

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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15p

WORKERS

UNITY TO BEAT TORIES

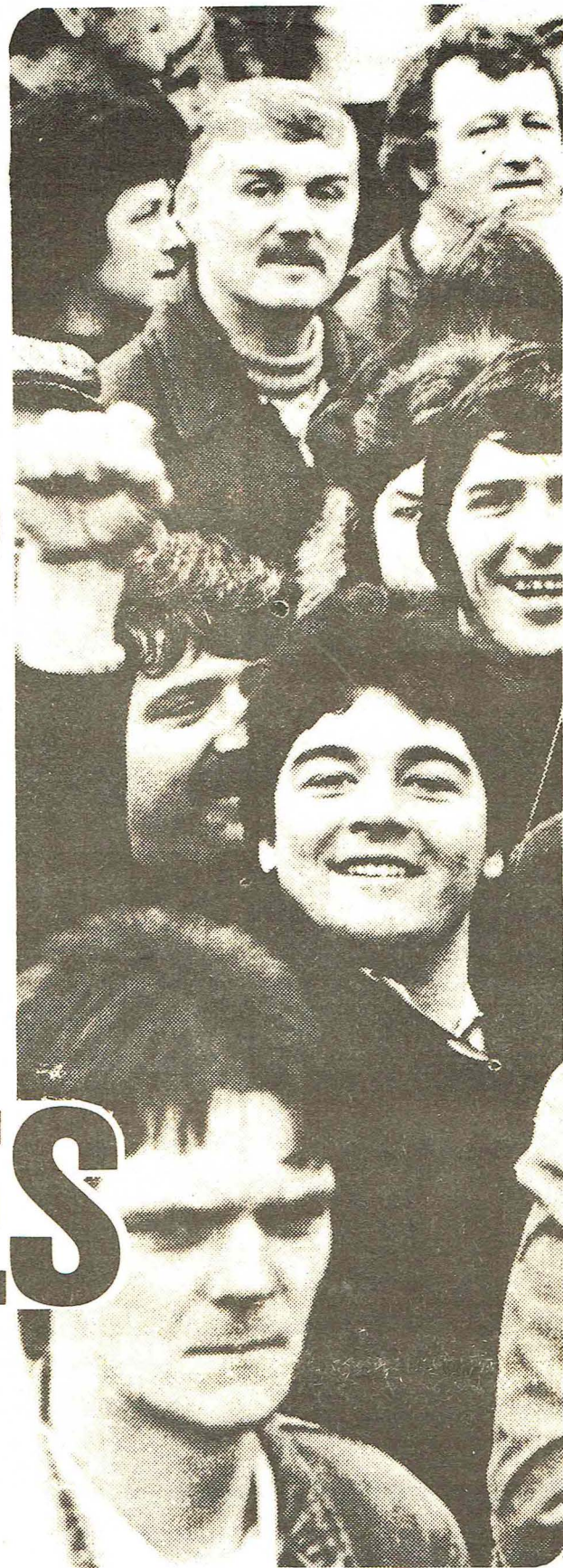


Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

Bitter anger at Thatcher's class war policies and the urgent need for united action against the Tory government has been the predominant mood of the Labour Party conference in Blackpool.

"People are talking of a return to the 1930s," said Pauline Dunlop, delegate Liverpool Edgehill, who set the tone for the economic debate; "but the conditions of the 1930s are already here."

By Lynn Walsh

Motions demanding the implementation of the 35-hour week without

loss of pay as an immediate aim, and the extension of public ownership, were overwhelmingly approved.

On education, the capitalist press is already up in arms, at conference's decision to take measures to abolish private education, banning fee-paying schools and bringing their resources into the public sector.

On transport, the conference reaffirmed its policy for a "publicly owned, fully integrated and co-ordinated transport system," and the motion [composite 39] added that "this would mean the re-nationalisation of all private road haulage firms with 6 or more vehicles," and pledged the next Labour

government to "re-nationalise without compensation any transport activity that the present Conservative government sells or hives off to private industry."

Far from registering a swing to the right, which had been predicted by right wing trade union leaders and their friends in the capitalist press, the results of the NEC election actually showed a further strengthening of the left.

The right wing is increasingly isolated within the party. To divert criticism from themselves they had to resort

CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE

Save our Hospitals

The threat of a sit-in by workers at Newsham General Hospital in Liverpool won a temporary victory in the fight to save the hospital.

The Area Health Authority had decided to stop recruitment at the hospital and reduce beds by about 500, closing 228 immediately. Management planned to close 12 orthopaedic beds and 30 dermatology beds by this Tuesday. The workers' angry response has made them back down, though they will probably try again later.

The reaction of health service workers has been magnificent. The real fighting mood was expressed by a thousand workers at a meeting last week at St Georges Hall and also at a recent meeting of over 200 workers covering nurses, porters, cleaners at Newsham General.

A question mark must be raised, however, over the Royal College of Nursing's

By Jimmy Hackett
(Kirkdale Labour Party
and hospital action
committee)

attitude. Nursing representatives on the Area Health Authority nominated by the RCN voted for the cuts.

It looks as if consultants are backing up the fight. Despite pressure from the medical officers, consultants at Broad Green have promised to continue to refer patients.

Consultants on the dermatology ward are continuing to refer patients at Newsham General. This is essential to keep the hospital open.

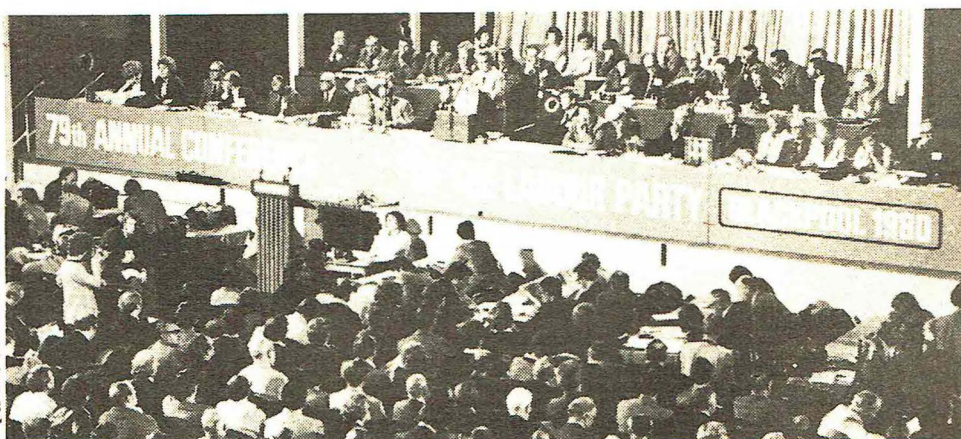
Messages of support should be sent to Steve Barber, NUPE, Newsham General Hospital, Belmont Road, Liverpool 8.

**LABOUR TO POWER ON A
SOCIALIST PROGRAMME!**

Labour Party Conference Report

SOCIALIST POLICIES RE-AFFIRMED

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)



Labour Party Conference erupted into stormy applause when Tony Benn replying for the NEC argued for more public ownership and that a new "industry bill must be on the statute book within a matter of days after the election of the government."

And to more cheers and still louder applause he called for a bill to bring about the abolition of the House of Lords. Unless this is done, it would be impossible for a Labour government to implement its policy.

**Report by
Lynn Walsh
from Blackpool**

Michael Foot had opened the debate on Economic Policy, introducing the TUC/NEC liaison committee document 'Trade and Industry.'

He attacked the Tory government, saying that the problems posed by the new technological revolution and the present world recession were being compounded by "the home-made catastrophe directed from 10 Downing Street."

But he described the suggestion that the last Labour government had begun some of the steps towards mass unemployment and the cuts as "A 'Daily Mirror' lie."

The first resolution in the debate was moved by David Bassnett of the General and Municipal Workers. While taking over many points normally made by the left he also raised the question of an incomes policy. Part of the motion argued that "the place of incomes within the policy must be determined," giving delegates a clear warning that some union leaders still have far from repudiated the idea of a new incomes policy under a future Labour government.

Following the G&M's motion, Pauline Dunlop of Liverpool Edgehill CLP moved a composite that called for an economic policy based on clause IV, part IV of the Labour Party's constitution. It called for the taking into public ownership of any firm threatening redundancies and refusing to pay a living wage, and for the next Labour government to bring in an enabling act to take into public ownership the banks, finance houses and insurance companies, together with the top 200 or so monopolies which control 80% of the economy, compensation to be only on the basis of proven need.

Pauline pointed out that there were now 100,000 unemployed in Liverpool and 17,000 school leavers chasing 2,000 jobs. As a Labour councillor she came into contact with social problems which have now reached epidemic proportions.

The horrifying rise of unemployment was one of the major issues taken up in this debate. Composite 30, moved by Moss Evans for the Transport and General Workers Union pointed to the necessity of the trade unions throwing their weight behind any workers threatened with redundancies. "Have the Tories," he asked "been to Liverpool, to Birkenhead,

where wealth has been wrenched from raw materials and machinery for generations and seen the factories locked up? Have they seen the faces of the unemployed?"

However, it was left to the movers of composite 31 to spell out a clear programme on which unemployment could be fought. Richard Venton of Birkenhead CLP gave the example of an unemployed building worker in his area who recently had to walk three miles to sign on because he literally had no money.

Mrs Thatcher has said that the workers should move to find work. Should the Merseyside workers move to South Wales? Where could they go to find jobs?" "Someone should move," he said "this bosses' government should move. We should throw them into the dustbin of history."

Malcolm Lindsay, of Bootle Labour Party, seconding, emphasised the importance of a fight to implement the 35-hour week without loss of pay, in order to fight unemployment. Referring to the struggle of the Meccano workers on Merseyside, where 900 workers had been thrown on the scrap heap with half an hour's notice, he said that occupation was a key weapon in the fight against unemployment.

Taking up the arguments on incomes policy, Tony Mulhearn of Liverpool Wavertree Labour Party, clearly refuted the arguments put forward for a renewed incomes policy. He explained that incomes policies have always restrained or reduced the wages of the working class. Despite nearly twenty years of incomes policy the poorest 10% of workers were now relatively worse off than they were 100 years ago according to figures produced by the Low Pay Unit.

Composite 17, however, moved by the Union of Communication Workers called openly for a return to incomes policy. Alan Tuffin of the UCW said that they



Photo: MILITANT



**Above: Tony Mulhearn
Below: Moss Evans**



Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

were against any return to the incomes policy of the past, which were imposed on the trade unions and which froze

pay anomalies. He was proposing something different. But in practice, nobody could see any difference.

Called first in the discussion, Denis Healey MP urged the movement to unite in a great crusade to bring down the most destructive government in our history. He said that we must build on the plans put forward in the joint TUC/LP statement and added that these plans must also cover incomes. His uncharacteristically restrained references to opposing policies, however, left most delegates with the impression that his 'unity' speech was made with one eye on the coming leadership stakes in the Labour Party.

Coming to the rostrum, Terry Duffy of the AUEW was greeted with booing and hissing, with only a few pockets of support in response. He got a very cool reception when he said that the TUC had been doing its bit to persuade the government to ease the burden on the working class with selective import controls. But, he complained, so far the TUC had been waiting two months to have the talks with Mrs Thatcher and her cabinet. "What did he expect?" was the clear attitude of most delegates.

Replying to the debate, Tony Benn gave the NEC recommendations. They included support for both composite 16 from Wavertree which rejected any wages policy under capitalism and also composite 17, which clearly supported an incomes policy. Tony Benn stated that

as this motion asked for a debate on pay policy, the NEC did not oppose the idea of a debate.

The NEC also recommended rejection of composite 20 and 31 which put forward clear policies based on nationalisation and workers' control.

However, in giving the NEC's recommendation, Tony Benn told conference that these resolutions were based on "deep socialist convictions, which I share. However, they contain phrases which are not fully worked out, and the Party cannot pledge itself to carry out at this stage."

Tony Benn showed that it is not just a question of getting rid of Thatcher. For "if this woman and this Cabinet who believe in capitalism cannot make it work better than it does," what hope is there for Labour in trying to operate within the same system.

However, he warned that the labour movement must be prepared for all-out resistance from the press, the IMF, the bully-boys of the City of London. And within days of forming a government, Labour would have to show that it was serious about the policies that it intended to implement.

Virtually every delegate that spoke was in favour of a more radical approach by the next Labour government. The Party ranks are not prepared to go back through the experiences of 1964-70 and 1974-79. In the face of Thatcherite reaction they are looking towards the type of bold socialist policies that alone can really take the Party forward.

Labour's right fume

At the well publicised meeting of the right wing so called "Campaign for a Labour Victory," held on Monday night, the notorious "Gang of Three" claimed that in reality it was a "gang of thousands" but the predominance of right wing MPs and trade union officials among their supporters in the audience showed where their support mainly came from.

The meeting was also festooned with television cameras which reflected the capitalist media's determination to give as much, if not more prominence to the views of this small right wing minority as to the views of the majority of conference delegates.

William Rodgers claimed that the conference was a shambles and completely out of touch with the majority of workers. He was in favour of a party which would reflect the real views of "leftward thinking people," which would be a party of "reform and conscience."

Clearly, this has little in common with the Labour Party as it now exists—and this was admitted in so many words by Rodgers himself, who said that "we are reluctant to come to Labour Party conference, and are glad when it is over." He also said, only half jokingly it seems, that the three year rule should apply to conference itself.

What could show more clearly the right wing's utter contempt of the policy making body of the Labour Party. In reality, they want to claim the right to determine the policies

By a 'Militant' reporter

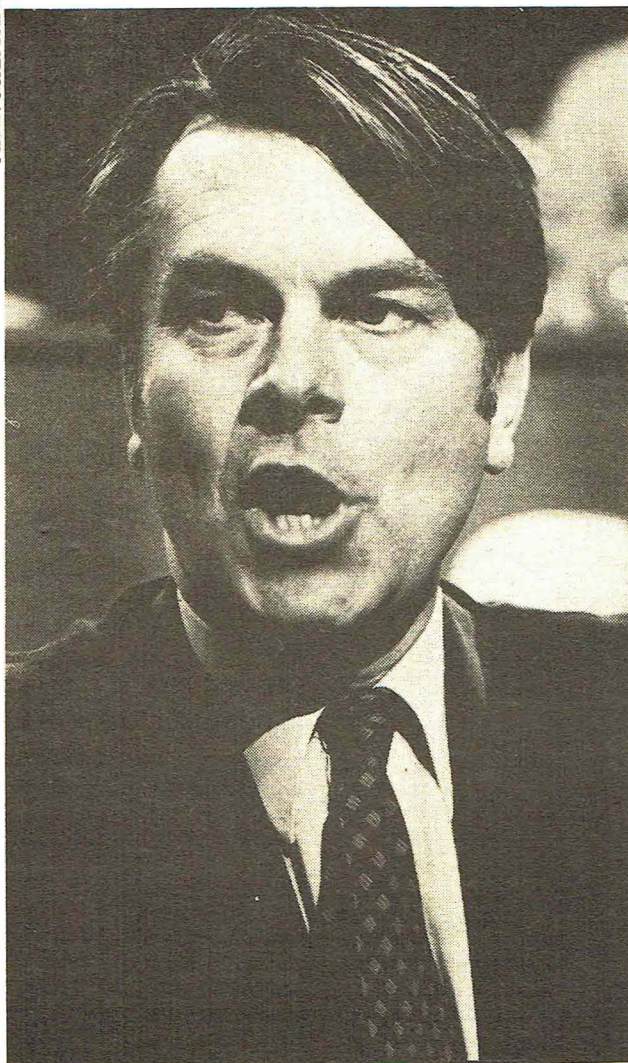
of the Labour Party and the character of its leadership without reference to the rank and file of the party, and with scant regard for any democratic decision making.

This doesn't prevent them however, from launching tirades against "the fascists of the left within the party." David Owen and Shirley Williams both announced that the time for compromise was over and that the moment had arrived for an all out fight against the left within the party.

Shirley Williams' denunciation, particularly of Tony Benn's speech on Monday, was of course given enormous prominence in the media, but what she failed to explain is why her views have so little support within the trade unions and constituency delegations.

It was also evident, however, that these right wingers are at the moment staying

Photo: MILITANT



David Owen, and the other members of the right wing, are not prepared to accept Party Conference decisions

within the party. Even they realise that they would be finished if they broke their links with the labour movement by leaving the party and formed some kind of centre party, at least for the time being.

In order to try to lend some trade union weight to their conditions, the CLV had invited Frank Chapple and Terry Duffy to sit on the platform. But Terry Duffy made an incoherent speech, which even his friends in the capitalist press described as "muddled," in which he defended the last Labour government as "a humane government" and commen-

ded Michael Foot for his "wonderful contribution to that government"—although he warned Foot against standing for the leadership when Callaghan goes!

However, Duffy's presence was little consolation for the fact that the AUEW delegation, despite intense pressure from Duffy and Boyd on the delegates to vote for the right wing candidates, voted in the way in which they wanted. In the event the AUEW delegation voted 18-17 in favour of left candidates, thereby insuring that the left was strengthened in this year's NEC elections.

Socialist policies for Labour

"You can't cure a sick patient without accurately diagnosing the illness first," was the reply to a heckler who demanded to know Militant's policies at the beginning of Ted Grant's contribution.

Speaking at the Militant Readers meeting at Labour Party Conference, Ted made a thorough diagnosis of the crisis in capitalism—a crisis that had even forced William Rodgers of the notorious "Gang of Three" to confess at the CLV meeting "that he didn't know how to run the mixed economy."

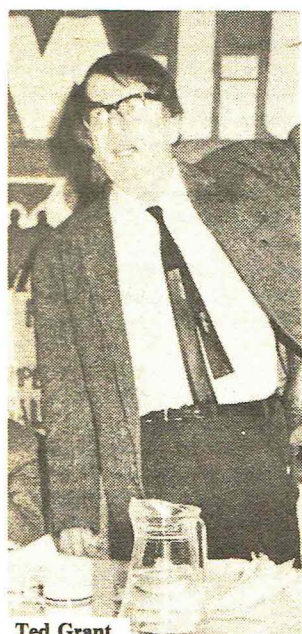
Militant would support the policies put forward by Tony Benn and the Tribune, Ted went on to say, when we face such a crisis in the system but those policies did not go far enough. There was a full and lively discussion after Ted's contribution, in which Militant's analysis and policies were questioned by speakers from the floor.

Could the trade unions ever be more than defensive organisations? How could the nationalisation of the big monopolies be carried thro-

ugh? How would the problems of energy and conservation be dealt with under socialism?

These points were answered by Ted in his summing up, and by other contributions from the floor. To cries of "absolute rubbish!", Eric Evans, delegate from Hayes and Harlington CLP and a T&G convenor in EMI, said that he was "too old," but the real task for socialists was to get into the unions, get active, and win support there for Marxist ideas.

Alex Ingram, a veteran trade unionist from Brighton, said he had formerly supported the ideas of Tribune, but his own experience had led him to see that a socialist programme had to be firmly based on Marxist ideas and a clear perspective. He was fighting for these ideas in his



Ted Grant

to delegates and visitors.

The meeting, which had an excellent attendance of over 180 delegates and visitors, had been opened by Terry Fields, of the Fire Brigades Union Executive, who (speaking in a personal capacity) said that the firemen would be fighting to stop the cuts in the fire service, which were a direct threat to the lives and property of workers and their families.

He said that there had been great disappointment amongst rank and file trade unionists at the lack of a lead from the TUC earlier in September. But at the Labour Party conference, the outstanding contributions of Militant comrades in the debates had shown that there were clear Marxist policies which offered a way forward.

Ray Apps, delegate from Brighton Kempton, appealed to the meeting to recognise the urgency of building support for Marxist policies through strengthening the Militant. Delegates and visitors responded magnificently to his appeal with a collection of well over £650.

SELL THE PAPER THAT FIGHTS FOR YOU

By Dave Farrar

This year has seen record sales of the 'Militant'. With a growing interest being shown in the paper by broader and broader sections of the labour movement, we should see an even bigger surge in our circulation figures in the coming year.

The success of 'Militant' is in marked contrast to the crisis facing the bosses' press, and even some of our socialist 'rivals'. All the 'dailies' and 'Sundays' have had large price increases.

There is talk again of the two London evening papers merging, and of the 'Daily Star' folding up. Two major bastions of the capitalist press, 'The Times', and the 'Observer', have also been threatened with extinction.

Why is it that the 'Militant' has gone from strength to strength—without the help of any big backers or large advertisers? Clearly, because the 'Militant' is always in the forefront of the battles facing the labour movement—and workers know 'Militant' can be relied upon to put their case and to champion bold socialist policies.

Giving a lead

It is no accident that the biggest growth in our paper occurred during the year September 1971 to September 1972. This was the period of the Heath government and the heroic series of struggles that British workers launched against that Tory government: Upper Clyde shipbuilders, the Housing Finance Act, the Pentonville five, and the Industrial Relations Act, and of course the battles of the miners that eventually brought the Tories down. That year, 'Militant' grew from a four page monthly to an eight-page weekly.

This was not on the basis of gimmicks or of watering down of policies, but because 'Militant' gave a lead and explained the need to transform the labour movement and to fight for the replacement of capitalism with a socialist society.

The need for a Marxist paper is now more vital than ever before. We are faced with perhaps the most vicious Tory government since Wellington, and the worst economic crisis since the second world war.

Barely a day goes by, moreover, without an attack on the 'Militant' in the bosses' press. They fear the growth in influence of this paper, and

are terrified at the growing support for our ideas within the rank and file of the labour movement. That explains the reason for their unscrupulous witch-hunting campaigns against the 'Militant'.

But all these campaigns have failed because 'Militant' is seen by an increasing number of activists to be the paper that fights shoulder to shoulder with them in their battles. 'Militant' is also well known internationally and has a growing readership on every continent. Articles and cartoons have been reproduced by activists in many countries.

The sales and the paper's influence have been built up by dedicated sellers—and we are now entering a period of struggle that will match—and soon exceed—the titanic struggles of the early '70s. Undoubtedly, there will be a possibility of building up a mass circulation for 'Militant.'

Now we have to turn to every factory, office, Labour Party, Young Socialist branch, trade union branch, and establish regular sales.

The tasks of conscious socialists, as the first edition of 'Militant' in 1964 explained "is to make the mighty labour movement aware of the impossibility of solving the national and international problems of our times, such as peace and security, prosperity and abundance, without taking decisive measures against capitalism." For this, a Marxist paper with mass sales is an absolutely indispensable weapon.

During October, 'Militant' is launching a sales drive, with a new poster and sales leaflets. We are confidently expecting to see the sales take us nearer a twice weekly paper and later, as soon as possible, to a daily 'Militant'. Sellers up and down the country will be on the streets, on the estates, outside the factories, pushing up the sales.

We are appealing to all activists in the movement who would like to see a larger and more regular 'Militant' to take out a bulk order to sell in their work place, to their neighbours, and to members of the Labour Party and to trade unionists. The need for a socialist society has never been greater than now. Build the 'Militant' and strengthen the paper that spearheads the fight for a socialist Britain and a socialist world.

LPYS in the frontline

LPYS round-up

The Labour Party Young Socialists hit the headlines when they struck at the very heart of big business. With the announcement of 2,039,000 unemployed, they picketed the Stock Exchange in the City of London with placards and banners, and full of the anger of working class youth today at the Tories and their allies in big business.

Forty Young Socialists formed the picket and were joined by Ian Mikardo MP. The well-heeled, pin-stripe wonders of the city were stunned by this piece of reality interrupting their rose-coloured world. One worker, totally unprompted by the YS, rushed up and gave them a quid for the funds.

And throughout the country, the LPYS has been at the forefront in the battle against unemployment. In Liverpool, complete with one comrade dressed up as Thatcher, the Young Socialists held a 'day of action' in the middle of the week. The success of the event was shown by 52 mainly unemployed youth signing up with the YS. The activity was covered by local radio.

In Cardiff, National Committee member Chris Burns appeared on local radio on the day the latest unemployment figures were announced, and he outlined the need for the socialist alternative.

In Shipley, West Yorkshire, the YS collected over 1,300 signatures in a petition against youth unemployment in a week of action. They held paper sales and leafleted

dole queues in the town centre. The local Tory MP received the petition, not to mention a hostile reception from the YS as well!

Youth rallies have been held in Sheffield and Barnsley, where Andy Bevan, LPYS National Youth Officer explained that the fight against the Tories had to go hand in hand with arming the labour movement with a socialist programme. Over 60 people attended the meeting at Sheffield and 40 were at the Barnsley meeting.

Throughout the country the LPYS is increasingly gaining the ear of working class youth in the battle against the Tories.

This action must be stepped up, and all the stops must be pulled out to ensure a massive Young Socialist contingent on the Labour Party demonstration against unemployment on 29 November, in Liverpool.

By
'Militant'
reporters



Labour Party Young Socialists on the picket at the Stock Exchange.

End Unemployment! Join the Labour Party demonstration in Liverpool on November 29th

By
Alan Watson
(NOLS NC)
Paul Cunningham
(Stirling University LC)

Stirling - Labour Students beware!

Labour students beware! When you go back to college your Labour Club may have been closed down—without the officers even being told!

On the first day of term at Stirling University, Mike Gapes, in one of his final acts as Labour Party Student Organiser, had given authority to the 'Clause 4' leadership of the Scottish Organisation of Labour Students (SOLS) to set up a new Labour Club, despite the fact there has already been an active Labour Club there for five years.

The President of the Students Union, who is politically hostile to the Labour Club, had written to NOLS saying the Club had been inactive, and had not applied for recognition to the Students Union for this year. This is simply a formality, and the Club in fact applied on the first day of term.

Without any consultation with the Club officers, the Club was 'deemed' to be disbanded, and SOLS given the responsibility of establishing a new Club. Last year, the Labour Club had regularly fortnightly meetings of 20 people, and some meetings of over 100. They organised support for the NALGO members involved in industrial action on the campus, were active in the local Labour Party, and had over 50 members.

At the NOLS Officers'

meeting in June, when it was agreed to investigate Stirling University Labour Club for inactivity, the officers also considered two resolutions sent in by the Club. Surely this is a sign of an active Club. It is no co-incidence that this Labour Club has supported the political ideas of 'Militant' rather than those of the NOLS leaders.

Only after pressure on leading Labour Party officers at regional and national level were the Club officers allowed to put their case to the 'new' Club meeting called by SOLS. Because of the record of the Club, and the socialist policies they have consistently put forward, the real Labour Club members came to the meeting, and with 50 people present, re-elected the existing Club officers unopposed. This shows the Club officers had the support from the active membership of the Club.

The unconstitutional action by an unelected Party official disrupted the work of the Labour Club. This type of action only sets back the development of NOLS. Resorting to such manoeuvres as this can never help any Labour Party organisation grow. This is the kind of manoeuvre carried out by the NEC in the 1950s, when it was controlled by the Gaitskellite right wing.

Arbitrary expulsions and disaffiliations fly in the face

of democracy. How can the NOLS leaders support campaigns such as the "Campaign for Labour Party Democracy" yet carry out these type of measures in their own organisation? Instead of building a mass, active NOLS to fight against the Tories, and for socialist policies, the present NOLS leadership appear more enthusiastic to attack Labour Clubs that do not support their political ideas.

At least five other active Labour Clubs which support 'Militant' have had letters from Mike Gapes attacking them for being "inactive" and threatening investigations!

The fight for an active NOLS committed to socialist policies goes hand in hand with a democratic NOLS, in which the membership feel they can have confidence in the leadership. NOLS must end the bureaucratic procedures which hold back the development of Labour students activity.

For five years the present leadership have stymied the development of NOLS. Not one national rally, demonstration or real campaign has been organised in that time! The time has come for a new leadership in NOLS, committed to the socialist transformation of society, and not afraid to allow the democratic functioning of NOLS itself.

NEC: YS demands go through

By Kevin Ramage

(National Chairman
LPYS)

The Labour Party NEC last Friday approved proposals for an expansion of finance and representation within the Labour Party Young Socialists. The proposals agreed at the meeting mark a major step forward for the LPYS.

It was agreed that in principle the LPYS would have an annual budget of £50,000—subject to discussion with the NEC's Finance Committee. Included in this would be finance for a full-time National Chairman, and LPYS representative on the NEC.

The LPYS will be given a direct voice at Labour Party Conference in the future; as the National Chairman will attend as an ex-officio delegate, with speaking rights. In the regions, the LPYS will be able to elect delegates to the Regional Labour Party Conferences.

The position of National Youth Officer is to be changed to Secretary to the LPYS National Committee; to be appointed by the LPYS NC and five NEC members.

Similarly, the position of secretary to the National Youth Officer [currently held by Linda Reid] is to be appointed on the same basis, and become Assistant Secretary to the NC, and Editor of 'Socialist Youth.'

The campaigning work of the LPYS in the regions will be helped by the agreement for the Regional Youth Committee to be able to set up Regional Campaign Funds.

The proposal for the LPYS 'Liaison Committees' in individual districts or towns is to be considered by the NEC's Organisation Committee.

The proposals put forward by the LPYS NC for trade union affiliations to the LPYS are to be circulated to the trade unions affiliated to the Party, and LPYS members active in these unions should build support for them in the union branches and shop stewards' committees.

The work for the Labour Party Unemployment Demonstration in Liverpool on November 29th was also discussed. It was agreed that the LPYS be allowed to produce one million leaflets, paid for by the LPYS Campaign Fund. Every branch should see these decisions as an excellent development for the LPYS; and should help the building of greater membership and support for Labour's youth.

students

ACCOMMODATION CRISIS

By Leon Kaplan

(Manchester University
Labour Club)

"A distinguished Georgian house standing in superb parkland in the Duke of Beaufort's hunt," enthused the 'Guardian' on 7 August.

Nine bedrooms, six bathrooms and a nursery wing are available for Prince Charles at 'Highgrove'. Meanwhile, the vast majority find it impossible to find decent accommodation that is not overcrowded for a reasonable rent.

Students leaving home for the first time often look forward to the independence this brings! This is quickly tarnished when they try and find accommodation.

Last year hundreds of students spent their first few weeks bedded down on the library floor at Manchester University, a common occurrence at most Universities and Polytechnics in Britain.

Universities only provide for 50% of their students in halls of residence whereas for the two million polytechnic and technical colleges students, barely 11% are 'lucky' enough to be provided with this basic need.

In one hall of residence in Manchester last year students were asked to work overtime, normally done by NUPE members, in return for the guarantee of a place

in their final year. This incidence alone highlights both the threat of redundancies from the cuts as well as the lengths some students are driven to secure themselves accommodation.

Students' housing problems won't be solved in isolation. Hundreds of thousands of workers are faced with a similar accommodation crisis. Homelessness, overcrowding, slum houses etc are the lot of millions. At the same time bricks are stockpiled, land lies derelict and over a quarter of a million building workers rot on the dole!

The monopolies controlling the construction industry are only interested in profits. Build enough houses for everyone and profits will be slashed. So, their motto is "Build fewer houses—make more profits."

On the basis of capitalism housing will never meet the needs of society. In Manchester, council tenants pay £29¼ million in rents, more than covering the cost of repairs, maintenance and management, [which are now being cut] but the council pays £30 million annually in debt charges!

We pay more for fewer services. A recent Parlia-

mentary report predicts "the biggest rent rises seen under any government since public housing began." As student grants have lost ground continuously to the increase in rents, students are hard hit.

'Red Clydeside', Poplar, the London rent strikes in the 1960s and the actions of Clay Cross Council against Heath's misleadingly labelled 'Fair Rents Act' are all milestones in the repeated attempts by the working class to solve the housing crisis.

NUS must link up with the labour and trade union movement in a full blooded campaign to defeat the Tories and ensure the next Labour government implements socialist solutions to the housing crisis.

★ Freeze all rents.

★ Nationalise the construction industry, banks and finance houses under workers' control and management.

★ For a crash housebuilding programme to meet the needs of society.

These should be the slogans we raise. If this is linked to a socialist plan of production then the miseries of unemployment, poverty and homelessness can be eradicated once and for all!



Tories in Tottenham have got the hump due to a local election being held during the Tory Party conference. They take their conference seriously—in fact the Tory candidates are going to miss the poll and go to the conference. Could this be real commitment to the internal policies of their party? Not really. The chairman of the Tottenham Tories explained why they really want to go: "It's more than a conference. It's a big social occasion."

'You've got to work that bit much harder and then the good times will come' is the bosses' age-old lie. Maintenance engineer John Downes must have had this on his mind when he was working up to 70 hours a week for the Asperia Machine Supplies Company. His reward from the bosses for this hard graft? The sack! After working for such long periods no doubt his mind wasn't as sharp as it should have been, and he forgot to check a safety switch on one of the many sites he visited during the day. For this, according to the 'Daily Mirror' [September 24] he received a 'day long inquisition' and then was sacked. And he was refused permission to drive home his company van; he needed it to drive his daughter to join a school party going to France, so, understandably angered by the bosses' attitude, he took it anyway. The bosses then called the police and he was arrested and later fined £131. An industrial tribunal found in his favour last week and he was awarded £2,459. Not that this will go a long way. For John has had trouble finding work. The company, despite all the extra hours he put in for them, have not given him a 'decent reference'. Let this be a warning.

'Realism and Responsibility' was the slogan of last year's Tory party conference. 'We must face the facts of the real world' we are continually told by the bosses. Perhaps then, they could explain this. An auction of the world's top wines was held at Christie's recently. The revolting overfed specimens of the ruling class packed into the auction rooms and exchanged thousands of pounds for a bottle or two of the ancient grape juice. For example a 'Lafite 1806' fetched £3,300. Not that it will be drunk, otherwise the upper classes could make do with a 'Sainsbury's 1980'. Rather, it will be an investment, and accumulate 'wealth' by sitting in some parasite's cellar for a few years. In all, this auction for a few bottles of plonk raised over £2½ million! Meanwhile at Lyme Regis hospital in Dorset, 'minor' treatment is being carried out under torchlight. The hospital can't afford to replace the lighting system which broke down and nurses stand over doctors holding torches. The cost of new lights is a mere £250. This is the real world we live in, the world of the crazy logic of capitalism. And it is the responsibility of the workers to change it.

With youth unemployment ever increasing and the continuing fall in living conditions, it is no wonder football violence is on the increase. The media, owned and controlled by the millionaire class and directed in their favour, have been quick to blame this for the decreasing attendance at football matches around the country. Yet a report in the 'Guardian' [September 25] showed the major reason for falling attendances. It described how Liverpool FC has been having some of the lowest attendances for nearly 20 years. It went on, "With 72,686 people unemployed in the city of Liverpool...and a further 60,000 out of work in the surrounding Merseyside area, the recession was bound to affect football attendance..."

The Tories haven't changed!

For years, with the 'welfare state', the Tories and Liberals have been saying the hard times of the 'thirties' had gone forever. But have they?

In his book 'The Problem of the Distressed Areas,' Wal Hannington pointed out one of the economies sought by the National Government's Board of Education was to force the local authorities to interpret the 1921 Education Act, which allowed for the provision of school meals to necessitous children, in such a way that no child could be provided with a free meal unless a doctor certified that he or she was already suffering from malnutrition.

The school medical officer for Smethwick, in his report issued in May 1935, made a strong attack on the Board of Education:

"If the medical officer does not find malnutrition then the Board suggests he must not recommend free meals. But if the child is receiving free meals, he will not show signs of malnutrition. The doctor must therefore say 'you must stop having free meals,' you do not need them yet. When you have starved sufficiently to show signs of actual malnutrition, however slight, come back for meals. You may have meals until the

malnutrition is cured, but only till then; after that, you must have another trial period of starvation."

The desperate need for capitalism now, as in the 1930s, to increase profits has meant that health, education and all public services must be cut—but not, of course, those services, like the police and the armed forces, which protect private property.

The Peterborough 'Evening Telegraph,' on 11 June this year, reported that Cambridge County Council's education committee had decided that free school milk will only be given to children on the advice of a hospital consultant.

One councillor disagreed. "It is very difficult to see a consultant," he pointed out, "and to get hold of one to discuss school milk would be



The National Unemployed Workers' Movement sets off from Glasgow, demonstrating against unemployment and the means test in 1934. The picture is taken from one of Wal Hannington's books, 'Unemployed Struggles 1919-36'. Available from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

impossible." However, he added: "I feel we could perhaps do this on the advice of general practitioners."

But councillor Paddy Crossman felt it would be dangerous to change the decision: "when school milk was abolished it was viewed with wide concern and people predicted horrific things would happen. But it has not made any difference, and milk only needed to be issued when there is a real medical need. If you put it into the hands of GPs, they would feel bound to recommend milk for every child."

One wonders why GPs

would recommend milk for every child. Could it be for the simple reason...that they need it?

So there you are, comrades, not in 1935, but in 1980. The real face of Toryism has not changed one bit.

Cambridgeshire is typical of Tory-controlled county councils. They are falling over themselves to implement the cuts demanded by this Thatcher government, which thinks nothing of spending £11,000 million a year on armaments but demands a letter from a consultant for a bottle of milk!

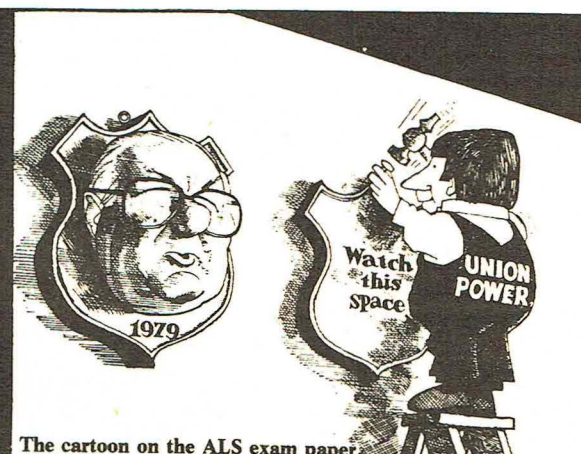
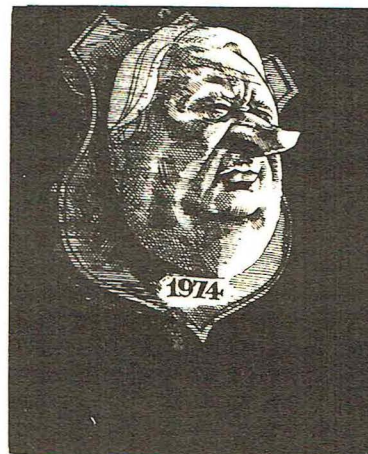
PROPAGANDA FOR THE BOSSES

The History paper set by the Associated Lancashire Schools Examination Board for this year's CSE candidates is a good starting point for a look into the job schools are doing on our kids.

Pupils were presented with a cartoon depicting 'Union Power' as a man in overalls busy fixing a plaque to the wall with the words 'Watch this Space.' Alongside are two other plaques: one bears the head of Ted Heath, the other of Jim Callaghan.

Pupils are asked to name the two ex-premiers and to speculate on the head likely to be mounted on the third plaque. Then they are asked "what part might Union Power be said to have played in 'hanging these trophies'?"

The underlying anti-trade union attitude here is not uncommon within education. What is unusual is that the Board received several complaints from teachers. Among them was that of Councillor Dave Lees, who teaches at Nocholls Ardwick High School. He complained to his MP, Jim Callaghan—not the one in the cartoon—who has taken the matter up with his namesake, with Len



The cartoon on the ALS exam paper.

murray, and with the Education Minister, Mark Carlisle.

The Board declared themselves satisfied that the question was free from bias, adding that "few attempted this question."

Their comment gives rise to optimistic notions about the success-rate of anti-union propagandists in schools. But it is vital that we watch what goes on in education very carefully.

Many socialist teachers have experienced the ground shift beneath their feet when they have ventured into discussions of social issues with pupils who question them. Always, there is the knowledge that admission of a commitment to a particular view of the way society should

go is seen as something bordering on treason.

To sing the praises of the status quo, however, is either seen as 'non-political,' or the political implications are so much a part of the scene that they are no longer noticed. To question the status quo—however gently—is to face the accusation of 'indoctrination.'

The aftermath of a visit to a Manchester school by Phil Frampton, speaking for the Labour Party Young Socialists, is a good illustration. His questioning of many taken-for-granted issues—despite the fact that the 'accepted' view was well-aided by a teacher present—provoked a well-orchestrated and predictably hostile reaction from many of the teachers in the school.

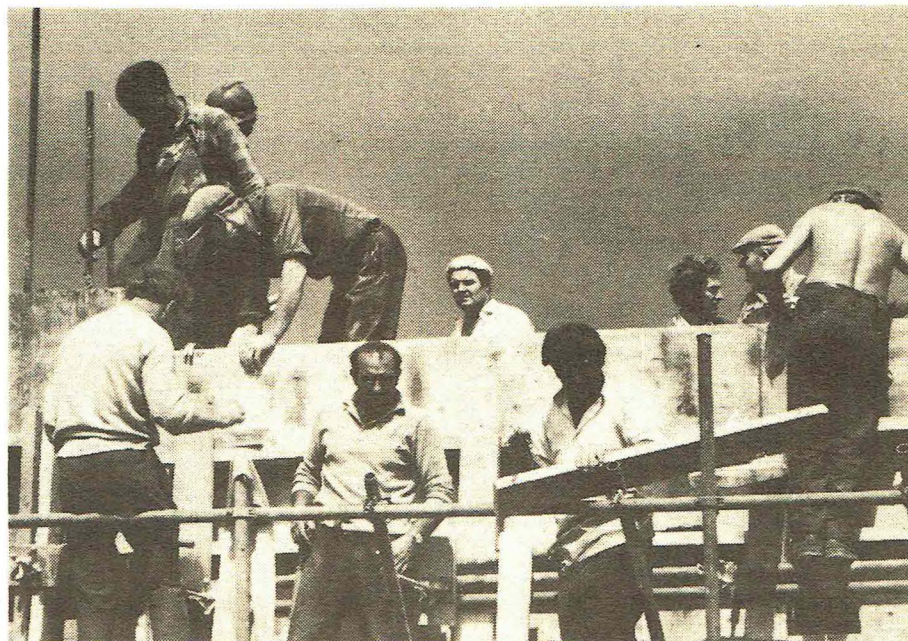
So, how are kids supposed to get 'the other side of the argument'? Or are they?

What are they supposed to make of the clash between their experience of everyday life and the views with which they are presented? Where can they discuss the important issues that are central to their lives?

It is important that the labour movement takes up the question of what takes place in schools and fights for the open debate of political issues. As it is, only those who support the system under which we live—for the present—are free to express their views.

By Sheila Woodhead

Learning a Trade - Learning the Truth



The building industry—still in urgent need of full unionisation

Now is the time for the nationalisation of the building trade, and for union-controlled apprenticeships.

By Nigel Shaw

Firms are more and more reluctant to take on an apprentice or trainee, but they still cry out for skilled labour.

From my own experience as an apprentice, I know the conditions that exist in this trade. After two years at college on low wages, two thirds of which are paid for by the government, I was asked to sign my indentures—which meant doing a man's job for a boy's wage for another three years.

At college we were told about the Shrewsbury Six and how these were naughty union people who wanted to bring

the building trade to a stand-still for some stupid reason. We should have nothing to do with the trade union, we were told.

It was only when I was made redundant that I learnt the real reason of the imprisonment of the Shrewsbury Six and realised the need for trade unionism throughout the building trade.

I was made redundant three weeks after I refused to sign my indentures. After six months and two more firms—and being made redundant again—I decided to go and work in a local factory to learn a little more about union work.

After a while I was made shop steward, and later I was asked to stand for senior shop steward. So I phoned up our regional full-time officer and asked for ballot papers. Weeks later the ballot papers hadn't arrived so I phoned again, and again.

Three times the full-timer came to the factory, but still no ballot papers. It didn't take an idiot to realise that neither the management nor full-time official wanted me to become senior shop steward.

I was a supporter of 'Militant', and they knew things would only change for the better for the workers, and not the management. So a lot of pressure was put on me, and I fell for the management's trap and—

like a fool—handed my notice.

I was sent to work on a job in a factory that was a closed shop and found out that some of the men from the firm I was working with were non-unionist. So with the support of the unions in the factory I said that I would not work with non-union labour. After a few days of arguments with management, several more workers applied to join a union.

The TUC Day of Action on 14 May was coming close, and the management put a notice round saying anyone who came out would be breaking their contract of employment and would be instantly dismissed.

I asked the senior shop

steward what he was going to do about it. He said he was going to come to work. He just happened to be the foreman of the site as well!

After hearing that, I sought help from the factory UCATT shop steward, and was given full support. If I was sacked, the firm would not be let back in the factory until I was reinstated.

So I went on the May 14th Day of Action, and sold quite a lot of papers as well. When I returned to work the next day, nothing was said to me at all. But four weeks later, I was told work was getting slack and I was to be made redundant.

When I went for a job to the various firms in the town, one after another the answer

was "sorry no vacancies." In our local paper, I saw that a firm I had been to the week before was still advertising for bricklayers. Could I have been black-listed, I ask myself?

In my area there have been about 300 redundancies. One housing site has been left unfinished, houses from the ground to the roof just left to be vandalised, perhaps by distressed unemployed youth who've never had the chance of a worthwhile job.

The real vandals though are the Tories and their big business backers. While they control society, our chances of getting decent jobs are very remote.

NALGO

FIGHT THE TORIES

By Terry McDonald
(Knowsley NALGO)

Photo: Militant

What can only be described as an historical event took place in Manchester last Saturday, when over 500 delegates attended NALGO's North Western and North Wales District Council.

The District Council represents over 7,000-8,000 people in various public services in the Region. They are employed by local authorities; health, gas, and electricity services; and universities, new-towns, and water boards.

Nalگو is not exactly renowned for its militancy. In fact, quite the reverse is true, as it is usually referred to as one of the 'moderate' unions. However, that meeting saw a turning point in the union's role and view of itself in the wider labour movement.

Nalگو, whose membership covers administrators, clerks, rent collectors, planners, solicitors, social workers and engineers, has not yet affiliated to the Labour Party. Last Saturday, however, a decision was taken by those delegates which, hopefully, has brought Nalگو to a new stage in its relations with the Labour Party.

The Knowsley branch moved an emergency resolution calling upon the District Council to support the national demonstration called by the NEC. The motion was moved by Derek Hatton,



chairman of Knowsley branch, and was accepted unanimously by the delegates, who represented about 120 branches.

The unanimous acceptance was surprising, especially as the resolution included a call for "...the trade unions and labour movement to use this platform to expose the disastrous policies of this Tory

government and to campaign for their early defeat with the return of a Labour government committed to increasing public expenditure..."

The clear call for the defeat of the Tory government and the election of a Labour government from an important section of this formerly 'right wing union,' is a sign that Nalگو has—at least in

the North West—come of age.

Clearly, this Tory government is forcing more and more Nalگو members to recognise the fact that it is only by supporting the Labour Party that the jobs and services provided by its members can be protected.

No jobs - Plenty of work

By Nick Wrack
(Dulwich LPYS)

One thing you can say for the Tories. They may not be able to provide jobs for well over two million people—but while they are in power there is no shortage of work for the labour movement—trying to get them out.

Despite high local unemployment, with building workers on the dole, 10,000 families are on Southwark's waiting list and 20,000 houses are unfit for habitation. That is why Dulwich Labour Party Young Socialists have been running a campaign on housing.

Our campaign redoubled when the right wing leaders of Southwark's Labour council agreed to sell 70 acres of council land to property "developers" without even consulting either the Labour group or their constituency parties. They claim the Tory Land Bill gives them no option.

A special council meeting was called by Labour councillors opposing the sale. Dulwich LPYS and Southwark Trades Council organised a picket of the meeting pointing out that the land had been earmarked for the building of 1,000 council homes.

The sale would ensure that either the houses would not be built or they would be at prices well beyond the reach of working people.

We also organised a petition calling on the council to provide more council housing and oppose the Tories policies of selling council homes and land. In just three sessions on the streets of Peckham we obtained over 2,000 sig-

natures.

Over 100 people at the picket gave the right wing a hostile reception. Councillors opposed to the land sale stressed that the council should be opposing Tory legislation—not implementing it before it is even passed!

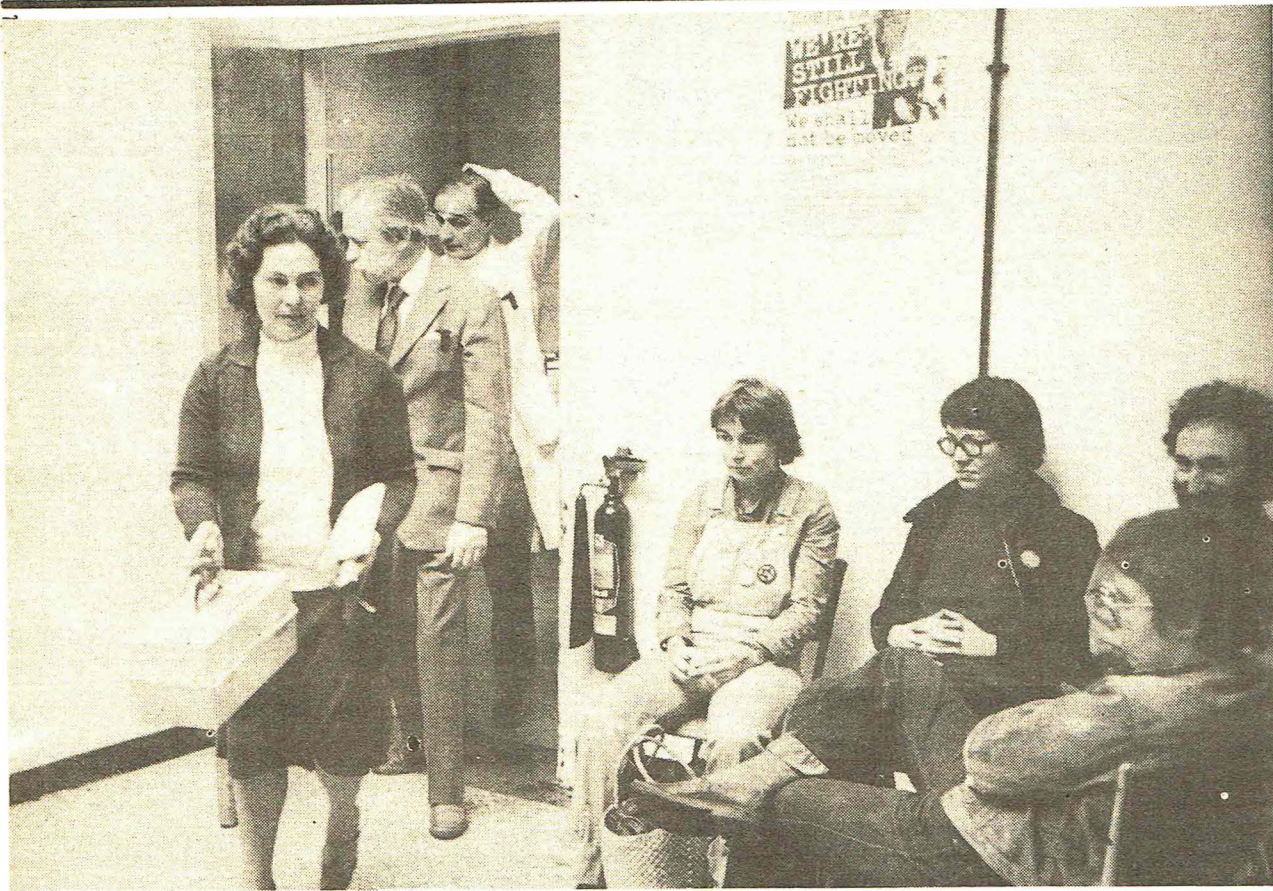
The LPYS petition was given as an example of the support councils could get if they were to campaign actively.

A majority of Labour councillors voted against the sale but the right wing proposition was carried with the support of just seven Tory councillors. The reaction to the result was a furious determination not to re-select the right wingers for the next elections.

Our campaign is continuing with plans for a public meeting. Our canvass of estates has made us 16 new members.

Also by the time you read this article Thatcher herself will have visited the area. Desperate for good publicity, she is opening [not closing] accommodation for disabled people.

We are now getting support for a demonstration when she arrives. Most people in this solid Labour area are outraged at her hypocrisy when the disabled are hit by massive cuts—and astonished at her cheek. We intend to give her a welcome she won't forget.



The DHSS report highlights the importance of the struggle to save hospitals like Bethnal Green

Photo: Laurie Sparham (IFL) II

PROFIT SYSTEM RUINS YOUR HEALTH

This report contains an indictment of our profit-orientated society that fully supports our assertion that capitalism kills.

Even a superficial examination of the 417-page Report gives the impression that it could well be used as a health service handbook during this country's transition to socialism.

This has special significance for trade unionists in East London. The Report quotes the community covered by the City & East London Area Health Authority as one of the two in England and Wales with the highest mortality rates. The other is Gateshead.

We were correct to fight to retain acute beds in our Area while still increasing community care. We repeatedly claimed that the AHA was changing the pattern of health care in Tower Hamlets, City & Hackney and Newham without due regard to the historical background of the locality and no knowledge of the possible consequences of their actions.

The Report quotes Dr Tudor Hart who said: "in areas with most sickness and death, general practitioners have more work, larger lists, less hospital support and inherit more clinically ineffective traditions of consultation than in the healthiest areas; and hospital doctors shoulder heavier case-loads with less staff and equipment, more obsolete buildings and suffer recurrent crises in the availability of beds and replacement staff...".

We fought hard to retain the Casualty Department at Bethnal Green Hospital and the Report confirms that there is a greater need for Accident and Emergency Units and Out-Patient facilities in working-class areas, partly because of the unavailability of GPs at certain times and

also because of the greater risks of accidents in the home and at work.

It discusses how poor health is the result of class inequalities in Britain and says that "present inequalities in health in a country with substantial resources like Britain are unacceptable and deserve so to be declared by every section of public opinion."

It calls on the trade unions (with others) to play their part in securing "desirable" conditions of work, preventive health measures and a greater emphasis on health and safety.

The Working Party states firmly that "in our view much of the evidence of social inequalities in health can be adequately understood in terms of specific features of the socio-economic environment" and that "thirty years of the Welfare State and the NHS have achieved little in reducing social inequalities of health."

But while earning our gratitude for so expertly posing the problems and what needs to be done and for recognising themselves that their proposed national goal of the abolition of child poverty in the 1980s "requires a redistribution of financial resources far beyond anything achieved by past programmes," the Working Group cannot or will not come to the conclusion that the resources called for would never be made available under our present system of running the economy for private profit.

This is spelled out for them bluntly enough in Patrick Jenkin's foreword to the Report, although the authors now dispute the £2,000 million a year he says it would cost to implement their proposals.

Myrna Shaw, Secretary Tower Hamlets Health District Joint Shop Stewards Committee (Personal capacity) reviews 'Inequalities in Health: Report of a Research Working Group chaired by Sir Douglas Black. Published by the DHSS [1980] price £8.

But of course, Patrick Jenkin is telling the truth. His party, the party of big business, would have to give way to a socialist democracy where the wealth produced is used for the benefit of the people who produce it, before this Report could possibly be implemented. We should never stand for the death of 74,000 people in 1970-72 who are estimated in the Report to have died only because they were in a lower income bracket. This included 10,000 children and 32,000 men of working age.

The Tory press yells its class propaganda against workers who they say don't want to work, are always malingering, and are "always on the sick". Yet time after time the Report emphasises how much more likely the working classes are to suffer sickness and generally wait longer before seeking help.

'The Lancet' (6 September, '80) describes the Report as

an "unwanted legacy from Mr Jenkin's predecessor," and says that it will provide abundant ammunition for the Opposition to bombard Mr Jenkin when Parliament re-assembles. When the Labour Opposition was itself a Labour government, it was bombarded with these very facts by health service workers—who they ignored. How long will this charade continue? How long do we allow ourselves to be a human tennis ball batted backwards and forwards across the floor of the House?

Every trade unionist should gain access to the Report and familiarise him or herself with the contents. Time is running out for another 74,000 of us and we cannot afford to wait. Our very lives depend on our getting rid of this or any government which represents only those who can afford to buy their good health and has no interest at all in the rest.

Surplus to requirements?

What the Tories talk about doing tomorrow—how to lower the value of social security payments—the Labour-controlled Knowsley Council have done today.

They have abolished free adult education courses for the unemployed and also pensioners.

By taking this action, Knowsley councillors are not only going against the wishes of their Labour Party General Management Committee, but are also telling the most hard-up sections of the working class that they may further their education so long as they can afford to pay the fee!

Mark Carlisle would be proud of them.

Who can afford to pay education fees out of unemployment benefit or state pension when the cost of feeding and clothing yourself under the Tories is such a struggle? There will undoubtedly be a reduction in the number of enrolments; courses will be closed because of lack of numbers; teachers, typists, cleaners, clerks, etc. will all become 'surplus to requirements.'

In Knowsley, as elsewhere, when you are not required you are cut.

The consequences of these actions are horrific. Here we will see the spectacle of a Labour controlled authority being directly responsible for further unemployment

We need unemployed workers centre

By Tim Webb

(Secretary, Kings Lynn Trades Council)

Feeling inspired by the remarks of Margaret Thatcher that we unemployed could find work if only we were prepared to move I asked in the Job Centre recently to be registered for work throughout South East England.

The Tory press always tell us there are jobs there. "I'll register you as you request" said the assistant at the Job Centre "but frankly I think your chances of getting a job are nil".

I am an experienced lorry driver used to all kinds of haulage. I have never lost a load or had a serious accident. I can only assume Mrs Thatcher was talking through a part of her anatomy most of us use for a quite different purpose.

I've been out of work since January in Kings Lynn in Norfolk. I was offered a temporary job on my last visit to the Job Centre, but this was cancelled due to insufficient work to keep the lorry on the road. I asked the assistant then if there had been any Class 1 HGV vacancies recently. "That's the first one for six months" was her reply.

Our Trades Council is trying to set up an Unemployed Workers Centre similar to the magnificent initiative of the Newcastle Trades Council. This is almost the only example in existence—I am sure due mainly to financial difficulties in starting such a venture.

One union branch in Kings Lynn has given an inspiring example of how to overcome this problem.

Mike Reed, Staff Representative of 10/628b. Branch of the Transport and General Workers Union, (covering local bus workers), has raised in his branch the question of each member voluntarily paying 5p. per week towards the running costs of the Unemployed Workers Centre.

Although Mike has not yet approached everyone in the branch due to Staff Holidays and some members working in out-lying garages and depots the response so far is almost 100%. There are over 4,000 union members in branches affiliated to our Trades Council, so we should

be able to open and run our much needed Centre if other Union Branches respond to this magnificent lead!

As Brother Reed has commented "none of us knows when we are going to need a Centre like this ourselves". The overtime and jobs of the bus workers themselves are under threat from the Tory Transport Bill, see "Militant" (12th September).

As several bus workers have said, it is important that the proposed Centre should link employed Trade Unionists to unemployed workers so that both may gain strength and solidarity from each other.

My experience convinces me of the importance of our Centre for the Unemployed. Hopefully within the foreseeable future it will cease to exist because there is no unemployment, but this will only happen when we are on the way to the socialist transformation of society.

Whatever happens I shall always be grateful to my Brothers in 10/628b. Branch for their initiative, which is in the best traditions of Trade Unionism.

**CHILE:
Support
workers'
struggle**

At the LPYS Annual Conference earlier this year, a representative of the Chilean Socialist Party [Interior] issued an appeal to the British labour movement for material aid and support in their struggle to rebuild their shattered organisation.

The ruthless efforts of the Chilean generals to wipe out all the traditions of workers' struggle has resulted in untold suffering for the whole of the Chilean working class.

Yet, despite the mass murders, torture and brutal repression, the rich traditions of the Chilean workers lives on. The comrades inside Chile continue to wage a heroic struggle to rebuild their party, as a vital step in the fight to overthrow their oppressors.

They need our help. The junta receives the backing of imperialism, including support from the Tory government which has announced its intention to resume arms sales to the Chilean regime.

The LPYS has responded to the appeal of our Chilean brothers and sisters by launching the Chile Socialist Defence Campaign. We call on every section of the movement, labour parties, trade unions, shop stewards committees and co-op societies to join our campaign, to provide financial and material support which we guarantee will be passed on to the comrades inside Chile.

We need donations, urgently! Cheques to CSDC.

Leaflets and appeal letters are available free of charge from the Youth Officer, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

By Sue Ferguson
(Knowsley)

POLAND

Ted Grant analyses what

The uneasy compromise



The sullen faces of the seventeen Polish government bureaucrats as they enter the meeting-place of the Gdansk Soviet to negotiate with the workers

An uneasy compromise has been reached between the representatives of the striking workers and the rulers of Poland.

Nominally, the workers have won the right to organise "free trade unions," independent of the Communist Party and the state—that is, free from the control of the bureaucracy, which is composed of the legions of officials who rule Poland.

Why, after repeatedly declaring on the radio, television, and in the press that under no circumstances would the regime accept such independent trade unions, has the bureaucracy accepted such a compromise?

They have agreed to this at least temporarily, because there are no forces in the country on which they could rely. Any attempt to use force against the workers of Gdansk and the Baltic province would have provoked an uprising throughout Poland.

The army and the police would not have been reliable. The lower ranks of the bureaucracy, as in Hungary in 1956, would have come over to the side of the political revolution. Only the political police would have been rel-

iable.

Trotsky predicted that once the Russian workers rose against the bureaucracy and moved to take control into their own hands, the ruling elite "would be suspended in mid-air." That is exactly what happened in Poland. They were paralysed by the mass movement of the workers.

Therefore, unable to use force, at least for the time being, the bureaucracy has taken the road of deception and compromise. With gritted teeth they are biding their time, waiting for their revenge at a later stage. At the first suitable opportunity, they will try to take back all the rights conceded to the workers. That was what happened in Poland in 1956, in 1970 and in 1976—and will once again be the case.

There can be no half-way house. There will either be totalitarian control under a

one-party state, as exists in Eastern Europe and Poland; or there will be control of industry and the state by the workers, as envisaged by Marx, Lenin and Trotsky. An uneasy compromise between the two can exist only for a very short time.

The elements of dual power existed in Poland during the general strike. The masses had the real power in their hands, if only they had been conscious of this fact. They brought industry, transport, and the whole industrial life of Poland to a halt.

Unfortunately, in the leadership of the workers in Poland, there were no Marxists who, on the basis of the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, understood the processes involved.

The agreement reached, of trade union rights without any union interference "in politics", is completely untenable. The working class is not only interested in bread and butter issues.

In a country where landlordism and capitalism have been abolished and where the state is the sole owner of industry, the workers have a direct interest in economic planning. They need all the essential information, as the demands of the Polish workers showed. They need to decide the plan of production after full discussion—otherwise there will be all sorts of imbalances and dislocation, and the masses will suffer from its shortcomings.

The long queues for necessities in Polish shops, with shortages of meat, clothing and other basic goods, arose from the bureaucratic control of the last period. Bureaucracy could work, despite its many glaring shortcomings, in a relatively primitive economy, with an overwhelmingly peasant population and when the construction of mainly heavy industry was the primary task.

But once Poland developed into an industrialised, relatively sophisticated economy, then it required the control and check of the working class to develop a harmonious economy. Only where there is free discussion and democratic control can the workers decide what proportion of the national wealth should be allocated to machinery, plant, and buildings on the one hand, and to agriculture and consumer goods on the other hand.

Economic Decline

Poland's economy ground to a halt, with an actual fall in production last year, because of bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption and the nepotism and chaos which is inevitable under a dictatorship. When capitalism and landlordism are abolished, it is absolutely necessary that the day-to-day running of industry and the state should be in the hands of the working class. Lenin and Trotsky explained, that in any advanced industrial country where the workers have taken power, the trade unions should run industry under democratic workers' control and management. And Poland, due to the advantages of the abolition of capitalism, is now a modern industrial economy.

Under capitalism, the market, through painful booms and slumps, and bankruptcies, provides an automatic check on quality and productivity—although, in the present period, even in booms, capitalism can only achieve an 80% utilisation of productive capacity, a clear symptom of the outmoded character of the system. But in a workers' state, with the nationalisation of production, the check of the market must be replaced by control and checks by the working class.

The absence of such checks and controls is the essence of the crisis in Poland, Russia, and the other East European countries. The bureaucracies are developing the economy even more wastefully than under capitalism. The bureaucracy has now become an actual break on the further development of production. That is the fundamental explanation of the movement of the workers in Poland in the last period.

The Polish events have been a shattering blow for the so-called "Communist" Parties in the West, who have been taken by surprise. The British CP's paper, the 'Morning Star', has had glowing reports about the trade unions and the workers' rights in Poland. Yet without any signs of embarrassment, the CP's journals have been supporting the demands of the "independent trade unions". They are trying to adopt a neutral position in the struggle between the workers and the bureaucracy.

Without comment, the 'Morning Star' has quoted examples of the conspicuous wealth, privileges, and corruption of the bureaucracy in

Poland. They have reported, for example about the head of the state broadcasting organisation, Szczepanski, a friend of Gierek who was removed when Gierek fell.

"Preliminary investigation by the broadcasting union," the 'Morning Star' said, "is reported to have found that his assets included seven personal cars, two executive aircraft, a helicopter, a million-pound yacht, a sheep farm, a mountain villa, plus a hunting lodge in Kenya." (16 September)

But what the 'Morning Star' does not explain is how privileges such as these could exist in a country which, according to the Communist Party and the 'Morning Star', is a socialist state.

Marxism teaches that the socialist revolution will begin with control of the state and the economy by the workers. Yet thirty years after capitalism and landlordism were eliminated in Poland, and after a mighty industrial base has been created, the state is dominated and directed by a monstrous bureaucracy. Poland is further away from a healthy workers' democracy than the relatively healthy workers' state that existed under Lenin and Trotsky during the civil war.

The top layer of the bureaucracy in Poland, as in Russia and the rest of Eastern Europe, live like millionaires. At the same time, the workers have only a very modest standard of living. It is this situation which fuelled the anger of the Polish strikers. The workers demanded, for example, the abolition of the shops where the bureaucrats can buy food, clothes, and other commodities which are unobtainable for the majority of the people.

It is these privileges that the bureaucracy, particularly its top layer, is trying to defend. Inevitably, a privileged caste, like a privileged class, will fight ferociously to maintain its position. Occasionally, they will sacrifice one bureaucrat or another, who has gone too far in conspicuous affluence and corruption, to try to provide a scapegoat for the crimes of the bureaucracy as a whole.

To head off a movement of revolt from below, the bureaucracy will temporarily make concessions to the workers on wages, hours, prices of meat and other necessities, and other issues. But with a strong material interest in maintaining its position, the bureaucracy will never voluntarily relinquish control. That is why they cannot for long tolerate the development of genuinely independent trade unions under the control of the workers themselves.

In trying to report both sides in Poland without taking a position of its own, the Communist Party in Britain is attempting to adopt a neutral stand when things must be resolved one way or another—for the bureaucracy, or in the interests of the working class.

The uneasy compromise cannot last. Either the workers will take control of the state into their own hands, or inevitably the bureaucracy will return to the same totalitarian methods and regime as they did after the

What the future holds for Polish workers

upheavals in 1956, 1970 and 1976.

Already, according to the statements of the workers' leaders, the bureaucracy are attempting to corrupt and ensnare the leaders of the so-called independent trade unions by giving them privileges. Later, as the movement ebbs, the Kania leadership will attempt to draw many of these leaders into the orbit of the bureaucracy, giving them special flats, the use of cars, and other privileges.

Any leaders of the so-called independent unions who will not collaborate will be arrested or framed, when there is the inevitable ebbing of the movement. The mass of workers cannot sustain a high level of activity and participation indefinitely. When the workers become disillusioned with the limited results achieved by the independent unions, then the bureaucracy will clamp down on them, or incorporate them into the state machine.

The Catholic church, as always in such circumstances, has through its Polish hierarchy preached peace and agreement between "rulers and the ruled". The cardinal and the bishops demanded collaboration between the bureaucracy and the workers, urging an end to the strike long before an actual agreement was reached.

The church has gained from the crisis. Now, for the first time, Sunday mass will be broadcast on radio and television. The hierarchy are also demanding state subsidies, and it is possible that the bureaucracy will later agree to this to secure the support of the church. As under capitalism, the church hierarchy always tries to compromise with the rulers, rather than putting themselves on the side of the masses.

The attitude to the Polish events of the ruling class in the West—of the financiers and industrialists, and of course of the press-barons—reveals their fear of the movement of the Polish working class. They expressed malicious glee at the compromising of socialism and communism by the incompetence, mismanagement and corruption of the bureaucracy, which provoked the general strike.

But they are afraid of the effects in Eastern Europe—and in Western Europe, too—of the Polish workers' action. They advocated that the workers make a compromise with the bureaucracy. In their editorials and foreign service propaganda broadcasts, the Western governments urged "moderation" and the need for the workers to compromise.

The capitalists understood clearly that failure to arrive at a compromise would result in the collapse of the bureaucratic machine and the establishment of a workers' democracy in Poland. This, in turn, would have prepared the way for the spread of political revolution throughout Eastern Europe and Russia.

With the conditions of slump and recession in the western world, moreover, such a movement would inevitably spread to the rest of Europe as well. The capitalists fear this more than anything else. That is why

they have an interest in the bureaucracy arriving at a compromise and strangling the movement of the Polish workers.

The Western capitalists will always arrive at a compromise with the bureaucracy in Russia and Eastern Europe. The capitalists lean on the bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy leans on the capitalists of the West. Each needs the other as a spectre to hold up before their respective working classes.

In Russia and Eastern Europe, the bureaucracy holds up the danger of capitalist intervention. The capitalists, for their part, use the spectre of totalitarianism, which they attempt to associate with the genuine ideas of socialism.

The attitude of the sects to the Polish events has been comical. They are completely ultra-left in their attitude to the Labour Party and the workers' movement generally. But the moment a concrete situation is posed, they take an opportunist position.

The sects, including the "state capitalists", raise the same bogey of Russian intervention as the reason for not advocating the overthrow of the Polish Stalinist regime. They have swallowed the false position of the Polish dissidents. Incapable of thinking two steps ahead, they are at one with the capitalists in advocating the workers' compromise with the bureaucracy.

Why have the Russians swallowed more in Poland than they were prepared to accept in Czechoslovakia in 1968? Even when control was still firmly in the hand of the liberal wing of the Czech bureaucracy, the Russian bureaucracy intervened against the attempted liberal reforms.

But they have not intervened in Poland because of their fear of the working class in Poland and in Russia itself. The Russian bureaucracy immediately jammed the broadcasts of the BBC and the CIA's Voice of America, fearing the effects that news of the Polish workers' action would have on the Russian workers.

Panicky articles have appeared in 'Pravda' and other papers of the bureaucracy instructing the official "trade union" bureaucrats that they must listen more to the workers, and take more account of the workers' demands! Panic-stricken by the Polish events, the Russian bureaucrats are attempting to head off from above movements from below.

The "trade unions" in the Stalinist states have nothing in common with the trade unions created by the sacrifice and struggle of the workers in the capitalist countries. They are organisations to carry the instructions of the bureaucrats to the workers, rather than representing the demands of the workers. They have no more independence from the state than the "unions" under a fascist regime. That is why the Polish workers are trying to reject them, and are by the millions moving towards unions independent of the state.

Faced with the mass movement from below of the Polish workers, the Russian bureaucracy has temporarily accept-



Anna Walentynowicz addresses her fellow Gdansk workers. It was her sacking which began the July occupation.

ed changes which will potentially have a more disintegrating effect on the Polish bureaucratic regime than the reforms they would not tolerate in Czechoslovakia in 1968. They understood that in the event of an intervention, the Polish workers and people would fight. The Polish army would go over to the side of the workers. Intervention would also have an effect on the Russian workers and peasants within the ranks of the Russian army.

Only Temporary

The Russian bureaucracy has therefore endorsed this temporary compromise in Poland. They have accepted Kania as a replacement for the discredited Gierek. Kania, who was formerly linked to the secret police, took no steps without consulting the masters in the Kremlin. The Polish and the Russian bureaucracy have agreed to the compromise purely to gain a breathing space. It may last a year, 18 months, possibly two years or so—but it will be impossible to maintain for any length of time.

If the independent unions were to function as genuine unions, the workers would not only demand negotiations on wages and conditions, but would inevitably demand a say in the plan itself. This in itself would produce new conflict.

However, the bureaucracy, taking advantage of the inevitable disillusionment amongst the workers and the ebbing of the movement, will inevitably move to strangle the unions, or incorporate them into the state machine. In the long term, there will inevitably be new outbreaks and strikes by the workers in

Poland, leading to an uprising to overthrow the bureaucracy.

Unfortunately, the Polish workers abided by the advice of the dissident intellectuals in Poland (advice which was echoed by the ultra-left sects outside Poland). Their position has been false from beginning to end. They have not understood the processes taking place in Poland, Russia or the rest of Eastern Europe, or the processes internationally.

In their endeavour to avoid Russian intervention, they will, in the long run, provoke that very intervention! Poland cannot solve its problems on a Polish basis alone. The Polish workers could only successfully overthrow the bureaucracy and establish a workers' democracy in Poland by appealing to the workers and peoples of the rest of Eastern Europe and, of course, Russia itself.

Like the social revolution in the West, the political revolution has to be international in outlook, economically, socially, and politically. Socialism in one country is impossible. Even reformism in one country is now actually impossible, because all the countries are inextricably linked together economically and politically.

The impasse in which the Polish bureaucracy found itself in 1970 led it to try and find the way out through the world market. This assisted the industrialisation of Poland. With loans from the Western capitalists, Poland bought new machinery and established new industries. But with the development of world recession, Poland found itself burdened with enormous debts, owing \$20,000 million and paying millions of dollars a year in interest alone.

Markets for Polish exports in the capitalist countries have fallen sharply as a result of the world recession, with a slowdown or a fall in output in most of the main capitalist economies. Now three-quarters of Polish exports will go mainly to service its foreign debt.

The aid which is now being offered by Russia and the West to underwrite the compromise between the bureaucracy and the workers will produce new contradictions. All the contradictions in the Polish state will be intensified by the attempt to allow "independent" workers' unions.

How can these contradictions be overcome? It is true, the workers have made great gains in wages, hours and conditions. But the regime will inevitably attempt to take these concessions back, and repress the independent unions, or incorporate them in the state. In that case, renewed conflict and a new uprising will be inevitable.

What, therefore, has been gained by "not provoking a Russian intervention"? Unfortunately, the Polish workers have been persuaded by the dissident intellectuals to give the Russian bureaucracy what they want without intervention. And they have not avoided the possibility of intervention at a later stage! The only way that the intervention of the Russian bureaucracy can be avoided is to face up to the problem of the bureaucratic control in Russia as well as in Poland.

The only path for the Polish workers is to overthrow the bureaucracy in Poland, and then to issue an international

appeal to the workers of Eastern Europe and Russia, and to the workers of the world, to come to their assistance and aid the establishment of a free, democratic Socialist Federation of the workers and peoples of these countries.

There is no way around the problem. It will have to be faced squarely by the Polish workers. No lasting compromises can be made with the forces of the bureaucracy, any more than the workers in the West can make a compromise with capitalism, given the organic economic crisis now developing.

It is not only the sects who are hopelessly confused. Unfortunately the Tribune wing of the Labour Party and the leaders of the trade unions seem to be hopelessly at sea on this question. They support the compromise that took place with the bureaucracy! They do not realise that the compromise cannot be maintained for any length of time.

Once again, we arrive at the position that only Marxism can serve the needs of the workers of Britain and of the working class internationally. The Polish workers will find the road to Marxism, as will the workers of Eastern Europe, and the working class of the entire world. Only through the ideas of Marxism will the problems of Poland, of Eastern Europe, and of the world working class be solved.

TWO AMERICAN UNIONS DEMAND INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY

Last month two American trade union conventions called for an independent Labour party.

At the United Electrical Workers Convention, workers endorsed the formation of a Labour party.

The principal speaker, John Henning, head of the Californian Federation of Labor, stated that a Labour party was the only alternative to the two old parties. It was no longer possible to liberalise the Democratic Party.

In the first week of September the delegates to the quadrennial convention of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Union meeting in Cincinnati, pledged the union's support "for any grass roots efforts" to create a new working people's party.

The resolution was a substitute for an even stronger resolution which would have called on the million members of the IAM to actually initiate a party of Labour.

The Union's President, Mr William Wimpisinger, who is a member of the AFL-CIO Executive Council (American TUC) had opened the Convention with a far-ranging report in which he assailed the top leadership of the US labour movement for its 'business unionism' and 'cautious conservatism' in resisting the bi-partisan corporate offensive against labour.

"Resources are now there to attack and counter attack," he said, "We don't have to posture ourselves in the coward's crouch or retreat into bunkers when our adversaries be they government or corporate—begin firing missiles or lobbying grenades at us..."

"The aim of big business," he continued, "is to destroy the labor movement, turning the hands of time back a hundred years or more."

Then he dealt at length on the US labour movement's paralysing ties to the Democratic Party. The Canadian labour movement operating in a hostile and indifferent environment did not try to deceive itself about its relationship with the employers and government. "It had the good sense, it seems to us, to mount an offensive by helping to form a pro-labor political party—the New Democratic party."

Scathingly he denounced President Carter's new "economic renewal" programme as a scheme to bail out big business with billions of dollars in more loopholes while compelling workers to face closing mines and mills and to "sacrifice."

Betty Traun reports from New York

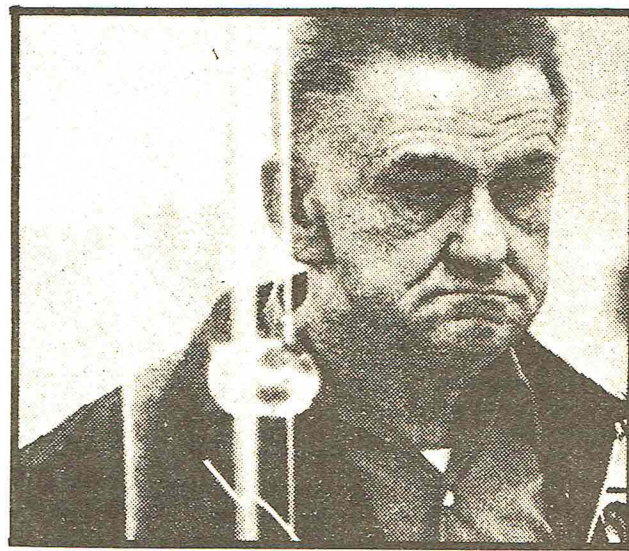
Wimpisinger blasted Carter's policy of giveaways to the profit-bloated oil companies which have "milked every last penny from OPEC imports and brought us to the brink of war."

The alternative was to keep

pressing for democratic controls that will break the big oil monopolies, and if that "means socialising the industry, so be it," he said.

He attacked Carter's sabre rattling in the Persian Gulf and his military draft registration drive. "Let big oil fight its own damn war. If the corporate state wants the military draft then let it draft robots and give our kids real jobs...with the promise of life not death."

In the floor debate that followed Wimpisinger's presentation Fred Smith of the IAM Lodge 1005 pointed out that it was a Democratic-controlled Congress that had enacted the labour-weakening Taft-Hartley Act. "We're not going to dump Taft-Hartley by supporting the Democratic Party. We've got to make our



Rising unemployment and inflation have brought increasing disillusionment with the two main capitalist parties.

own political party," he said.

He went on to urge a return of the "spirit of solidarity and militancy" of the 1930s, denouncing the Taft-Hartley Act for forbidding mass picket lines which are a vital weapon in blocking strike breakers by giant corporations. He urged workers to stage "sit down strikes" in plants which corporations threaten to close and relocate in areas of unorganised labour.

A woman delegate pointed out that the US was the only major industrial country where workers did not have their own political party.

"The IAM should take the initiative to create an independent working people's party," she said.

A spokesman for the resolutions committee argued against the IAM unilaterally moving to establish such a party without first establishing a broader trade union and grass roots support for such a move. Wimpisinger thanked those who had introduced the original resolution and pledged full support for the M for any broadly-based movement to create a genuine political alternative to the two parties of big business.

SPD 'dangerously' near a majority

By Greg Powell (Hamburg SPD)

The horrific neo Nazi terrorist bombing of the Munich beer festival which left 12 people dead will probably not effect the result of next week's general election. It could even lead to more votes for the Social Democratic Party, which is the last thing that the German capitalists wanted.

During the campaign they have literally tried to move heaven and earth to stop the SPD obtaining an overall majority.

In a synchronised pastoral letter two weeks ago, Catholic bishops all over the Federal Republic tried to guarantee that our worldly goods remain in the hands of a few. Carefully spiced with religious phrases, the bishops expressed their worry about the extension of state activity, the bureaucratisation and the

financial debts of the state. Reportedly amongst the authors of the pastoral letter was Rausher, who is a member of a Conservative working party.

The intervention of the church shows the concern of the ruling elite on how German society is developing.

The internationally renowned relatively high living standards of German workers are being brought into firing range by the representatives of capital.

West Germany is moving into the same crisis as other capitalist countries and it will be looking for the same solutions—that the working class must pay. They have no other choice. Safeguarding profits and financing costly reforms cannot go hand in hand anymore.

The opposition's prog-

ramme is one of large-scale re-distribution of wealth towards the rich.

While the SPD leadership promises that reforms will "in no way" be eroded, at the same time Schmidt warns "I cannot promise you that we will remain unscathed through world crises which could also affect us."

No socialist could deny this. But it is the first duty of a workers' party to explain in a clear way the world situation and the causes of the crisis and particularly to point a bold finger at the real culprits. Instead the party is calling for votes for Helmut Schmidt, as a world statesman of stability who speaks for "our peculiar national interest." (from an election brochure).

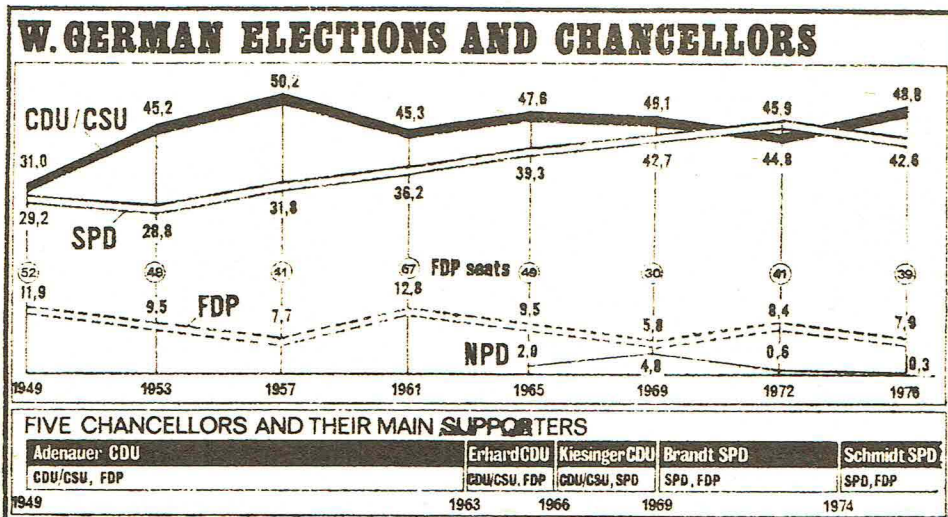
Schmidt has openly app-

roved at election rallies of votes for the Liberal capitalists and coalition partner, the FDP. The rank and file of the party will not be campaigning for the FDP—for them it's a question of strengthening their own party, of demonstrating active support, of vigilance against counter reforms.

Few SDP supporters amongst the working class would be sad to see the small party of capital disappear from government. An SPD absolute majority and a defeat for Strauss, the German Thatcher, would be a magnificent victory and mark a new stage in the development of the West German labour movement.

The leadership, however, continue to propagate the coalition with the liberals as the goal. Their policy, as the election propaganda repeats, is one of "prudence, circumspection and caution" to preserve internal and external peace.

At the time of writing an SPD/FDP victory seems assured. Whatever the outcome, sooner or later, the masses will be called upon by the victorious parties to make their sacrifice towards solving the economic and political problems of capitalism. All socialists and active workers in the SPD must fight for the interests of the working class and youth and link their needs to the struggle for a socialist transformation of society, the only way to really guarantee peace and justice for all.



INDIA: Support Thorn Electrical Workers Strike

For over 3½ months now, 300 workers of metal Lamp Caps (linked to Thorn Electrical Co, UK) have been fighting against one of the deadliest, feudalistic managements just to achieve fair and reasonable demands.

The background to the dispute began in March when the management unilaterally introduced an incentive scheme in one department. When the incentive payments were made on 25th April, the workers were surprised to see they were only 60% of what they should be.

The workmen refused to receive the amount and demanded a 100% incentive payment. Discussions between management and union representatives failed. After giving due notice the workers in that particular department downed tools on 27th April 1980.

The management forcibly got the workers out from the department with the help of police and security guards and displayed a notice stating that the incentive scheme would be withdrawn from 1st April 1980. Workers responded by deciding to stop doing overtime throughout the factory.

The management then stepped up their harassment of workers. They refused to pay overtime wages due on 15th May 1980.

So the workers refused to leave the company premises without overtime payment. The management was forced to pay the overtime amount after a long 6 hours stay in strike (the workers left the factory at 10 pm).

The management then declared a lay-off without compensation with effect from 17th May 1980.

So a general meeting of workers on 7 June decided to go on strike from 9th June. The management meanwhile dismissed about 50 workers without giving any reason.

Since 9 June the strike has been total and peaceful. All efforts to break the strike have failed. The management even arranged goondas (thugs) to attack the peaceful demonstrators near the factory but the militant workers retaliated and defeated their attack.

About 300 families have been put in great difficulties, as most of the workers were solely dependent on their salary for their living. The morale of the workers is very high. With the help of the working class at Bangalore notably MICO, the union is helping the workmen by giving them a minimum ration every week.

The strike continues with the demands:

1. Payment of incentive.
2. Payment of lay off wages.
3. Re-instatement of dismissed workers.

Our factory is linked to "Thorn Electricals London". Could the Thorn Electrical factory union people please try and help us to bring pressure on the management of Thorn.

By a trade unionist in Bangalore

Northern Ireland

almost one in six out of work
one in three below poverty line

WORKERS' VOICE MUST BE HEARD

Tony Benn has stated that mass unemployment in Britain could lead to violence in the streets like that of Northern Ireland. He is quite correct.

The de-industrialisation of Britain would create conditions similar to those endured by the workers of Belfast, Derry other parts of Northern Ireland. Already this province suffers 15% unemployment.

Job losses are mounting. In the last few weeks three key factories in Derry have announced or threatened major redundancies. Early in October the gates of the Grundig factory outside Belfast are to shut for good, displacing 1,000 workers, many of whom will never be able to find jobs again.

For Sir Keith Joseph and his friends, who proclaim that workers must accept lower wages and price themselves into jobs, there exists the theoretical difficulty that wages in Northern Ireland are 20% lower than in the UK as a whole. Yet the unemployment rate is consistently twice the national rate.

Strabane has the highest unemployment rate in the province. It also boasts the lowest wages. A recent report has shown that the average salary of those school-leavers who manage to find jobs in the Derry-Strabane area is £25.97.

Low wages do not create jobs. Rather unemployment is a club which is used to enforce poverty-level wages.

With prices on average some 4% higher than in Britain, it is not difficult to picture the extent of poverty in Northern Ireland. In 1976, 38% of households lived below the poverty line. For the South East of England the equivalent figure is 13%. Even Scotland's scandalous figure of 23% appears as nothing compared to the plight of Northern Ireland families.

By Peter Hadden
(Northern Ireland Labour & Trade Union Group)

If there was a part of the globe which cried out for a united working-class movement, that area must be Northern Ireland. It has been the social misery of poverty and unemployment which has underlain the sectarian violence of the past decade.

Today the opportunities for the building of a class movement to smash the sectarianism and end this poverty are greater than they have been for ten years.

On April 2nd of this year a successful half-day general strike was organised against the Tories. Catholics and protestants marched together in all areas. Outside Belfast's City Hall 10,000 workers from every part of the city stood together to listen to the trade union leaders.

Protests grow

Everywhere the anger of working people at the Tory cuts is to be seen. Unemployment, wages, cuts in services—these are now the talking points in the work-places, and not so much the 'troubles.' Last week 100 women from the protestant Shankill Road and other parts of north Belfast marched to the offices of the Education and Library Board, protesting on the issue of school dinners.

Overall, and particularly in the issue of unemployment, a mood for action is developing. A call for demonstrations against unemployment has already been raised by workers on a number of trades councils.

Unfortunately, the Northern Ireland labour movement is handicapped by the fact

that it can only fight on the industrial plane. Politically, the trade unions are silent. Yet the need for a Labour Party to challenge the bigots who now dominate politics could not be greater.

Ian Paisley, Enoch Powell, John Hume and others are the most prominent political figures in Northern Ireland. All attain their seats on the basis of sectarian voting, and all have, therefore, a vested interest in the maintenance of the religious division among workers.

The four major political parties, Official Unionist, Democratic Unionist, Social Democratic Labour Party and Alliance are all Tory parties under different names. Enoch Powell represents the views of the Official Unionists by repeatedly calling for more cuts. His colleague, William Ross, MP for Derry, responded to job losses in local factories by declaring this necessary to economic revival!

That such people are elected has very little to do with continued popular support. Rather, it is chiefly because of the lack of an alternative. Increasingly, however, the activists within the trade unions are coming to see the need for a political voice of their own.

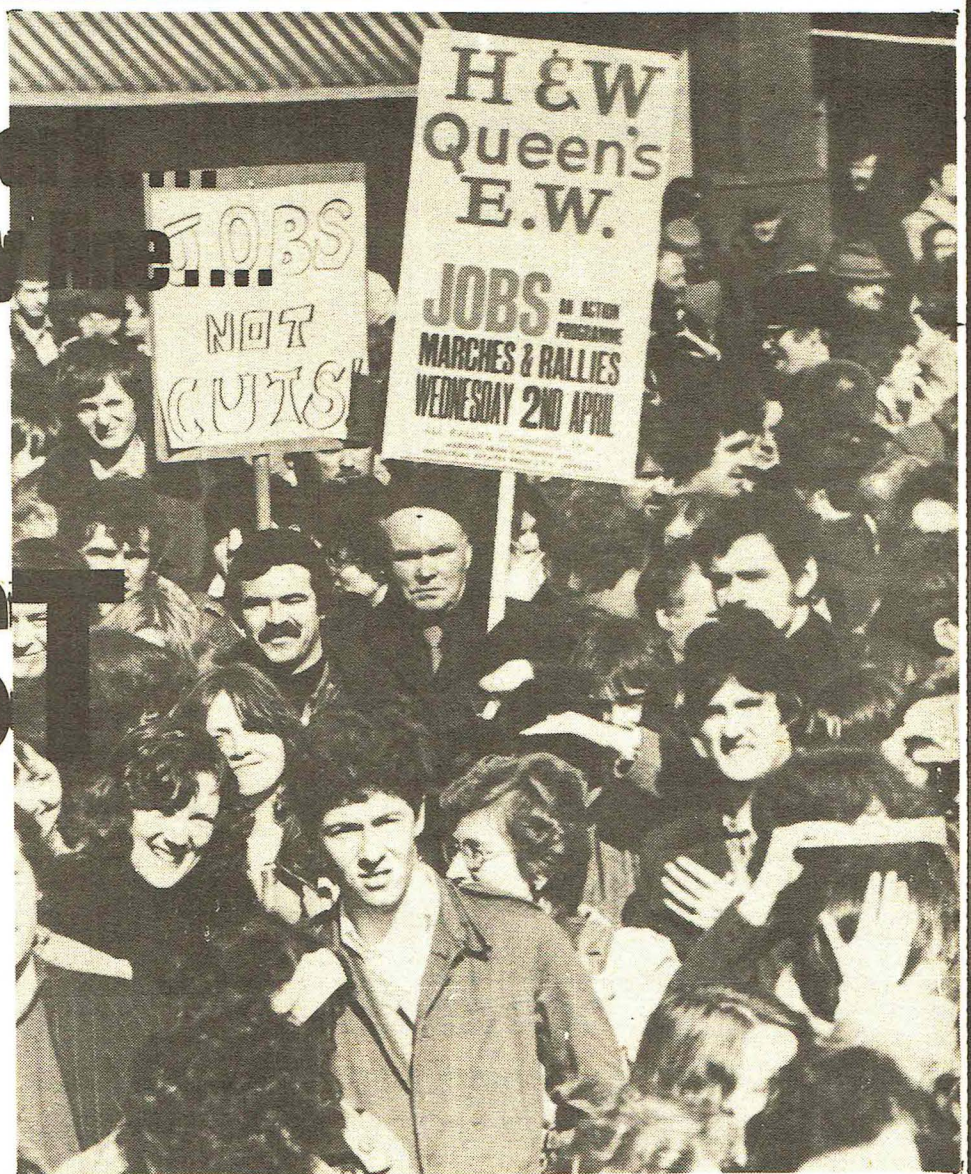
Workers faced with redundancies in a number of factories have gone to MPs such as Paisley and Hume for support. They have been given sympathy, and on occasions public backing. But no action has been proposed, and these politicians have done nothing to save jobs.

The Grundig shop stewards met representatives of the nearby Lisburn Borough Council, and were offered condolences and nothing else.

The comment of one of the shop stewards, that the meeting was a "total waste of time," sum up the conclusion which many workers are now beginning to draw.

Next May, local government elections will be held. Antrim Trades Council have decided to field at least one candidate. They have set up a body called the Antrim Labour League for the purpose. It is quite possible that other Trades Councils will do likewise.

Throughout the North, the Labour and Trade Union Group (LTUG) have been



Protestant and Catholic workers showed unity in action in the half-day general strike on April 2nd. A political voice is needed to express growing demands for working class solutions.

Photo: Derek Spiers (IFL)II

'Common Misery, Common Struggle'. An analysis of the united class struggle of workers in Northern Ireland. Available [price 40p inc. postage] from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

developing their influence by campaigning for a trade-union based Labour Party. Even in Paisley's backyard of Ballymena, the local L&TUG branch have managed to underline the potential support for a Labour Party by building a 40-strong branch of Young Socialists.

Talk by the Tories of a "political solution" in the form of some kind of new Assembly adds further urgency to the question of building a political voice for the unions.

As things stand, this latest 'solution' would solve exactly nothing. Elections due to an Assembly would be dominated by the sectarian parties. The horrifying prospect has even been mooted that if his Democratic Unionist party were to emerge as the largest single party, Paisley might seek to become the leader of the parliament! This could only give a boost to the bigots on both sides.

All this underlines the need for a united class alternative. A Labour Party would attract the working class support which today accounts for the voting successes of a whole array of bigots. At the moment, no such party exists.

That the SDLP is a middle-class catholic party has been re-affirmed by the defection from its ranks of people like Gerry Fitt, and Paddy Devlin, who have Labour connections to boast somewhere deep in their political past.

The Northern Ireland Labour Party no longer exists except as a lifeless rump. In 1977 it managed to win only one council seat in the whole province. Since then, it has declined even further.

With no Labour Party in existence the trade unions face the task of creating one. Great assistance in this can be

given by the British Labour Party. It can supply political advice, can assist in pressing the unions in Britain to support the idea, and can give practical help in the form of resources and money.

However, the idea sometimes raised, that a new region of the British Labour Party should be set up in Northern Ireland, should be resisted. Such a step would be seen in Northern Ireland as the imposition of a party from above and from outside. The danger would be that many activists would resent such a move and oppose it.

In any case the only people raising this call are the people who are or have been members of the Northern Ireland Labour Party, who helped destroy the NILP with their right-wing and sectarian policies. Now they have gone down on their knees begging the British Labour Party to come and rescue them.

It is the trade union activists within Northern Ireland who will have to form and build a new Labour Party. They can be given aid in this task, but no-one else can actually carry it out.

A rank-and-file conference of the NI trade unions, with representatives only from those political organisations who base themselves entirely on the labour movement should be called. This would work out a socialist programme and a democratic structure for a Labour Party.

Under present conditions such a party would quickly develop, fighting the twin enemies of poverty and sectarianism. It could challenge the sectarian parties on both sides, who up until now have simply fed on each other. It would need to develop the closest links with the British Labour Party.

Above all, it would be a

gigantic step towards the unity of the working class of Ireland, North and South. Through links with the Irish Labour Party, and by moving to the development of a single Labour Party for Ireland, it could help politically to reunite the workers of Belfast and Dublin for the first time since partition in 1921.

Only the working class of Northern Ireland can provide any answer to the situation. The Tories have nothing to offer. If they can only bring hardship to the workers of Liverpool and Birmingham, how can they be expected to solve the problems of workers in Belfast and Derry?

There are no grounds to justify a continued 'bipartisan' approach between Labour and the Tories in Britain on this question.

Instead, the labour movement in Britain must campaign for a socialist solution to the Northern Ireland problem, and should give every possible assistance to those fighting for class unity and socialism within the Northern Ireland labour movement—and above all, to those are fighting for the building in Northern Ireland of a trade-union-based Labour Party.

For regular coverage of the labour movement in Ireland North and South, read 'Militant Irish Monthly'

Order from:
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12 issues.....£2.16

Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Austrian readers' view

Dear Comrades,

Although 'Militant' is a little bit expensive for me as a student, I think it is worthwhile and I am always waiting anxiously for the next copy.

It would be a grand—and important for the socialist cause in Austria—if we could produce a similar paper, but I am sorry to say we are still far away from that, so I try to draw conclusions from the articles concerning the UK, as there is a lot we can learn from the present struggle of the British working class against the reactionary Tory government and from your fight for socialism. It is my impression that your most important tasks now are to democratise the Labour Party (especially the PLP) and build up a strong united trade union movement.

Reading 'Militant's' articles about the different unions' fights I find it surprising that there are so many unions—in Austria there are 16 strong trade unions and they are all united in the 'OGB' (Austrian Trade Union Federation), whose president is also president of the Austrian parliament—a right wing social democrat.

At our weekly meetings I always quote articles from 'Militant' and tell about the conditions of your fight for socialism. Our comrades were deeply impressed by your 'Day of Action' (May 14th). We are convinced that the British working class showed the way to fight against their enemies.

But it is not enough to wait for the victories of our comrades in other countries. It is our task now to build up the fight for bold socialist policies. Yours fraternally
Helmut Kepp
Austrian Young Socialists

Midlands' grass is no greener

Dear Comrades,

Reading the business news section of the 'Sunday Times' today I looked with interest at the 'jobless Britain' column, a weekly list of redundancy figures.

This week alone redundancies totalled 17,000. Of those, I calculated 5,025 were from the Midlands—that is excluding the unknown percentage of the 3,500 workers made redundant from various CEBG plants.

This means a total of 29.56% of those affected were in an area that in the past had lower unemployment figures than the national average.

Few of those people made redundant will be able to find jobs. Yet, when Mrs Thatcher advises people to move area to find new jobs, how many people will consider looking to the Midlands?

We all know that the only hope for the unemployed now is to support the Labour Party, throw the Tories out of government, and follow the socialist path to end the misery and suffering experienced by numbers far exceeding two million.

Yours fraternally,
J. Davies
Billesley Labour Party

It's a job

Dear Comrades

Three days ago I started work in the Dole Office—my job is making out claims. Yesterday a 16 year old girl came in—a new school leaver who couldn't read or write at all.

Today an ex-prisoner who had just come out after three years said to me that "I thought it was hell inside but it was nothing compared to this."

After three days in this job I can give example after example of the despair, depression and bewilderment that these people are facing.

I was unemployed after finishing my degree in psychology in June—I can't get any jobs using my qualification.

But I suppose I'm considered one of the lucky ones. I've a job—dealing with people that under capitalism will have no future.

Yours fraternally
Leigh Riley
Bermondsey LPYS

Taking a name in vain

Dear Comrades

I was amazed and sickened when I heard on the news on the 4th September that Mrs Thatcher wants to sell weapons to increase our exports.

How can a woman who says she is a Christian wish to sell weapons to kill and maim people?

Who does she want to sell the weapons to? Who are they to be used against? I suppose it's the 'Third World' as Thatcher has been quoted as saying that our weapons are "too sophisticated" and should be made easier to use.

How sick can you get? Is this the way a so-called Christian should behave and why on earth did no-one mention this at the TUC conference during the disarmament speech?

PS I am not a Christian
M. A Loveley
Littlehampton, Sussex

We shall overcome

Dear Comrades

On Sunday 21 September, thousands of protesters marched the four miles from Newbury to RAF Greenham Common, Berkshire, earmarked by the Tories for their proposed missile site.

The march included about 150 from Swindon, as well as strong contingents from the Bath and Oxford labour movements. The response as we went through Newbury (apart from the few inevitable reactionaries) was good. 'Militant' supporters were very prominent, and many papers were sold.

The march snaked its way through countryside, flanked by country bobbies (who were not quite used to this sort of thing in Berkshire... yet). As we approached the site of Greenham Common, we passed the plush houses of some of the employees. Here the reaction against



LPYS: the turning-point

Dear Comrades

Last week's article on the development of the LPYS mistakenly referred to the 1971 LPYS march against the Tories as being organised by the 'old' right-wing leadership.

The February 13/14 1971 march and rally was in fact the first event organised by the 'Militant' majority on the LPYS National Committee. When the supporters of 'Militant' first won a majority in the LPYS in 1970 the LPYS hardly existed as a national organisation.

One of the first tasks of the new LPYS National Committee was to attempt to pull together the isolated branches and regions in national campaigning activity and give a real sense of

national identity to all LPYS members.

The 800-strong February march, which was the first every national LPYS march, was a major step towards achieving this goal. It paved the way for the further building of the Young Socialists and the extension of its roots into the trade unions and Labour Parties.

The march also provided a further impetus to the LPYS's growth, which was reflected later that same year when the November 6/7 national march against unemployment attracted 1,500 people.

Fraternally
Bob Labi
LPYS National
Committee 1971-7

Unrest in the air...

Dear Comrades

The Tory government has only seen the tip of the iceberg. With their present policies they are trying to curb trade union rights and activities, also bringing into action one of the Tories biggest backers, the great unbiased British press.

Capitalism is just about on its last legs, as old people die, young people starve because of lack of jobs, kidney patients die, while some of the elite go round in £300 suits and dresses and chauffeur-driven Rolls Royces. In a letter to the national press lately, one of them wrote that 'the trouble with people today is that they're paid too much. It took me all of five weeks to find a (not trained or very good at that) housemaid and I have to pay an outrageous £32 a week for 36 hours work.'

If this is the general attitude of the capitalists I've no doubt that people will fight not only to work but to live as well.

The government knows

that a feeling of unrest is in the air and are desperately assembling their means to attack the working class, with new recruiting in both the army and the police.

The police seem to have all under control; limiting pickets to six, the death of political agitators and general tiny everyday things like phone-tapping, arresting peaceful pickets.

To top it the government started as they meant to go on, making people jobless, homeless, with no National Health Service, not to mention attempts to bribe trade union officials.

The present Tory government seems to be scaling everything down for about half the present population and with hardnosed policies, seem to know how to make the population fit.

I for one intend to fight and hope people can see what's happening and will fight alongside me and my comrades.

Deano
Milton Keynes

Swindon and Joan Lestor MP. We were assured that the issue would be brought up at the Blackpool Labour Party conference.

The rest of the speakers were a mixed bag of pacifists, resurrected CND members and the local vicar. We half-listened to their self-righteous platitudes, and dozed in the sunshine.

About a third of the sleeping throng sat bolt upright when a trade unionist spoke of his members refusing to work at the base—the first constructive statement of the day.

The day ended with a sweet voice from the platform asking "Shall we sing 'We shall overcome'?" Someday soon we shall overcome but not down this road.

Yours fraternally
Mick Coleman
Swindon Labour Party

Recruit the unemployed

Dear Comrades

When I went to the LPYS summer camp I came away feeling more enthusiastic and more prepared to work effectively in my local YS branch.

At the end of the summer camp, Andy Bevan stressed that the YS should now start to recruit more young people, in order to build itself as a mass youth organisation.

He also stressed that the YS should now be recruiting the young unemployed.

This is one of the most crucial factors the YS has got to take action about. We've got to give a fighting lead among the unemployed and so have the trade unions and the Labour Party. The young unemployed have got to be told who their real enemy is, otherwise they will become angry and frustrated and might be coerced into joining the National Front.

The November 29 demonstration in Liverpool has got to be our aim at the moment. We've got to leaflet the dole queues, jobcentres and the careers centres in order to get those unemployed on the march.



As Andy Bevan said, the YS has got a big potential at the moment in order to recruit the unemployed, and we shouldn't miss this opportunity.

Yours fraternally
Anne Pickersgill
Secretary,
Stevenage LPYS

The defenders of democracy

Dear Comrades

One of the London evening papers, the Standard, takes great pride in pointing out to the London Labour Party the electoral pitfalls of a left-wing programme for the 1981 Greater London Council elections.

Recently it did an axe-job in its leaders column on proposals moved by Greenwich Labour Party and accepted by the executive for inclusion in Labour's 1981 GLC election manifesto dealing with the extension of democratic control over the Metropolitan Police and calling among other things, for the abolition of the Special Branch, the Special

Patrol Group and the Immigration Intelligence Unit. On being challenged by me for a right of reply to some of the distortions in the leader Jeremy Deedes, the Managing Editor, proved somewhat unco-operative, asking me first to submit the reply and giving no guarantee of publication.

Needless to say the letter below has as yet failed to appear. Now if the press were nationalised, wouldn't Jeremy and his Tory friends be fulminating about socialist press censorship?

Eddie McParland
Greenwich Labour Party
& Executive Committee
London Labour Party

To the Evening Standard

Labour Party members are long used to distortion and bias in the reporting of Labour Party affairs in the press. Your leader, 'Police Folly,' by presenting only one side of the coin, was an excellent illustration of distortion by omission.

The amendment adopted by the Executive, from Greenwich CLP, proposed firstly that control of the Metropolitan Police should pass from the Home Office to the elected Greater London Council. Nothing revolutionary in that, as all other police forces in the UK are controlled by local Watch Committees. Why should London be different?

At the moment London boroughs are required to pay whatever the Police Commissioner asks for in the form of precepts. We think rather more control should be exercised over how much of our money is spent and on what.

Elected representatives at borough and GLC level have a right to greater control over a body that last year spent £240 million and is at

present unaccountable to any form of democratic control.

The other points mentioned in your editorial reflect the growing concern in the labour and trade union movement with regard to the increasing paramilitary and political role of the police: the death of Blair Peach; the operation of the 'Sus' laws; the raids on black workers at their place of work; the use of the police on picket lines (photographic evidence of police training in London's dockland to break picket lines has been printed in the magazine 'Time Out'). All of this, viewed in the context of the Tories' proposed trade union legislation, underline the growing political role of the police.

We are concerned to halt this trend and defend the civil and political liberties of working people in the face of a determined political assault by the Thatcher government to cut workers' living standards and shackle the ability of the trade union movement to defend its members.

ads

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

LEEDS Militant Industrial Rally. Speakers: Brian Ingham (Militant Industrial Correspondent); Bill Mullins (Senior Steward, Rover BL). At Victoria Pub, behind Leeds Town Hall. 7.30 pm, Sunday 5 October

STRATHCLYDE 'Militant' Trade Union Day School scheduled for 18 October now postponed due to pressure of other events.

LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS Public Meeting
Thursday 2 October
7.30 pm
in the Ballroom,
Imperial Hotel
North Promenade,
Blackpool
[i.e. in the NEC hotel]
'The Fight Against Mass Unemployment'
Speakers:
Dennis Skinner MP
Tony Saunois
Andy Bevan

EALING LPYS Thursday 2 October, 7.30 pm, Rock & Reggae. Featuring Gun Control and the Spice Group. At Queen's Hall, Ealing Town Hall. £1 entrance.

NEWCASTLE Militant Readers Meeting "Labour Party Conference—Results and analysis" Speaker: Donald McDonald, delegate Post Office Engineering Union (personal capacity). Sunday October 5th 7.30pm. Venue: Collingwood Pub, near Coxlodge.

OLDHAM Militant public meeting 'Eastern Europe' Speaker: Ian Stowell (Moss Side CLP). Sergeant-at-arms, King Street, Oldham. 8.00pm Tuesday 7 October.

MERSEYSIDE Militant Readers Meeting. 'Which Way for labour after the Conference' Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant) Tony Mulhearn (NGA Delegate) Chairman: Councilor Derek Hatton. AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool. Sunday October 12, 7.30pm.

EAST KILBRIDE Militant Readers' Meeting Tuesday 21 October, 7.45 pm. 'The Fight against the Tories and the struggle for socialism'. Peter Taaffe—Editor of 'Militant'. Ballerup Hall, Town Centre, East Kilbride

BLYTH Militant Readers Meetings every Wed. in the Buffalo Community Centre Blyth at 7.30pm. Further details, contact Joe Cox, Tel. Cramlington 712035

PORTSMOUTH Militant Readers Meeting 'After Conference' Speakers: Cathy Wilson, delegate IOW CLP. Andy Allenby, Havant & Waterloo CLP. LP Rooms, Kingston Crescent, Portsmouth. Monday 6 October 8.00pm.

SHEFFIELD Militant Readers Meeting 'The Situation in Poland' Speaker: Brian Ingham (Militant Industrial Correspondent). Wednesday October 8th, 7.30pm. Station Hotel, The Wicker, Sheffield.

MILITANT Readers Meetings: 'The Crisis in the Paper Industry.'

1. Speaker: Dave Power (SOGAT Merseyside—personal capacity) Sunday 5 October, 8pm. Venue: Star and Garter, Fairfield St. Manchester.

2. Speaker: Eddie Fury (SOGAT Manchester—personal capacity). Thursday 9 October, 8pm. Venue: George Hotel, Bury.

3. Speaker: Dave Power (SOGAT Merseyside—Personal capacity) Friday 10 October 12.30pm. Venue: George Hotel, Bury.

Mobilising Committee Pamphlet

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

Fraternal Greetings from Camden LPYS branches. Tories Out! Labour to power on a socialist programme

Socialist Greetings to all delegates
Ron Thomas
former member of Parliament,
Bristol North West

Hackney LPYS Youth Rally
Saturday 11 October
MARCH: March against unemployment. Starts 2pm at Arcola St; N16. **March to Hackney Labour & Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane E8.** where there will be a film show and disco.
FILM: "Divide and Rule, Never." Starts 3pm. Entrance 20p.
DISCO: Reggae disco. Starts 8pm. Entrance 50p.

EAST KILBRIDE
LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS
DEMONSTRATION AND RALLY—Saturday 11 October
No to millions on the dole!
Tories out!
Labour to power on a socialist programme!
Demonstration—assemble 10 am, Civic Centre Car Park
Rally—Murray Hall, 11.30 am

Speakers:
Maurice Miller MP
Ken McMillan [East Kilbride Trades Council]
Colin Robb [East Kilbride Labour Group]
Willie Griffin [LPYS]
Bob Wylie [Militant]
Further details: Clare McGinley
33 Capelrie Drive, East Kilbride. East Kilbride 26496

Build Militant

Area	Received	% of 3rd qtr target achieved	Target 3rd qtr	Target for year
Eastern	3023		3500	5,000
East Midlands	2483		2660	3,800
Hants & IOW	2482		2730	3,900
Humberside	1114		1750	2,500
London East	4291		4340	6,200
London West	2405		3290	4,700
London South	3940		3290	4,700
Manchester & Lancs	2161		3570	5,100
Merseyside	3023		4200	6,000
Northern	3553		5110	7,300
Scotland East	1459		2240	3,200
Scotland West	2944		3500	5,000
Southern	3535		4130	5,900
South West	1799		2240	3,200
Wales East	1190		1960	2,800
Wales West	2477		2170	3,100
West Midlands	5186		6300	9,000
Yorkshire	3125		5110	7,300
Others	9240		7910	12,000
Total received	59340		70,000	100,000

TARGET FOR OCTOBER 11th £70,000 FOR YEAR-£100,000

IT'S UP TO YOU THIS WEEK £956

There is now only one week left until the end of the third quarter when we should have raised £70,000.

As you can see this week's total of £956. 65 brings us up to a total of £59,340 which is well behind target.

Are readers and supporters in your area seriously thinking of ways of raising money for the fighting fund?

Obviously the main way of raising money is through donations from the readers of our paper but there are many other ways of doing so. Social activities are a very good way of raising money. Not only do they make it easier to raise in a form of a collection but it is also a way of bringing different sections of the labour movement together.

Has one been organised in your area? Perhaps the fund raising ideas listed below may give you an idea.

From Eastern Region this week we received £161 leaving over £476 to raise. The money came from: a donation of £2.45 from Ipswich; a collection from a 'Militant' Readers' Meeting in Southend £24; a social in Huntingdon £13.50; a folk evening in Basildon £21.12; a 'Militant' Readers' Meeting in Stevenage £5.32 (with IOUs being chased up) and over £10 in paper extras. East Midlands sent in £60

By Alison Rudd

leaving over £177 to raise. This came from a 'Militant' Readers' Meeting in Mansfield £10; R Buchanan (Nottingham) £2, T. Lee, L. Keely, F Perkins and A Jones (also Nottingham) £1 each, M Eadon (Leicester) £6 plus miscellaneous items and paper extras.

We only received £10 from Hants & IOW leaving them with £248 to raise and we received nothing from Humberside this week which means they have £636 to raise.

From London East we received £35 this week including money from L McDaid (Islington) £1, M McGrath (Tower Hamlets LPYS) £1, plus extras. This means £139 to raise in one week—can you do it comrades?

London West sent in £32 this week leaving over £885 to raise. This money included Hayes Curry Night £9.50; H. Gajadharsingh (Hammersmith LPYS) £1.

London South has already reached its third quarter target but they have not given up raising until October 11th—although they only sent in £14 this week. This included £5.61 from R Andrew (Dulwich LP).

Manchester & Lancs sent in £22 this week including a 'Militant' Readers' Meeting in Wigan £1.75, a 'pennies collection' in Stockport £5.31, and N Robinson

(EETPU Stockport) £5. This leave them with £1,409 to raise.

From Merseyside we received only £15 this week leaving them with £1,177 to raise. This included £10 IOU from a recent meeting on Poland, Chester LPYS £1.13, and sale of pontoon tickets (Chester) £1.15.

Northern region sent in a total of £64 which still leaves them with £1,557 to raise. This included money from A Hare (Stockton) £2, D Cox (ISTC) £1, M McNeil (NU PE) £1; a 'Militant' Readers' Meeting in Teeside £18.04; 'John Baker's Irish Night' (Gateshead) £14, collection of pennies (also Gateshead) £11.83; plus paper extras.

Scotland East have done very well this week, sending in £115 and this leaves them with £781 to raise. This includes £3 from comrades in Dunfermline LPYS, B McCosh (Edinburgh) £1. £10 from J White (Dunfermline), P Mahow (Stirling AUEW) £1, G McGreath (also Stirling) £5, Stirling University Labour Club £76, and 'Militant' v Manifesto Group debate £2.44. Unfortunately Scotland West has not followed the example of Scotland East this week, and sent in nothing. This means they have £556 to raise.

From Southern region we received £64 leaving them with £595 to raise. This included money from a Marxist Discussion Group in Reading £16, M Hutson (Wokingham CLP) £6.50, J Mager (Brighton Trades

Council) £10, R Atkins (same) £5, J Webb (Maidstone) £1, 'Bed and Breakfast' (Gravesend) £4, and £15 from Thanet.

South West hasn't done very well at all this week only sending in £2. This leaves the with £441 to raise.

Wales East sent in £21 including £12 from L Ropke (Cardiff N LPYS) A Thompson (Cardiff GMWU) £1 and sale of cartoons copies from the paper £4.50. Wales West have already reached their third quarter target but still sent in £89. This money came from miscellaneous small donations, collections, paper extras etc.

From the West Midlands we received a magnificent £203 which still leaves them with £1,114 to raise. This came from J Davies and S O'Neal (both Selly Oak) £5 each, public meeting £19, 'party of the year' (Selly Oak £22.45), pontoon tickets £11, lifts and accommodation (Birmingham) £10.40, a 'Militant' Readers' Meeting in Birmingham £80 and a £5 donation from Nuneaton.

Yorkshire region sent in £35 including £14 from a house-warming in Bradford, sale of pontoon tickets in Leeds £1.90, and paper extras and small donations. This means they have £1,985 to raise.

Keep the donations coming in. This week's amount is still an achievement (two years ago we were only getting in a third of this per week) but we must get back on target if we wish to go forward—it's up to you!

Greetings from Llanelli LPYS
Save Steel! Save Pits!
Sack the Tories now!

Brighton Labour Party
greet conference delegates
'For a mass democratic socialist party'

SUPPORT THE CRANE DRIVERS

The Contract Plant Association [CPA] have decided to take on the crane drivers of the AUEW construction using the method of lock out.

The crane drivers have responded with the instruction for every crane driver on-shore and off to withdraw labour from Monday 29th September.

'Militant's' correspondent was invited by the Grimsby branch of the AUEW construction to report this dispute as "we can't rely on the Tory press for their coverage or support," said Ian McEwen, Branch President. "We want the Tories thrown out of office and Labour returned on a socialist programme."

"If they are picking on us, they are picking on the wrong group of men, because we know CPA are hiding behind Thatcher's skirts," said the strike committee chairman of Scunthorpe.

The crane drivers' claim is an increase in pay from £1.77 to £2.20 per hour, a sickness and injury insurance scheme, short term employment severance scheme and two days extra holiday.

The employers conceded on pay, but only gave promises for the future on other issues and no commitment over the two days extra holiday.

John Baldwin, General Secretary of AUEW cons-

By Alan Hartley

truction, in his personal capacity, wrote to branches recommending acceptance as this "is the best possible deal at this time," and asked for voting to be recorded within seven days so as to have the offer backdated.

However, the whole business is unacceptable to the men, particularly as John Baldwin put his own personal views on paper, which the employers got hold of and used as propaganda to get the men to accept. This angered many of the men and led the strike committee chairman to point out that John Baldwin does not make the policies of this union, but is entitled to his own personal points of view.

A work to rule was imposed, (ie. no overtime being worked) in pursuance of the claim.

The employers' plea was that the industry couldn't operate on a 40 hour week and the men were not fulfilling their contracts. Lay-offs, suspensions and lock-outs followed in many areas of the country; 400-500 men in the North-East-

ern division were sacked.

The employers blamed 'Militant' and agitators amongst the men for the situation. But as the strike committee chairman said, "if you stand up for yourself today, then you are a red under the bed. Well, I must be a red under the bed then. Our EC is 100% behind us and we're only carrying out our EC instructions."

This situation led inevitably to strike action on the part of CPA crane drivers. The Scunthorpe lads have been picketing now for four weeks, using flying pickets from Peterborough, Walsall Birmingham, Kings Lynn, Ipswich and throughout the Lincolnshire area.

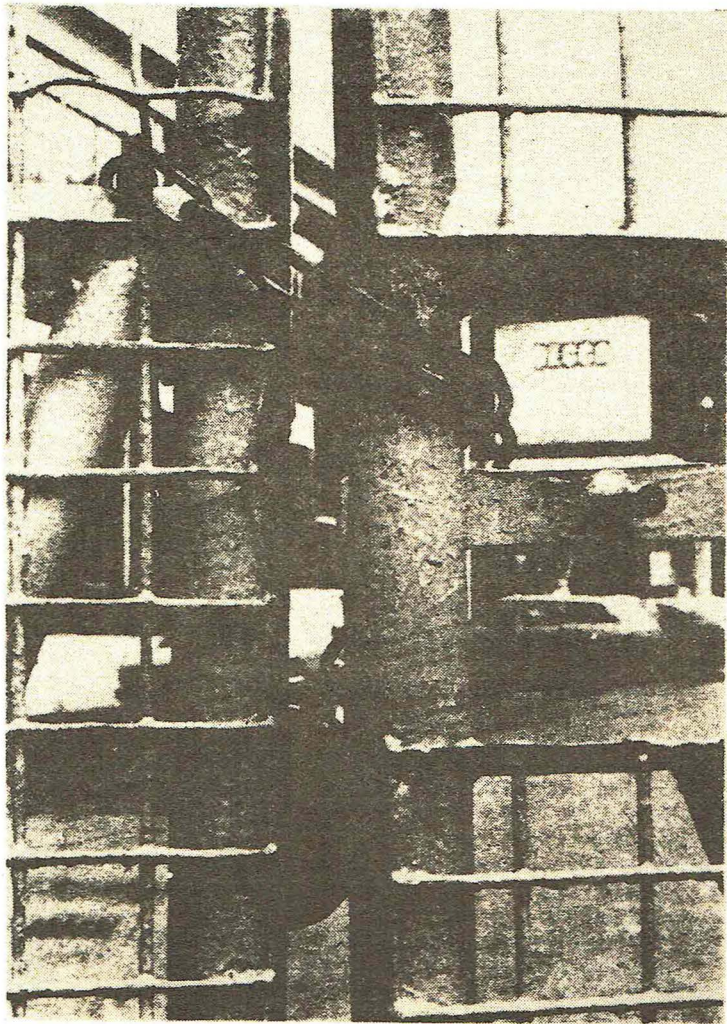
So far the support has been excellent—Humber Bridge workers are giving £5 per week to keep them going. Last week saw £2,247 raised on the Bridge. Lindsay Oil refinery sites have also arranged for collections. Volunteers from the Bridge are taking time off to help with flying pickets.

Branch Secretary, Alan Harrup, read out the new instructions from headquarters of a national strike of all crane drivers in Britain, on-shore and off, in support of full re-instatement, the continuity of employment for all those locked out, suspended or laid off.

"You all know what's happening in the Gulf at the present time; well if they come out on the oil rigs (North Sea Oil), that will really give Thatcher something to worry about" said the strike committee chairman.

Letters of support and donations to: Crane Drivers Strike committee, AUEW House, Fernial Gate, Sheffield S1 3HE

Racal Decca



Management padlock the gates at Racal Decca. So fearful were they of the thought of the workers getting into the site and occupying it, they dumped the workers' lockers out onto the street rather than let them in to collect their belongings

With ruthless efficiency, the management of Racal Decca moved quickly to stop any worker resistance to closure plans for their Battersea, South London site, by locking out the 200-strong workforce over the weekend 14-15 September.

Over that weekend, the management moved in, removed any essential equipment, brought in a full array of security men and guard dogs and, when workers arrived for work on Monday refused to let them in—even to collect their personal belongings! Some workers who had left their cars at the factory were not allowed to retrieve them.

Workers were told to return the following Friday to pick up their severance pay and collect their personal effects.

That day saw a sorry sight. Women workers some of whom had given over

By Bob McKee

(Battersea LP)

twenty years of service to the Decca company were totally humiliated when forced to empty their lockers in the street! So afraid was the management to let the workers in, that they moved the lockers out of the factory onto the pavement. So while workers stood there and waited to collect cheques shoved through a slit in the door, police skulked in nearby sheds and garages waiting for 'trouble'.

This disgusting method of treating a hard working bunch of employees, mostly women and mostly black, seems typical of the Racal Decca company. Racal recently took over Decca's navigational equipment division, which makes radar for ships etc. They want to devote resources to military equipment and so, despite

promises to the contrary at the time of takeover, announced the closure of its civil production at Battersea.

This was not a closure by a loss-making company. Racal is the fastest growing company in the UK. These events confirm that there is no better argument to save jobs than the demand to bring into public ownership rapacious and profitable capitalist companies like Racal, so that they can be run by the organisations of the working class, and through a general plan of production, produce useful products and not products of war for profit.

'THE CASE FOR THE 35-HOUR WEEK'

A Militant pamphlet Available from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Price 30p (inc. Post)

YS TAKE ON THE 'MAIL'

The Birmingham 'Evening Mail' is a particularly nasty variety of local rag. This week, for example, there have been two items published campaigning for T. Duffy in the AUEW elections.

Yet these same gentlemen who own and control the 'Evening Mail', would throw up their arms in horror if it was suggested that they devote equal space for Bob Wright to state his case.

When Derek Robinson was sacked by British Leyland, this very same paper did not open its pages to debate by the parties con-

cerned, but instead printed a full page of articles attacking Robinson's personal life.

In past years, they have even tried to tell Trades Council delegates who to vote for in their elections.

It is because of articles like this that the Birmingham LPYS are mounting a campaign against the 'Mail' who incidentally have shares in the local radio station and own Birmingham's largest newspaper chain to make sure that their monopoly of information is complete.

Our campaign will include a mass picket of the 'Evening Mail' building and a public meeting on the press. Already, several trade union branches have expressed an interest in the campaign, one T&GWU branch alone has ordered 4,000 of our leaflets for distribution to its members.

By Richard Evans
(Sparbrook LPYS)

Birmetals

"Trade unionists report here. Scabs over the road.", is the inscription on the hut christened 'Mick's pad' outside Birmetals main gate in Birmingham.

When the staff and management scabs left at 4.30pm on Friday they were greeted with jeers and cries of 'scab' from the 40 pickets on the gates. A 24-hour, 7-day week picket is being maintained to ensure that no machinery or equipment is moved off the site.

However, one scab wagon went to the lengths of removing his number plates to get through the line!

There is a colourful array of placards and notices displaying the worker's case at both entrances saying '700 sacked and no money'. Men who spent a lifetime making profits for the bosses have been callously

despatched to the dole.

Although these workers were sacked five months ago, it is only in the last five weeks that a picket has been mounted. The workers blame the leadership of their unions, particularly the AUEW and EETPU, whose attitude seemed to be "leave it all to us and our legal boys."

These workers are also very angry about the bad publicity in the media. Birmingham's 'Evening Mail' threw a fit when the Labour council loaned the use of a derelict house for their strike headquarters.

Financial support is vital, as many pickets cannot afford the bus fare from home to the line and back again. Send to J.A. Glasford JSSC SEC, 78 Longbridge Lane, Birmingham B1 2TW.

St Benedicts

On Tuesday September 9, a fleet of private ambulances broke through the picket line at St. Benedicts Hospital and so began the removal of the patients and the defeat of the 10 month occupation.

The occupation was smashed by the heavy handed tactics of the AHA and the police. The health authority took out court injunctions against some workers at the hospital, union full-time officials and local supporters, in its efforts to weaken effective picketing.

It was ably supported by the police who limited the picket to just two people, taking full advantage of the employment act. 23 arrests were made during the final two weeks of the occupation.

The battle has been lost. There are many lessons to

be learnt, not least of all that those making the cuts, in conjunction with the police, are prepared to go to extremes to achieve their ends. Another major question that will be discussed is the mobilisation of the wider labour movement in the fight to keep hospitals and other services running. [These issues will be taken up in a later issue.]

For the time being the Battersea and Wandsworth Trades Council, with NUPE and COHSE, have issued an appeal for financial support for the arrested pickets. Rush donations to Battersea & Wandsworth Trades Council, 19 Auckland Road, London SW11. Cheques made payable to Battersea and Wandsworth Trades Council/St Benedict's Defence Fund.

Stop the bosses plans

The Lagers' dispute at the Texaco oil refinery, Pembroke, has finally come to a head.

The main contractors, Snemprogetti, are refusing to employ trained G&MWU lagers, now on the dole despite the fact that over 200 lagers are required on the site immediately. Instead, Snemprogetti have taken on trainee lagers.

At a site meeting a few weeks ago, it was agreed that no trainees would be allowed on the site while the experienced lagers remain-

By Alec Thraves

(AUEW, Texaco Oil Refinery, Pembroke)

ed on the dole.

The members rightly see the introduction of trainees as a move to undermine the strength and unity of the craftsmen, and are therefore fully supporting the lagers by refusing to cross their picket lines and demanding

the removal of the trainees from the site.

The workers understand the implications of allowing trainee lagers onto the site as being the thin end of the wedge, where the employers, if they get away with it, will try to bring in on future sites trainee pipefitters, millwrights, carpenters, etc. Rather, the workers are defending the future of lagers by this action. If the bosses get their way, new workers will only be trained up to join their brothers on the dole.

Management, the media and unfortunately some full time trade union officials have attempted to divide the 4,000 workforce by deliberately confusing the dispute with that of the Isle of Grain.

The lagers are not getting £20 per hour as the press and TV implied, but are prepared to accept the common craft rate and even be represented by stewards who are signatories to the local agreement.

It is perhaps more than coincidental that Snem-

progetti have decided to bring this dispute to a head in the middle of a national crane strike (see page 14) which has forced almost 1,000 workers to be laid off at the Pembroke site.

However, despite all the difficulties, we must defend the right of the unemployed lagers to work on this site and to remain in their own union. Introduction of trainees is an attempt to divide the workforce and should be opposed by every trade unionist at the Texaco site.

in brief

When management at the Susannah Kent garments factory in Pelaw, Tyne and Wear, announced its closure 80 workers immediately climbed in through the factory window and occupied the place. They are staying there until management guarantee to restore their jobs. Local Labour Party and LPYS branches are supporting the occupation and raising money. Send donations and messages of support to M Clifford, 9 Hatfield Road, Hebburn, Tyne and Wear. Full report next week.

The Assay office in Birmingham has announced 30 more redundancies. Earlier this year they announced 48 redundancies, and the workforce went on strike for 10 weeks.

Ind Coope have sent 175 workers at their brewery in Burton on Trent redundancy notices. Management blame fall in demand for their beer.

Scottish firemen are fully supporting their union's executive council's decision to stop any government interference in pay or manning levels. Over 600 firemen attended a meeting in Perth last week to discuss the coming fight. They are particularly angered by a government Green Paper proposing reductions in fire cover. Chairman of the Scottish FBU, Bill Craig, told the 'Militant', "Professional firemen have not been involved in the discussions leading up to the Green Paper, yet the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food were consulted. They know as much about fire fighting as I know about deep sea trawling! We want a public enquiry, no decisions behind closed doors. How many more Woolworths, Sher Brothers etc must firemen have to tolerate?" The firemen have not ruled out strike action.

A toy factory in Pontypool has announced closures. 136 workers employed by the firm, Palitoy, will lose their jobs.

Over a thousand workers at the Seddon Atkinson truck factory in Oldham are now on a one day week.

Ferrymasters are to close their haulage depot in Desborough, Northants. 60 jobs will be lost.

The Port of London Authority say they want to axe a further 650 jobs this year.

King Henry Pies



A mass picket at King Henry Pies—join them on 3 October

Photo: Stephen Willet

The grim necessity of the struggle for union recognition at King Henry Pies was brought home last week. A former union member who has continued to work during the strike suffered a serious hand injury.

The Bakers' Union is prepared to take up her case. As union organiser Bill Harrington pointed out: "Despite the fact that Mrs Bourke has been working throughout the strike we are not churlish at denying her assistance at a time like this."

"I would hope that the others who have been crossing our picket line, will realise that their working conditions including safety are best protected by joining the union and helping us to

By John Hunt

force the employer to grant trade union recognition."

This generous attitude on the part of the union can be contrasted with the bloody mindedness of the firm's Managing Director, Derek Colins. He has pre-empted a break-down in negotiations by declaring that he will reinstate only eight of the workers: they should draw straws to see who goes back!

The strikers remain determined to stay out till they win recognition and the reinstatement of all 16 of those who wish to return.

The causes of the 11 trade unionists arrested on the

picket line last month has been adjourned until December 11th and 12th and there are plans for a big demonstration outside Manchester Crown Court, involving the local trades councils.

A mass picket is being held this Friday 3rd October from 6.30 am, and all trade unionists and Labour Party members are urged to attend. The key to victory remains the choking off of all supplies and outlets to this scab firm which has a horrible track record of failing to prevent the mutilation of its workers.

Support the picket and send donations and useful information to the Bakers Union district offices, Room 4, George House, 30 Dudley Road, Manchester M16.

BOWATERS

The Mersey Mill closure poses a threat to print workers throughout Britain and as such needs to be fought on a national scale as well as locally.

We in the Merseyside and District branch of SOGAT are fully aware of the consequences of the closure becoming reality.

It could destroy the strength, financially and morally of our branch; this is why we adopted the resolution moved by myself and Jim Wilson, outlining a strategy of opposition to the closure (see recent issues of 'Militant').

The management proposals, calling for over 40 redundancies in the Bowater fibre container plant underline the vital need for this policy to be put into action without delay, and for the need for all workers at the Ellesmere Port site to be involved in the fightback.

The disasters at Conssett, Shotton, BL Speke and

Tillotsons, must not, and cannot be allowed to be repeated. If the Mill goes, then no print or paper workers job can be safe.

We must rely on our own collective strength, and not upon any 'joint approach' with management or the CBI in the fight to save jobs.

Bill Keys is leading a deputation to 10 Downing Street on Friday regarding the crisis in the paper-making industry. But we in the Merseyside branch (and elsewhere) should have no illusions about the sort of 'help' we can expect from this government.

We must instead, be ready to give our fullest support to the workers at Mersey Mill,—in actively opposing the closure through trade union strength in action.

Also, we must involve the trade union movement throughout the printing and publishing industry, and support the statement of Bill Keys in taking national industrial action in fighting for jobs at Ellesmere Port.

By Dave Power

AUEW YOUTH

The future for engineering workers in the AUEW seems bleak with new plant closures being announced daily. With no real fight-back from the present leadership of the AUEW, frustration and anger is mounting.

Only clear socialist policies will show the way forward for youth in engineering.

Throughout the industry though, many demands must be made for better rates of pay for apprentices, shorter training periods, larger intake of apprentices, and better working conditions.

The fight to increase youth involvement within their trade unions must also be taken up in a positive manner:

- ★ Youth committees in every workplace
- ★ Youth representatives on all shop stewards' committees
- ★ No restrictions on ap-

prentices taking part in union activities

★ Trades council youth committees

★ Youth schools and sections in all unions

★ A TUC youth conference of at least two days, with elected delegates and the right to move and agree resolutions

★ An elected TUC national youth committee with the right to campaign around its own policies.

Also support the national assembly of young engineering workers titled 'the way forward for youth in engineering' at Lecture Room 1, Digoeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. Sunday 23 November 11am to 3pm. Speakers: BOB WRIGHT [Assistant General Secretary, AUEW], JON INGHAM [convenor, National Campaign for a Fighting AUEW Leadership]

Tandy's

"Everything's been against us, even the weather," the pickets at Tandy's admit, but they won't be beaten by the company, the scabs, or the weather.

Eleven new 'workers' (the real workers have another name for them) have been taken on in the last fortnight. The rate is now apparently £1.20 per hour, nearly twice what some were

By Pete McNally

(Ladywood LP)

earning before the dispute. These scabs have no conscience about accepting the benefits of trade union action.

The pickets have been arranging their own 'benefits' however, with a recent disco raising over £40 for the

Defence Fund. Appeal sheets have been sent to many local factories, and personal visits by pickets have met with an encouraging response.

Those still working are having their loyalty to the firm tested. Many of the scabs are doing nearly the same hours as the pickets. They have been seen going in at 8.00am and not leaving

until 7.00pm.

Some are so conscientious or scared of the scorn of the pickets, that they don't even come out for lunch. Those who do come out are packed tightly into cars for the daily rush to the pub. They're no longer welcome in the pub they used to use, however, so they have to go elsewhere to drown their sorrows.

More help on the picket

line would be greatly appreciated, as a 12 hour shift in the open is harder than work.

The next mass picket is planned for October 6th and must be given full support, especially by the T&GWU District committee which covers the area, and other local trades unionists. The pickets are hoping that as the Managing Director has

not been seen since the last mass picket (2 weeks ago) they can get rid of him for good next time.

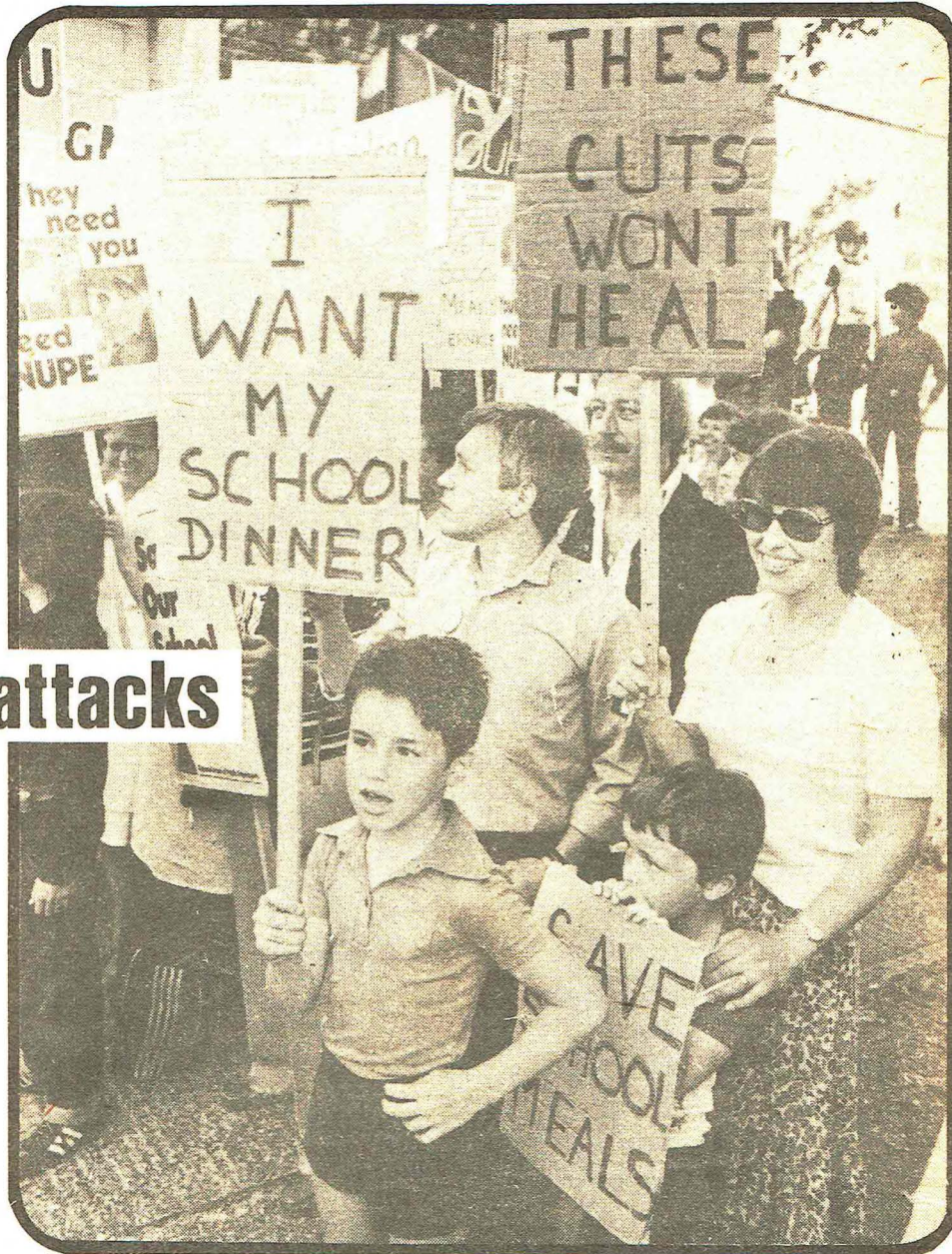
Donations to cover legal costs of the 5 pickets arrested so far to: Janet Marsh, Tandy Defence Fund, 3 Park St, Wednesbury, West Midlands.

Give Tory Axemen The Chop

Dorset school children and parents demonstrate against school meal cuts

By Jeremy Birch
 (Selly Oak Labour Party)

Photo: MILITANT



Councils must mobilise to resist attacks

Not content with ruthlessly cutting vital public services for the old, schoolchildren and the needy, the Tories are trying to force Labour local authorities to do their dirty work for them.

Environment Secretary Michael Heseltine has now financially penalised those councils valiantly attempting to retain their services intact.

Councils collectively are to suffer to the tune of £200m. But 13 Labour-controlled 'hardened criminals' have been singled out for special attention. Camden will be 'fined' £5m, and nearby Islington will receive £2½m less than it expected.

Labour's environment spokesman Roy Hattersley is encouraging the 'local government 13' to challenge Heseltine's arbitrary selection in the High Court.

The government, though, is determined to slash public spending. As local authorities account for a quarter of all expenditure, they are in the front line. Central government provides half of local

authority revenue through the Rate Support Grant, costing £10 billion a year.

The current Local Government Bill will confirm Heseltine's power to pick out particular high spending authorities. The essential government grants will no longer be based on individual council's past level of spending, i.e. how much councillors themselves feel necessary to meet local needs. They will be assessed on what the Tory government considers an authority requires.

Particularly at risk will be those councils which have spent more, to raise the standard of life for those they represent. The Tories will not see free facilities for the unemployed or direct labour departments as necessary expenditure, when calculating the block grant for a socialist council.

With the assumption of

these extra powers and the onslaught against the 13 councils, the Tories are closing the loopholes for Labour authorities to avoid cutting services.

In the past Labour councils have raised rates to provide better facilities in their areas, but now they are being forced to contemplate increasing the rate burden just to meet the deficit created by the Tories' reductions in government grants.

Already the average rate bill for a Camden household, where the council has tried to avoid cuts, is £404 for a year. But even if the massive rate increases needed to offset the deficit were desirable, the government will come down hard on councils seeking this way out.

Rate rises

Councils increasing rates will be deemed to be overspending and will incur an extra cut in their grant, the next time round.

The authorities with the best record for providing and defending services will be on a treadmill. Probably in the end when rate rises have reached intolerable levels, they will have to impose cuts as well, and sell off council assets, as Camden reluctantly has already.

BEAT TORIES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

to the "let's all unite" theme. But conference did reflect a genuine feeling for unity, of the Labour Party and the wider Labour movement in the fight against the Tories. But not unity at any price. Those in the Labour leadership, like Michael Foot and Denis Healey, who attempted a defence of the last Labour government's economic policies, received an extremely cool response from delegates.

Meaningful unity can only be around a programme that could really tackle the problems of ordinary people. A number of delegates took this up and made it clear that by abandoning socialist policies, the last Labour government had actually begun the cuts and attacks on working class living standards.

Jim Callaghan's somewhat half-hearted justification of the last Labour government, and his calls for practical, statesman-like policies, together with another appeal for "Party unity," was received more as a farewell speech of a retiring party leader, than as an indication of any real support for the ideas that he was putting forward.

Even on pay policy, the resolution moved by the Union of Communication Workers openly calling for a Labour government to adopt a new incomes policy, was passed, if at all, with only a very narrow majority on a show of hands. A card vote would almost certainly have led to its rejection, but the chairman refused and quickly moved on to the next business.

The weakness of the right wing was exposed in their desperate speeches, particularly in the meeting of the

Campaign for a Labour Victory. There, the gang of three, William Rodgers, David Owen, and Shirley Williams, reinforced by other right wingers like Terry Duffy and Frank Chapple, launched an almost hysterical attack on the left of the Party and notably on the 'Militant'

It is clear from the debates so far this year that the movement of the Party is still to the left. The support for left wing policies has been strengthened, and the rank and file of the Party are burning with impatience for action against the Tory government. More and more, Party members will be looking to the idea that a new Labour government must from the very start take hold of the economy, bringing into public ownership the banks, financial institutions and the 200 or so major companies, and banishing the horrors of Toryism for good.

Hauling the Tory government through the Tory courts is unlikely to stem the tide. Nor is appealing to the Tory House of Lords not to ratify the Local Government Bill. Even though Heseltine by penalising particular councils is utilising the terms of the Bill before it becomes law.

A nationwide battle against the cuts, and against increasing rates, could bring the Tories to their knees. How could they continue to chop government grants faced with organised opposition from Labour councils, backed by local authority workers and working people as a whole?

The Industrial Relations Act was dropped when the opposition became too exten-

sive. A co-ordinated campaign against the government's policies would put a question mark over whether the Tories could even stay in office.

Industrial action

Just one Labour council making a stand and urging others to unite with it, could lead the way. But it could not be left just to the councillors. They would have to prepare by meetings, leaflets, etc, for industrial action by council employees and other workers as soon as council money is blocked or

councillors removed from office.

Like Poplar in the 1920s the local Labour Party would have to organise a whole community against the Tories.

The government believes it can pick off defiant councils, and implement its monetarist methods without real opposition, at the same time letting Labour councillors take the blame.

There is no alternative but to take on the Conservatives, while preparing for a new Labour government that with socialist economic policies can restore cutbacks, and dramatically improve services through a vast increase in public spending.

SRI LANKA-STOP PRESS

The Sri Lankan Union leaders freed on bail last month, appeared in court on 30 September and were charged with various offences. Their cases come up on 10 October. Labour movement protests in their support must continue.

Send protests to: Sri Lanka High Commission, 13 Hyde Park Gardens, London W.2. Copies [with donations and messages of support] to: Wesley Muthiah, 19 Hawthorn Avenue, London N.13. Campaign to Defend Trade Union Rights in Sri Lanka, 32 Hollydown Way, London E.11.

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