Yours fraternally
Tom Taylor
Harlow CLP

A quiet stroll...

Dear Comrades

In these days of Tory mis-rule you can hardly go down the street without coming across a campaign against Tory policy, a demonstration or a strike. The other day I was walking home from hospital, and in the distance of under three miles, I came across all three.

At the hospital there was a campaign to stop closure of St George's, one of the other sites. While I was there I overheard a fierce argument between a group of nurses because one of them had voted Tory last year. After this year's experiences none of them will do that again!

I reached the High Street just in time to join a demonstration against the closure of Nightingale Lane Day Nursery [already reported in 'Militant']. In Wandsworth the Tories are running [down] the borough too, so campaigns against both council and government policy are well under way.

Then, just a few minutes from home, I came to a picket line. NGA members at Chapman's, Weir Road, had been locked out by their bosses, one of the handful of small firms in the printing industry who have failed to agree to the settlement made by the major employers. Amongst other things, the firm makes plates for the South London Press.

Only a few workers are involved—in fact they told me that the bosses who haven't settled only employ 80 NGA members between them—but their success in turning round every lorry that has come to the gates, and the solidarity of the transport workers involved, has given a big boost to their enthusiasm and determination to win the struggle.

If these sort of events are taking place up and down the country—and I'm sure they are—all we need is a concerted effort from the labour leaders, and all these separate struggles would become united into one big enough to get rid of the Tories for ever.

Yours fraternally
Vivien Seal
Lambeth Central LP

Roof in the sky

Dear Comrades

Recently I had a letter from the Greater London Council offering its current tenants the opportunity to become tenants of new houses and flats just built in Hackney.

In these days of 'sky's the limit' mortgages, perhaps these new properties will help some young families and couples to find somewhere to live? Perhaps not.

The rent for a single

bedroom flat—a mere £17 (rising to £29 with heating and rates); for a 2-storey house—£25 (£34 gross) and a 3-storey house—£30 (£40 gross). If these rents, several times what a mortgage would have been a few years ago, aren't bad enough, the real sting for any prospective tenants comes next... "(they) will be asked to demonstrate that their weekly income is five times the net rent." In other words an £85 a week wage for a single bedroom flat, or a minimum of £125 a week for a house.

It seems now that even what council housing there is, is being put beyond the reach of working class people. Forward to the day when the banks, finance houses and building industry are nationalised. Then we will be able to see housing for all, at rents no greater than 5% of incomes.

Yours fraternally
Kevin Ramage
Hackney Central LPYS

Olympic hypocrisy

Dear Comrades

The decision by the USA and other capitalist countries not to compete in the Olympic Games in Moscow has revealed the hypocrisy which underlines their moral standards.

They blatantly contradict themselves in giving vent to their frustration against the USSR by refusing to send a team to Moscow. Their ever-ready reply, when faced with the question of South Africa and rugby tours, is

that sport should have nothing to do with politics. It seems that as far as they are concerned, sport has nothing to do with politics as long as their own interests are secure, but as soon as they are faced with any threat, the 'golden rule' is forgotten.

Maybe we should also remind them that there was no protest against America competing in the Olympic Games when she was murdering thousands of Vietnamese, nor when she organised the bloody coup of General Pinochet in Chile.

Can we afford it? [I]

Dear Comrades

A friend of mine recently went for a job at a hospital in Birmingham as a night filing clerk. The position seemed an interesting one and she accepted it when she was offered the job after

her interview. She soon found out what was really expected from a night filing clerk!

On her first night she was told that the shift was from 10.00 pm. until 8.00 am. (this hadn't been fully explained to her at the interview) and that she would be working in the basement of the relatively

new hospital. The basement turned out to hold all the pipes for heating the hospital, and was consequently unbearably hot with no proper ventilation.

The whole of the ten hours on the shift, apart from one or two very short tea breaks allowed, were spent on her feet as there were no seating facilities where she worked. She also had to continually climb up and down cold stone steps to other parts of the hospital as there was no lift.

On top of all this, the job was very boring and the pay certainly didn't compensate for the poor working conditions, so needless to say she left at the end of the first week and is back on the dole looking for a decent job.

If this system can't afford to give us decent jobs, then we can't afford the system. Forward to socialism in the 1980s!

Yours fraternally
Ruth Hargreaves
Handsworth LPYS
and ASTMS

Can we afford it? [II]

Dear Comrades

A letter from Bob Wylie, issue no. 508, concerning the rise in builders' wages compared to the increase in house prices, reminded me of the pricing policy of the company I work for.

If the bits sold have been bought from the suppliers and resold, the company's policy is this: if the item costs less than £50, the price is multiplied by 5; if it costs less than £100 to the

company, the mark up factor is three times cost price and if the cost to our company is more than £100, the price to our customers is doubled.

This year we received 14% as a pay rise with the possibility of a few per cent more if we meet production targets. Which do you think causes the most inflation: our meagre pay rise or the blatant overcharging by my employer?

Yours fraternally
Dave Campbell
AUEW (TASS)

FORTNIGHT TO GO

£6,000 NEEDED

The Tory press are always telling us how unpopular our ideas are. Well, we got nearly £200 from delegates and visitors to the NALGO Conference, and a similar amount is on its way from the NGA Conference delegates!

At the FTAT Conference, which is smaller, £35 was given to our funds. Staffordshire staged a Militant Rally with Ted Grant speaking, and netted us £106.

At the end of the Militant Marxist Week-end School, the comrades collected £356 after meeting all their travelling expenses etc.

Two weeks before the half-year in 1979, we had achieved 68% of our (lower) target, whereas we now have 87%.

Although the biggest sums tend to come from meetings such as those above, (or like those at Eastern Region LP conference—£46, Caerphilly Militant Readers £69) we also get letters every week, such as that from R Barnes (Blackpool), enclosing a tenner.

He says "What this country needs is a true socialist policy, and not watered down by Labour's Right Wing."

Many sellers (for example J Cope in Southport) send us regular donations from local readers. From West Wales P O'Brien (Llanelli), T Thomas (NUM Agent) and B Roach (ISTC); from Tyneside P McKrowen (EPTU), P Mole (T&GWU) and from Merseyside R Schofield (Wavertree), D Power (TU expenses) and J Marsden (Belle Vale) all helped us materially this week.

To help keep up the good work started by Ian Burge, a fiver came in from Harlow.

Thanks also to Blaydon LPYS for a tenner; to C

Wood, S Laing (Newton-grange). G Williams (T&GWU) Birmingham, and to London readers R Crawford (Day's Pay for May 14th) J Mennell (CPSA Branch Secretary), P Toley, S Collins, and A English (Dorking).

Here are the major contributors at the SOGAT Conference, omitted from last week's issue: NEC £16 (inc. D Munro £5); North Western Group £19, Home Counties £23, Scottish Area £19, ATAES £5.50 (inc. J Dobson and T Jacques £2) and, last but not least, full-time organiser £5.

Fund raising can be fun too—Jan and Mike's Curry Evening (Leyton) raised £19, putting up shelves in new house (£15), TV fees (£9) Birmingham's 'Left, Right and Centre', bet on Germany to win European Cup, raised £8, sponsored walk (Merseyside) and 1960s Party (Dagenham) £10. Jumble sales in Aberystwyth and Poole raised £23 and £48 respectively, whilst Leicester supporters sold two calendars to Tories for £2!

Finally, an Italian evening in Hull benefitted us by £8.50. If this is unpopularity, we urge comrades to work at it a little more!

We need just over £6,000 in the next two weeks, and seeing that the 'record week' to date (at the end of last year) came to over £6,600, to raise six grand in two weeks shouldn't be asking the impossible.

Just keep putting forward the ideas of the 'Militant', and pointing out this column, and the reason for it to all our new readers, as well as comrades, friends and workmates. Get them all to make a regular donation, however limited. Tell us what you've discovered is the best way to raise funds for 'Militant'.

And keep plugging those raffle tickets!

Build Militant

| Area | Received | Percentage of half-year's target achieved | Target half-year | Target for year |
|-----------------------|--------------|---|------------------|-----------------|
| Eastern | 1734 | | 2,250 | 5,000 |
| East Midlands | 1801 | | 1,710 | 3,800 |
| Hants & IOW | 1418 | | 1,755 | 3,900 |
| Humberside | 644 | | 1,125 | 2,500 |
| London East | 2686 | | 2,790 | 6,200 |
| London West | 1800 | | 2,115 | 4,700 |
| London South | 2529 | | 1,800 | 4,000 |
| Manchester & Lancs | 1345 | | 2,295 | 5,100 |
| Merseyside | 2163 | | 2,700 | 6,000 |
| Northern | 2298 | | 3,285 | 7,300 |
| Scotland East | 996 | | 1,440 | 3,200 |
| Scotland West | 1898 | | 2,250 | 5,000 |
| Southern | 2182 | | 2,655 | 5,900 |
| South West | 1269 | | 1,440 | 3,200 |
| Wales East | 740 | | 1,260 | 2,800 |
| Wales West | 849 | | 1,395 | 3,100 |
| West Midlands | 3436 | | 4,050 | 9,000 |
| Yorkshire | 1996 | | 3,285 | 7,300 |
| Others | 7164 | | 5,400 | 12,000 |
| Total received | 38948 | | 45,000 | 100,000 |

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THIS WEEK £1,646

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MILITANT READERS' MEETINGS

ST HELENS 'Marxism and the Labour Party'. Speakers: Ann Dean (Bootle LPYS) and Phil Frampton. Thursday 17 July, 7.30 pm, St Helens Town Hall.

CHESTER 'Is Russia Socialist?' Hear: Richard Venton (Birkenhead CLP) at Chester Labour Club, 5 Upper Northgate Street, Wednesday 16 July, 7.30 pm

LONDON 'Northern Ireland today and the responsibilities of the British labour movement' Speaker: Tony Saunois (Labour Party Young Socialists' Representative on the Labour party NEC and a member of the NEC deputation to Northern Ireland June 1980). 7.30 pm, on Tuesday 8 July, at the Labour Hall, 241e High Street North, London E.12.

BRACKNELL 'The Crisis of capitalism and the socialist alternative' Speaker: Peter Taaffe (Editor of 'Militant') Tuesday 8 July, 8 pm, LP rooms, Griffin House, High Street, Bracknell

CLASSIFIED

FIGHT RACIALISM—KICK OUT THE TORIES. LPYS public meeting and film. Speakers: Mumtaz Khan (Labour Party Young Socialists); Andy Bevan (National Youth Officer, Labour Party). Film: 'Divide and Rule, never'. Tuesday 8 July, 7.30 pm, Southall Town Hall

BRAINTREE LABOUR PARTY MEETING Tuesday 15th July, 8.30 pm. Trades & Social Club, Victoria Street. 'What Militant Stands For'. Speaker: Brian Ingham ('Militant' Industrial Correspondent)

New 'Militant' T&GWU Pamphlet
T&GWU: A SOCIALIST PROGRAMME TO FIGHT THE TORIES'
Price 20p
Order from 109 Northfield Road, Birmingham 30. Add 10p for postage; ten or more copies, post free.

SOUTHEND & SE ESSEX LPYS Public Meeting 'Youth Unemployment in 1980s'. Speakers: Mike Waddington (Basildon YS and YS rep on Eastern Region LP) and Bob Wade (Brentwood LPYS). Wednesday 9 July, 8 pm, at Labour Hall, 40-42 Cambridge Road, Southend

Chris Hill's leaving do. Friday 11 July, 8 pm, Kilmington Arms, 69 Roseberry Ave, E.C.1 Disco and food. Bar extension till 12. Black tie. 50p entrance.

BADGES made to order: SAE for details from Dept P. Maprographics, 32 Worpole Rd Mews, London SW 19.

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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:

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3 column centimetres...£2
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one-sixteenth page...£7
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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

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Social-Disco-Bar
12th July, 8pm-Midnight
The Geoffrey Chaucer
Westminster Bridge Road, S.E.1.

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 Nati-

onal Committee); Alf Parker (NUPE, Save the General Hospital action committee); Brian Harrison (ASTMS Plessey); Roy Bennett (sacked AUEW convenor, Alan Smith Group)

ANSWER TORY LIES

By Dave Farrar

The recent miners' galas proved to be a goldmine as far as 'Militant's' sales are concerned, 160 being sold at the Berryhill Miners' Gala, Mansfield, and 200 being sold at the South Wales miners' gala. The Tories may have their plans for the coalfields but the miners are getting armed with Marxist ideas and are not prepared to give up their jobs or conditions at the say-so of the bosses. The miners at Highmoor Colliery, Killamarsh near Sheffield

have gone one better; they take a regular order every week.

The sales of 'Militant' have gone extremely well at trade union conferences this year, the latest being SOGAT conference, where over 200 papers were sold and a number of delegates are taking regular orders to sell to their workmates. That's the answer to the lies of the Tory press, a workers' paper that is read in every workplace in the country.

AUEW NEEDS A FIGHTING LEADERSHIP

The AUEW has a proud record of industrial struggle, in particular in the fight against the anti-trade union legislation of the Heath government.

By Dave Horne
(AUEW Brighton,
Secretary Brighton and
District Campaign for
a fighting AUEW)

We have also been an important part of the Labour Party, yet some of the recent pronouncements of President Terry Duffy and our executive committee seem to break with our traditions.

We can have no part of accepting from this reactionary Tory government what I would regard as Judas money, to finance union ballots. This would be the thin edge of the wedge, for imposed ballots at a later stage. We must be part of a united TUC stand against Thatcher's anti-union legislation, rejecting it lock, stock and barrel.

We must defend our hard-won rights, and any member who finds themselves penalised in any way under this legislation, or by employers, must receive the full backing of the union. There must be no more Derek Robinsons.

In our fight against the Tories we must campaign for the return of a Labour government pledged to carry out socialist policies. We pay our political levy to support the Labour Party and Clause 4; indeed we have a similar clause in our union constitution: "The control of industry in the interests of the community."

We object to our political levy being used to blackmail the Labour Party's National Executive into accepting the dictates of the parliamentary party. We haven't been consulted.

If our union leaders are confident that they speak on behalf of the membership on the issue of Labour Party democracy, let our executive call a special shop stewards' conference on this issue, with delegates from every area.

I am confident that such a conference would vote overwhelmingly in favour of mandatory re-selection of Labour MPs, for the NEC deciding, after consultation, the contents of the manifesto, and for the democratic right of party and trade union members to elect the leader.

Every day, with the announcement of more redundancies and closures in industry, makes clear the limits of the industrial struggle alone. Our union must be in the forefront of—not trying to act as a brake on—the struggle to have democratic control over our parliamentary representatives.

The AUEW must play a leading role in the fight for a socialist plan of production, if Britain is not to become an industrial desert with our members thrown on the scrap heap in increasing numbers.

Re-arm the Union

'Militant' supports the campaign for the election of Bob Wright, as the first step in the fight to break the right wing hold over the AUEW leadership and to rearm the union with a leadership committed to bold socialist policies.

- ★ £100 minimum time rate, linked to the cost of living.
- ★ £20 minimum across the board increase for all engineers.
- ★ A 35-hour week.
- ★ Common implementation date.
- ★ Emergency shop stewards' quarterly meetings to decide on national claim offers and settlement.
- ★ Full defence of shop stewards and union activists.
- ★ Active union backing for all members fighting redundancies.
- ★ Nationalisation of firms threatening redundancies or refusing to pay a living wage.
- ★ Nationalisation of the engineering industry under workers' control and management.
- ★ Nationalise the top 20 monopolies; for a democratic socialist plan of production.
- ★ Support the struggle for a democratic, socialist Labour Party.
- ★ For full democracy in the AUEW.
- ★ Elect Bob Wright.
- ★ Campaign for a fighting socialist AUEW leadership.

Blackpool

Who would you want as your shop steward, Terry Duffy or Bob Wright?

It is vitally important that, in the presidential election this year the AUEW elects the right leadership.

A real campaign is needed to challenge the one being waged by the right wing, to the extent that the assistant general secretaries are finding it difficult to attend meetings around the country. That is why we need a realistic Broad Left campaign not just at national level but at local level as well, to be carried on throughout the union: at national executive and national committee level etc, to get a left-wing majority more in line with the membership.

When more of the members move into action it will show how far removed the leadership are from the rank and file, noticeably in the case of Derek Robinson. We would have achieved far more on pay and conditions, and a lot quicker, with a left-wing leadership at all levels.

As we advance technologically, pressure for shorter hours etc will become much more intense. This will be our biggest challenge, with the attacks being carried

Harold Dunn
(President, Blackpool
and Fylde AUEW
District Committee)
talked to
Kevin Taylor
(Blackpool Layton
Branch)

out, taking us back beyond the 1930s as far as conditions are concerned. On the pay claim, £100 time rate is a start.

On the question of Labour Party democracy, the correct leadership is absolutely vital as far as the election of leader is concerned. The present union delegations to the Labour Party conferences are a slight embarrassment to the right wing of the union. Hence the attempts to water down the democracy of the union and the muted rumours of amalgamating with the EETPU.

Not that we shouldn't amalgamate, but only under policies which are beneficial to the membership.

So it is absolutely vital that a fighting campaign is waged to elect Bob Wright on a bold left-wing ticket and continue the fight throughout the whole of the union structure. 9



Rolls Royce workers, locked out during the 1978 engineering dispute, make their protest heard at last year's Labour Party conference
Photo: MILITANT

Swansea

The AUEW Broad Left presidential campaign meetings in Maesteg and Swansea were attended by over 70 union activists. More than 40 came forward to help found a Broad Left in West Wales.

The speakers, Alec Thraves, Swansea AUEW, and Bob Wright, Broad Left presidential candidate, explained that the campaign was a political as well as a trade union one; the right wing in the trade unions and the Labour Party are not harnessing the enormous power of the working class in the fight

against Toryism. Both speakers emphasised the need to elect a Labour government on a clear socialist programme, committed to challenging the power of capitalism.

An EETPU member, speaking from the floor, drew on his experience to provide vital lessons: "If you are prepared to go into the factories and explain the ideas to workers, then you would have an enormous response."

He summed up the mood of both meetings when he concluded that both his union and the AUEW, at present

two of the most right wing, could be transformed once workers started to become active within them again.

'AUEW—The Case for a Fighting, Socialist Leadership'
New 'Militant' engineering pamphlet
Price 30p (+10p p&p)
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1 Mentmore Terrace
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SCAB BOSSES ON MERSEYSIDE

On Merseyside, despite the workers' militant traditions, vicious, anti-union employers exist as they do elsewhere.

This is aptly demonstrated by the current dispute at Nichols [Concentrates] Ltd/Catercup Ltd in Bootle. Transport and General Workers Union members at this company, which manufactures processed drinks for vending machines, have been on strike now for seven weeks in order to achieve basic rights, the recognition of the union by management.

Despite the involvement of ACAS, [who recommended that the union should withdraw demands for recognition], the company gave the workers wages due and a P60 tax form. Since then a minority of scabs at the firm have been supplemented by the recruitment of ten new people.

When the Manpower Services Commission withdrew from a job project at Catercup after protests at their providing scab labour, the job creation workers were taken on directly by the

company. They still receive only approximately £23 per week. So the factory is ticking over, just about managing on a skeleton scab workforce.

Although the dispute has only slowly begun to gather momentum, union solidarity in blocking the factory is successfully depriving them of supplies. Support on the picket line has been given by local Labour Party members, Labour Party Young

Socialists and the local Labour MP Alan Roberts, who has also raised the dispute in parliament. South Sefton Trades Council has pledged support to the strikers.

This dispute merits the full support of the entire labour movement, to smash scab bosses in an area of high unemployment.

By Roger Bannister
(Bootle Labour Party)

MFI — Progress

Ten workers taken back; one still suspended.

After six weeks of industrial action, MFI workers at the Stratford, East London, store forced a meeting last Wednesday (25th) between T&GWU officials and MFI's chairman.

Management agreed to take back ten workers who have now returned to work, but Gary Cooke, who organised the union, remains suspended pending an inquiry

by ACAS. The company have agreed to take Gary back if ACAS finds in his favour.

Management, however, are still refusing to recognise the union. T&GWU officials and Stratford MFI members are meeting again this week to work out a plan of campaign for union recognition at Stratford and other MFI stores.

By John Reid
(Newham South
Labour Party)

NUM CONFERENCE



NATIONAL ACTION TO SAVE PITS

By Ian Isaac [Lodge Secretary, St John's NUM, South Wales area] (personal capacity)

This year's annual conference of the National Union of Mineworkers faces three burning issues— jobs, wages and union democracy.

Thatcher's Tory government, supervising an ailing economy sinking into recession, are determined to force their vicious policies down our throats. The fight against pit closures and to defend living standards therefore demands a union armed with a decisive programme, revitalised and prepared for battle.

Twelve South Wales collieries have been proposed for closure. In other coalfields, the picture is no less bleak, with coking-coal pits in Yorkshire and Derbyshire under threat.

South Wales pit meetings in the last few weeks have unanimously voted in favour of a campaign against the proposed closures, to be backed up with industrial action if the National Coal Board doesn't withdraw its closure threat.

An emergency debate must

be held on this issue at the conference. Lodge committees and the membership in the South Wales area are looking for a commitment from the leadership and the union's National Executive Committee to endorse industrial action against any pit closure not agreed to by the individual lodge or area, for reasons other than proven seam exhaustion or serious safety risks. The seriousness with which South Wales miners have taken the decision for action should be underlined and stressed to all conference delegations.

This year's wages debate hinges around the vital demand for £100 minimum wage for surface workers, with across-the-board rises for all other grades.

As Emlyn Williams, South Wales president, pointed out at the recent South Wales area conference, forty per cent of our membership rely on overtime and incentive bonuses to earn anywhere near a decent living wage. Take this element away, and miners are near the bottom of the wages' league.

The demand for £100 minimum wage encompasses

the TUC's call for a national minimum wage. The principal issue is the protection of our lowest-paid members, recognising adequate reward for the demanding work underground.

It is a demand that the membership will be prepared to fight for given a lead by the NEC and the initiation of a strong campaign in the coalfields to show the NCB and the Tory government that we mean business. Miners are determined to claw back the real value of take-home pay, eroded even since March of this year.

The £100 minimum demand is to be linked to a call for consultation with the membership on various forms of industrial action, should it be rejected by the NCB.

By contrast, Arthur Scargill, president of Yorkshire area, has raised on behalf of the area membership the demand for £10,000 a year salaries for miners. This resolution was excluded from the agenda, on the basis that it conflicted with the present wages package and resetting of negotiation dates. The demand now appears on the agenda in a slightly altered

form, as an amendment.

Miners undoubtedly work as hard, if not harder than others in the industry earning £10,000 and more. However, insufficient time has been spent explaining the implications.

Many members will see this demand as an adventurist step. Miners are aware that, faced with a world recession, defence of present living standards will force us into confrontation with the NCB and the government.

To call for what amounts to a hundred per cent wage increase without explaining the issue thoroughly can only lead to disagreements and divisions within the union's left wing and adversely affect the members' unity and willingness to struggle for what they see as justified wage demands measured against inflation.

Calls for greater union democracy have grown in the last few years, especially in regard to the unrepresentative structure of the NEC.

The present representation was established when the union could boast thousands of members in every area. Can anyone now justify areas

with only a thousand members having the same number of seats on the NEC as an area such as Yorkshire, with 60,000 members, or South Wales with 25,000?

Even if not prominent on the agenda this issue will surely be part of the discussion among delegates at the conference.

Once again demands are being raised for youth conferences in the coalfields to become a reality. In the past four to five years, branch and lodge committees have reflected the change in the average age of miners as a result of the early retirement scheme, and the resolutions seek recognition of this change within the union.

There is a need to cultivate the union's youth, to prepare them for the great responsibilities of involvement and leadership in a traditionally militant and vigilant union such as the NUM. Many young miners will accept this challenge, which would be of significant benefit to the work of the union. This is our insurance for the future.

ADWEST Reading — official support vital

By Steve Morgan (UPW)

As the fight for basic trade union rights continues at Adwest Engineering, strikers have stepped up their campaign for national recognition, nationwide support and full blacking.

Recently, strikers have been successful in gaining a sympathetic hearing with Moss Evans at the T&GWU Rules Conference. Furthermore local AUEW district meetings have been picketed to press for more constructive action locally and for extension to a national level.

National recognition from both T&GWU and AUEW is essential if blacking is to be achieved and massive support won on the picket line.

At a local level it is vital that the two reactionary shop stewards left in the factory are suspended by the T&GWU and AUEW members officially called out.

On the last mass picket around 100 pickets from Oxford, Swindon, and Slough arrived to try and stop the scabs going through. This was a great show of workers' solidarity. However, the numbers were insufficient to stop the scabs, since management was able to get the scabs in through the grounds of an adjoining factory.

During the course of the strike, workers have felt the full force of the state used against them: High Court injunctions, police intimidation, attacks and distortions by the local press and radio and the bureaucratic labyrinth of the DHSS.

In particular, the strikers' financial situation has become critical as a result of the DHSS halting all social security payments to all of the strikers.

Speakers have been visiting factories around the country raising funds, support for the picket line and calling on members to put through resolutions on national recognition to their local T&GWU and AUEW branches.

The strikers demand:

- ° Unconditional re-instatement, including shop stewards' positions, and compensation for every sacked worker.

- ° Abolition of the dictatorial works rules and their replacement with a charter of workers' rights in the factory.

- ° The right to negotiate a decent wage rise (since their sacking a 12½% deal has been rushed through with the consent of the two remaining reactionary shop stewards).

Mass pickets are every Wednesday and an especially large picket is being arranged for July 14th.

Join the line and send messages of support and cash to D. Broderick, Flat 4, 46 Berkeley Avenue, Reading. Cheques payable to J. Dhoot.

Tories' carrot bites

A new carrot is being dangled in front of the miners in the hope that they will accept pit closures. The Coal Industry Bill is just passing through its second reading in parliament.

The Bill involves large redundancy payments and lucrative transfer payments when pits close. The miner will get five days' paid leave to visit the new pit, with travel and accommodation expenses for himself and his family.

Estate agent and solicitor's fees, removal costs and a £735 household settlement grant, on top of a new £3,000 disturbance allowance, will be

available.

If a miner is unable to find a house he will be paid the full cost of his lodgings for six months. The National Coal Board will also pay rent and storage costs for three months.

These vastly increased payments are aimed at the young miners, who face industrial wastelands, bad housing and exorbitant rents or high mortgages.

The Bill goes on to put everything in its right perspective, however: it states that the government will be reducing its £200 million

grant to the NCB to practically nothing by 1983.

Joe Gormley, national president of the National Union of Mineworkers, warned the government that miners were very worried about the future of coal mining, adding that he hopes the present Conservative government were not seeking revenge for their defeat in 1972 and 1974 at the hands of the miners.

The new Coal Industry Bill raises the prospect of a 'British-Steel style' solution to the problems of the NCB. The imposition of an unrealistic 'break-even' target would

accelerate the closure of 'uneconomic' pits, prepare the way for de-nationalising profitable operations such as the new Selby coalfield, and ensure the destruction of the NUM.

The Tories remember how divided the NUM was until the great victories of '72 and '74, when for the first time since 1926 the miners acted concertedly as a national union. The NUM must remember how vicious the Tories were not only in 1826 but also in '72 and '74.

By Anthony Tynan

(South Wales NUM)

New 'Militant' trade union pamphlets

The way forward for NALGO—20p

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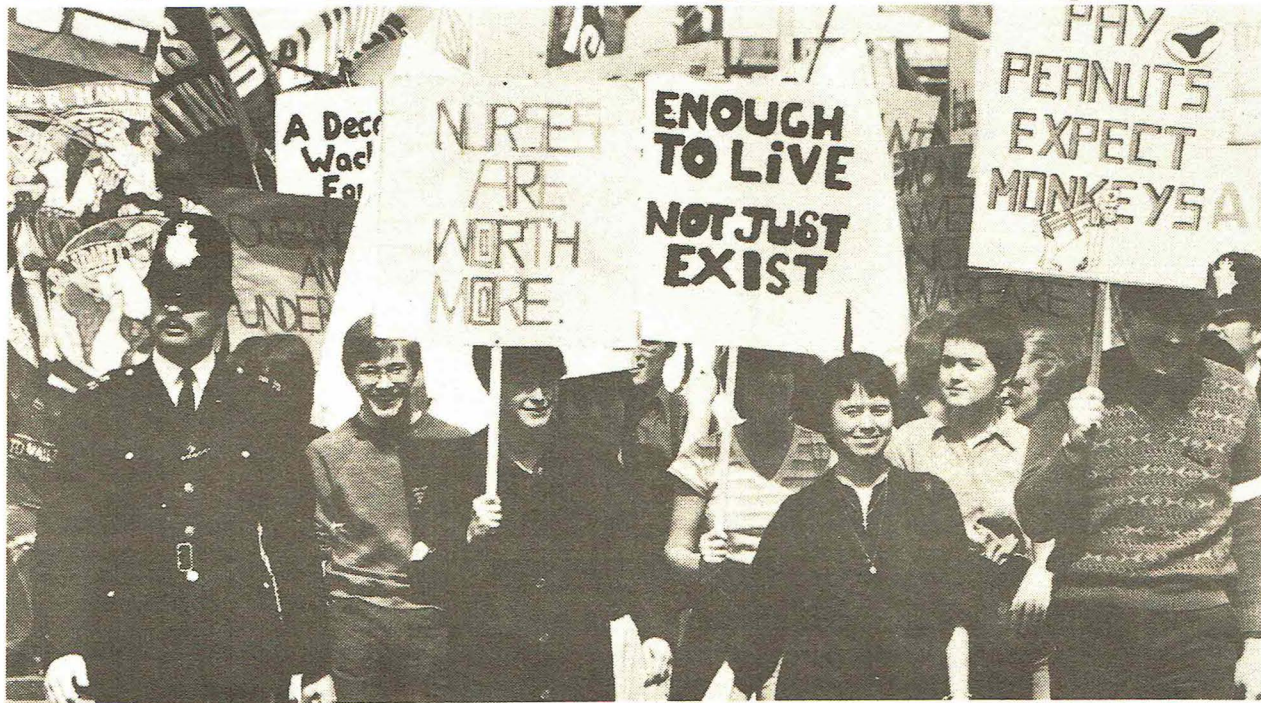
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+10p p&p from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

NURSES FIGHT FOR LIVING WAGE



Nurses can take industrial action without harming their patients. This was clearly demonstrated on June 26th in the East End of London.

Around 100 Tower Hamlets nurses and their supporters assembled outside the School of Nursing at The London Hospital, Whitechapel. They represented many who wanted to attend but could not leave their wards.

Faced with the prospect of doubled lodging charges, a 14% pay offer would have left the nurses worse off today than they had been six years ago.

A hastily called meeting, organised on joint-unions and RCN basis had decisively rejected the offer—and also the plea of the RCN convenor to wait for a ballot on industrial action later this year.

Senior Nursing Officers at District Management level had given guarded approval to the decision taken for a march to Westminster to lobby MPs provided that a skeleton staff were left on the wards.

Unfortunately, this 'permission' was not adequately filtered through to middle

By Myrna Shaw
 (Secretary, Tower Hamlets JSSC, personal capacity)

nursing management, and efforts to hold meetings and distribute leaflets in Tower Hamlets hospitals met in some cases with intimidatory response. One whole class of student nurses for example wished to join the demonstration but were too nervous of official reaction to do so.

The nurses assembled with their bright red NUPE 'Defend London Hospitals' banners with Community Nurses (formerly District Nurses) well represented. Health Service Administrators tend to be dismissive about the effects of the cuts and closures they institute on behalf of the government.

But community nurses go

into the homes of patients. They see the effects of too early discharges from hospital or too long waiting times for admission.

They see the full effects of health cuts coupled with cuts in social services—home helps, meals on wheels, ambulance services for out-patient treatment. Truly our society hits the sick and elderly from all directions and community nurses do not need convincing about this.

London Hospital ancillary workers and nurses on duty came out to cheer the marchers off. Support also came from hastily informed representatives of local trade unionists and when the march took off the beautifully hand-painted banner of the Tower Hamlets Trades Council was very prominent.

Some demonstrators were clearly putting their feet in the water for the first time, and they seemed to find it to their liking! After a self-conscious start, the noise they made shouting their slogans was unbelievable. They sounded 10,000-strong!

We went down a surprised Whitechapel High Street, through the recession hit rag-trade area of Aldgate onto the edge of the City, where the real money is. 14% is what you tip the waiter with there!

But not allowed through we went around and on to the

Embankment where the march broke up into delegations to see MPs. All along the route there had been sympathetic shouts of approval and even applause from passers by and office workers hanging out of windows.

The march had been organised very quickly, and proper leafletting and meetings in the hospitals, or efficient gatherings of local support had not been possible in the time allowed. This had made

isolation of the nurses a danger when they should have been protected by a wider section of workers.

But it had given the nurses an understanding of why ancillary workers sometimes have to take industrial action. It had shown them also that they could demonstrate safely, could be organised and unionised without the whole world falling apart. Next time it will be easier.

When will the next time be? We have been told that (unbelievably) Maggie Thatcher intends to visit Tower Hamlets on July 11 to cash in on the opening of the Clem Atlee Adventure Playground for handicapped children.

She is now likely to find some second-time demonstrators amongst the trade union reception committee waiting to ask her why so much in Tower Hamlets has closed since her government took office.

Occupation

By Dave Webb and Vicky Matthews
 (Hackney LPYS)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

that the decisions will be reviewed again within a year, which means that those cuts have only, as yet, been postponed for the time being.

To make sure that these concessions aren't eroded away later, the parents are continuing to meet and discuss any further moves by the ILEA and their own

future tactics.

The parents were amazed at the lack of national press coverage. Some of the mothers commented to us that this was probably because they had set an example, and the media feared that other schools facing cutbacks might adopt similar tactics. When the parents and the children

appeared on the 6 o'clock news they received messages of support from schools in Manchester.

A lot of support came from other Hackney schools, and it is quite clear that the parents of Gayhurst have given them an example to follow when it comes to battling against cuts in their own children's schools.

Eddie Taylor, the spokesman elected by the parents, has been asked to speak at other schools in the area: "Although we were fighting

specifically for Gayhurst, we realised that it was a fight for all schools in general. With the united feeling amongst the parents we have hopefully set the ball rolling."

What action would be taken next year? Eddie Taylor said: "Hopefully, we'll have a change of government by then!" He pointed out that when the parents went in they hadn't been very hopeful, but had won two-thirds of their case—and had set a successful example.

Scrap Tories

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

which is faced by British capitalism. Since they came to office, 257 major firms—nearly all heavy or light manufacturing groups—have announced massive redundancies and closures, putting tens of thousands out of work.

All the redundancy money offered by the bosses will not bring back jobs for today's workers or those of the future. The union leaders must spearhead a fight to resist all redundancies.

The bosses should be made to pay for their crisis. In their mad bid for profits, they have failed time and again to invest in new machinery to make British manufacturing industry more efficient. Workers have to use antiquated machinery and processes, while the bosses squander millions in such profitable but non-productive pursuits as land speculation.

Alfred Herbert is a prime case of under-investment. Failure to invest in this most vital of industries, has meant that machine tools made in West Germany and Japan have been able to outstrip the British firm even in Britain itself.

But it will not be the board room kings who will suffer for this policy. The blow will fall on Herbert's 1,343 employees. Meanwhile the Tory press, echoing their masters will blame the failure on the workers, and call for 'productivity' to be raised by lower wages and longer hours for working people.

But workers in British industry are amongst the lowest paid in Europe, and on average work for longer hours.

Why should 2 million workers be forced on to the dole, while economic hardship forces millions more into

overtime to make ends meet?

The demand for a 35-hour week with no loss of pay must become a rallying call for all trade unionists. The present level of unemployment could be practically eliminated if the work was shared out on the basis of a reduced working week.

Alongside this, we would demand an £80 minimum wage, which would remove the need for overtime working. The bosses' blackmail of jobs or wages must be resisted. Keith Joseph's vision of a Hong Kong-style economy in Britain must stay just a vision!

Workers are desperately needed to supply the needs of the population. Are there too many homes, too many schools and hospitals? Of course not; spending on these vital services has been slashed. Schools and hospitals, if they are not being closed, are frequently old and lacking in equipment.

A programme of useful public works would fill this gap and solve the problems of millions without work. We are not prepared to suffer a return to the 1930s just to oil the wheels of a crazy, inhuman capitalist system.

Such a programme will be sneered at by the bosses. Their anguished cries that they can't afford such modest demands must be met by a campaign by the labour movement.

Take industry and society out of the hands of the bosses. Nationalise the major monopolies under workers' control and management, with compensation only on the basis of proven need.

A plan of production on this basis would be able to eliminate the scourge of unemployment and low pay and make the nightmare world envisaged by the Tories a thing of the past.



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