

# Militant

By-election  
Campaigns

—see page 3

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR AND YOUTH

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# Speke workers say: FIGHT THE CLOSURES!

## THIS WEEK:

DUNDEE  
centre page  
feature

MERSEYSIDE  
page 5 feature

Cambridge  
Economic  
Review

Greece  
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US Miners

500,000 workers have been on the dole for six months. Another 300,000 have had no job for over a year.

Mass long term unemployment, the nightmare of the 1930s, is returning and, as it does, the hope and aspirations of workers throughout Britain are being crushed, especially the hopes of the young.

On present trends up to 250,000 school leavers will be unable to find work this summer.

Britain is rapidly becoming an industrial wasteland. The capitalist class who control industry in Britain have embarked on a spree of wanton destruction. Factories stand idle, machines are rusting beyond repair and factories are closed—all simply to maximise the profitability of this parasitic class.

By Brian Ingham

No area has been immune from this mindless sabotage. But Merseyside with its famous fighting traditions has been singled out for special attack.

The British capitalists no doubt calculate that a "victory" for them on Merseyside will be a savage blow to the resistance of workers generally. A blizzard of redundancy notices has rained down on Merseyside.

Michael Edwardes, the capitalist on loan to British Leyland from the Chloride group, callously announced in February that the Speke plant in Liverpool was to close with the loss of 3,000 jobs. Since then GEC, Lucas, Birds Eye, Spillers and Northern Ship Repairs, to name just a few, have all joined the campaign against the Merseyside industry and the Merseyside workers.

But Merseyside workers have refused to submit to the onslaught of the capitalists. Already the workers at Western Shiprepairers have announced that they will fight the closure of their yard. And last weekend the 2,000 Leyland workers from the threatened Speke plant assembled in the Liverpool boxing stadium and gave an overwhelming endorsement to the decision of their shop stewards to fight.



Spillers Bakery, London. See also interviews on pages 5 and 14

Photo: Laurence Sparham (IFL)

## SUPPORT THE BAKERS

The Executive of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union has given an important lead in the fight against redundancies in the baking industry. The whole membership of the Bakers Union is being called to ban overtime and to refuse to handle Spillers flour until some means is found to save 4,000

threatened Spillers jobs. **The action by the bakers must be vigorously supported by the whole labour and trade union movement!**

The action was agreed unanimously by the executive and one executive member, Joe Marino, told 'Militant': "Unless the employers give way and bring forward pro-

posals for 4,000 new jobs in the industry then the ban will be starting this Sunday.

"All the indications are that the ban will be well supported by the members. If there are any factories that do not support the ban, then they will be picketed and we will try to stop materials coming in and out. The full-time organisers will be withdrawn and put onto picket duty if necessary.

"We recognise that we are not likely to get Spillers themselves to maintain the jobs, but we want alternative employment. We want the National Enterprise Board to step in to take over the threatened factories—so that

it would be a step towards the nationalisation of the whole industry. As far as we are concerned, the problem is not confined to Spillers, it is a problem for the whole of the baking industry."

The big bakery monopolies have for too long played fast and loose with the jobs and wages of their workers, as well as the prices to the consumer.

★ Full support to the Bakers!

★ No redundancies!  
★ Share out the work with no loss of pay!

★ Nationalise the baking monopolies under workers' control, with compensation on the basis of need only!

NEXT WEEK: May Day issue

Historical: Largo Caballero  
Life on the Railways

Nuclear energy  
Zimbabwe  
South Africa





# Militant

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## NO TO PHASE FOUR!

The main finding of a survey by the Low Pay Unit over the last week was that more families are going to fall into the poverty trap, even despite the Budget. Whereas last November, 78,000 families with children were subject to a marginal tax rate of 80p or more in the pound, that figure will increase to 86,000 next year.

The recently published Earnings Survey for 1977 showed that millions of workers still relied upon overtime to achieve a living wage: overtime pay, in fact, accounted for nearly 14 per cent of average male manual earnings. For the mass of workers, the Budget handouts have been niggardly. A pound or two in the weekly wage in no way compensates for the decline in living standards over the last three years and, in any case, will be quickly swallowed up by increased charges for electricity, fares and so on.

It is against this background that Moss Evans, the new General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, has come out against a new Phase Four of the Social Contract. Undoubtedly, Moss is reflecting the pressure from his own union members when he says: "It will be up to them [the members] to decide whether they are acting responsibly or not, and not our executive, because we are not going to lay down any norms or percentages for them to follow."

But at the same time, the government is preparing to put enormous pressure on the TUC leaders, using the threat of a Tory election victory as a pistol at their heads, to get them to accept a 5-7 per cent wage norm. No matter how the government may try to dress up a Phase Four, for example by promising help for the lower paid, it will still boil down to universal cuts in workers' living standards.

The government are once again preparing to use cash limits in the public sector and official government contracts in the private sector to hold wages back. Unfortunately, some TUC leaders are opening the door to the government plans by their own ambiguous references to "responsible bargaining" as if it were common for trade unionists to put forward wild and outrageous claims.

The leaders of the GMWU and NALGO are pushing forward a collective policy for the public sector which is more and more being interpreted as meaning that there should be a controlling mechanism of some kind: this could become an incomes policy by another name. Sid Weighall, NUR leader, has openly come out for a Phase

Four, falling completely for the Tory argument that "the weak will go to the wall."

The TUC leaders have been forced by their own rank and file to give a verbal and public "No" to Phase Four. However, that position will become untenable in the coming months unless there is an active campaign involving the whole of the TUC against wage restraint. Moss Evans said that "We cannot accept that wages in isolation were responsible for the problems of inflation. They had only a marginal effect."

In fact, Marx explained that, other things being equal, wages do not determine prices, but merely the share of the wealth produced by the labour of the working class. If wages are held down, then profits, the unpaid labour of the working class, will go up. That this is so is indicated by the profits of the big firms which leapt up 50 per cent last year because of incomes policy.

All that the sacrifices of the working class have meant is that there has been a bonanza of profits for the capitalists. The extra surplus extracted from the labour of the working class has been squandered by big business and not gone into vital industrial investments.

The policy put forward by Moss Evans must be the starting point for a campaign inside the TUC itself. The TUC must come out clearly and unambiguously against any further wage restraint, for an across the board rise of £15 a week and for a national minimum wage of £65 a week.

Above all, those TUC leaders who seriously oppose any further incomes policy must campaign for an alternative economic strategy. In the public sector, especially, there is no way that 'shop-floor' pressure alone will alter the policy of the government. The TUC must be pushed to campaign for the restoration of the public expenditure cuts of the last few years and for socialist policies to be carried out by the government.

The Labour leaders may hold out the threat of a Tory election victory to try to intimidate the leaders of the trade unions, but there cannot be any doubt that a new round of sacrifices and 'belt-tightening' will do enormous damage to Labour's prospects.

On the other hand, if the Labour government and the TUC were to co-operate on the basis of socialist policies, then they could offer to workers an improvement in their living standards, and that would mean a certain Labour victory in the coming general election.

## OPPOSE BANS ON THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

On Tuesday 11th April, the National Council of Civil Liberties held a lobby of Parliament and a meeting to protest against the two month ban on marches in London which was imposed on February 24th.

### 1936 Act

The ban was initiated, supposedly to curb the violence threatened by the presence of the National Front in Ilford during the by-election, but it has been

used to stop all marches by the labour and trade union movement.

The power to ban marches was last used in 1963 to prevent a march by the trade union movement. Bans before that were also used mainly against the labour movement, although the purpose of the 1936 Public Order Act was supposed to be to curb the activities of the fascists.

Indeed, in 1950, the May Day march was covered by a ban and people who attempted to organise an alternative

rally were convicted and imprisoned for incitement to take part in a banned procession.

### Resolutions

Trade union branches and CLPs should pass resolutions opposing generalised bans on marches and should send copies to the Home Secretary and to the NEC Home Police sub-committee.

### John Reid

(Kensington LPYS)

# SOUTHERN REGIONAL LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

## CAMPAIGNING POLICIES DEMANDED

In his address to the Southern Region Labour Party Conference, outlining the crisis of capitalism, and explaining the need for socialist policies, Tony Benn said to loud cheers that "when the young militants in my constituency speak on the ideas of socialism, it is the old age pensioners that cheer the loudest!" He added "if we are returning to the old ideas of the movement, that is because all the old problems are still with us."

This provided the answer to those one or two delegates who chose to attack the 'Militant' rather than participate in the debate on the important questions that were before Conference.

Perhaps the liveliest debate was on the question of racialism and fascism. Conference decided to sponsor the Anti-Nazi League, although every delegate that spoke in favour pointed out that this must not be at the expense of the labour movement putting forward its own socialist programme, and that the ANL was not an alternative to the labour movement organising its own campaign—the only force that can defeat the racialists and fascists.

This view was re-inforced when conference went on to pass unanimously an emergency resolution that called on the labour movement in the Region to initiate vigorous anti-racialist campaigns.

### Against Cuts

Conference reaffirmed its opposition to cuts in public expenditure and passed an emergency resolution supporting the occupation of the nursery premises in Oxford. Criticising the executive for its failure to pursue a campaign against the cuts as it was instructed to do by last year's conference. A composite was passed demanding that they start a campaign

now. Conference also demanded a crash house-building programme in a resolution moved by Wokingham CLP that called for the nationalisation of the building and allied supply industries as well as the banks and insurance companies.

The need for a campaign in support of Labour's policy on the nationalisation of the banks and insurance companies was spelt out in a resolution from Reading South. This was carried despite the opposition of the Regional Executive Committee.

The Militant meeting this year was well attended: after a long session 43 turned up to take part in a debate around the programme of the paper.

As one delegate attending one of our meetings for the first time put it:

### Minimum Wage

"You seem to be the only ones putting up a fight at the moment. Your ideas are right. I work in the hotel industry and on my wages I can't make ends meet so demand for a £65 minimum wage is essential. I was disillusioned by some of the things said at the conference today, but attending this meeting and meeting people like yourselves I shall go back refreshed and ready to continue the struggle."

£21 was collected for the Fighting Fund plus £15 from a raffle organised by Bracknell supporters.

By Ray Apps



### NORTHERN IRELAND: Workers to oppose Paisley

On June 8th there will be a by-election for one of the council seats in Ballymena, Northern Ireland. The by-election will be a crucial one for the town because it is the only council actually controlled by the Paisleyite Democratic Unionist Party whose councillor for the area died recently. The balance of support on the council is such that this seat could decide who controls the council.

Last December in the same area ('area C') the Labour and Trade Union Co-ordinating Group fielded a candidate who polled 6 per cent of the vote and the Group have taken a decision to fight this election also. At present, the LTUCG are organising a series of meetings of their activists to discuss the campaign, and further details will be carried in a future issue of 'Militant'.

By Peter Hunt

### SELLERS' RALLY:

## 16-page paper a huge success!

The Militant Sellers' rally held last weekend was a tremendous success. The developments of the new 16-page paper and its enormous impact were all discussed.

### Industrial News

Congratulations were given to the editorial board especially in regard to the extra international and industrial coverage. Seller after seller told of successes in selling the new paper. Hundreds of new readers have been gained in the past few weeks with new sales in factories and on estates now firmly established.

In Handsworth, Birmingham, there were now at least

30 papers sold by just a few comrades in street sales every week. Some of these new readers eagerly becoming sellers. On a housing estate in Chesterfield, nearly 30 papers were sold in a very short time. The number would have been higher but the comrades sold out!

We have received many details of plans to continue building the sales of the sixteen-page Militant. With the enthusiasm being shown, our ideas and socialist programme can reach even more workers. It's just what they're looking for!

By Janice Dale





Inside the NF meeting



All Lambeth photos: Andrew Wiard (Report)

## LAMBETH CENTRAL:

# LPYS & PNP Day of Action

**The Lambeth Central By-election throws into stark relief many political issues.**

Fought in a constituency including much of Brixton, with its large black population, it represents a test-case for the newly prominent racist line of the Tories as well as for the fascists of the National Front. In an area blighted by urban decay the Labour Party is on trial for its willingness and capacity to really offer a better future to working people.

Against this background the PNP (Peoples' National Party of Jamaica) Youth and the Labour Party Young Socialists held a day of action on Saturday to take the socialist policies of Labour's youth out on to the streets. The organisation of an NF "public" meeting in the afternoon of the same day meant that the whole day of action assumed the complexion of an anti-Nazi mobilisation.

At 10.30, 150 young workers and students from the ranks of the LPYS and PNP together with older trade unionists and Labour Party members assembled, and contingents were quickly dispatched to visit various parts of the constituency. All activities went very well with the comrades determined not

merely to preach against the NF but to discuss with passers-by the merits of a socialist programme capable of tackling unemployment and bad housing.

One young unemployed member of Battersea LPYS said: "I have been canvassing for the Labour Party and been told to keep politics out of it—just stick down a tick or a cross! As far as I am concerned this is real canvassing and I would come out seven nights a week to do it. The YS has educated me and the labour movement as a whole has the task of educating the working class." Asked if he felt that the LPYS material would go down well on the dole queues he replied:

"Definitely, because it says exactly why the blacks aren't to blame and gives a way forward."

### NF Meeting

At 12.45 the LPYS and the PNP groups reassembled in central Brixton for a brief meeting, addressed by John Tilley, the Labour Candidate, John Bulaitis, London NC member for the LPYS and Bob Lee, of the PNP Youth.

After this meeting the comrades made their way to the school at which the NF were to hold their meeting. There LPYS and PNP members joined with members of the Anti-Nazi League.

Again, the NF thugs en-

joyed the presence of a gigantic police presence, reported to number 5000: an eloquent testimony to the inability of the NF to defend themselves. The "public" meeting was restricted to those whom the police and the NF decided were "safe".

To test the "public" character of the meeting members of the Anti-Nazi League sought admittance to the meeting. The NF goons selected those who would not be allowed in—and admitted the remainder. Inside the 30 or so anti-Fascists were brutally set upon by the NF thugs.

A tenant on the estate in which the school used by the NF was situated was watching

the pickets from her balcony. She said: "My neighbour supports the NF and she told how they were going to canvas and have a public meeting and really drum up support. But all we've seen today has been police. Without the police this meeting could not have taken place. Even my neighbour says that now."

### LPYS Boost

One West Indian woman told last week of two episodes that she was involved in, one with the NF and one with the Tories. Both told her that "she'd got it all wrong" as far as the recent immigration report was concerned. "It wasn't her that they were

talking about." Her answer—(apart from the unprintable!) will be to vote Labour next Thursday the 20th April.

Many names were collected for Lambeth Central LPYS and the day of action was a huge boost for them. It was not a climax but a beginning, showing how the PNP and the LPYS will unite in future to combat racism and argue the socialist case.

On this basis Lambeth Central and all campaigning LPYS branches can become a mass expression of the aspirations of working class youth.

**Cheryl Southern**  
(Lambeth Central LPYS)  
and **Paul Copping**  
(Battersea LPYS)



LPYS members out in Lambeth

## GARSCADDEN:

# Labour Victory

**Labour's victory in the Garscadden by-election was a crushing blow to the SNP who saw this as their first major opportunity since 1974 to make a real inroad into the industrial working class in the west of Scotland.**

While welcoming this Labour triumph, it is necessary to analyse results such as this and the implications involved.

While Donald Dewar, the Labour candidate, had a comfortable majority, the percentage share of the total vote was down by 5.5% from 1974, so where did the lost 3,000 votes go?

1,100 of these can be accounted for in terms of the total vote received by the SLP, CP and SWP, the vast majority of which were certainly from Labour voters registering their protest at the right wing policies of the Labour government over the last four years.

However, Labour's other lost votes do not appear to have gone to the SNP whose vote was down on its 1974 figure. Nor did it go to the Tories whose increased vote came from Liberals who didn't field a candidate this time. Clearly, many Labour voters registered their views on Labour's parliamentary record by staying at home.

Garscadden, which has 9% unemployment (higher than the national average) and 90% council houses (many of which are post-war slums) takes in the Drumchapel estate, the second largest in Europe. Drumchapel, which has been described by Billy Connelly as "a desert wae windaes" has areas of unemployment as high as 30-40%.

Jobs and housing were the issues of this campaign and it's in spite of the policies of the candidate, who made no secret of his support of Labour government policies, that Labour were victorious.

The SNP attempted to cloud the campaign in conjunction with the Catholic Church and the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) by raising the question of abortion. To his credit, the Labour candidate turned the campaign to the real issues of separation in a head on confrontation with the Nationalists.

The result for the SNP was an unquestionable rejection of their policies of separatism. On the basis of the 3.6% swing over Scotland, a General Election would give the SNP an increase of only nine or ten seats.

At this stage, the SNP has failed to take a real grip in terms of support from the working class and is still

largely a party of the middle class.

This result should not be seen as a vindication of the policies of the Labour government but as a sign of the tremendous loyalty of the working class to its traditional organisations.

At one stage in the campaigning there were as many as 300 party workers out at one time and there was a good turnout in the campaign from trade union and Labour activists, particularly the youth.

The Scottish TUC also supported the Labour candidate in the bye-election. However, the loyalty of the workers is not limitless. In order to wipe away the still present threat of the SNP, the Labour Party in Scotland will need to show the same loyalty to the workers as the workers have shown to them.

If the vigorous campaign of Labour in Garscadden had been run on a socialist programme, putting forward real socialist answers on the questions of unemployment, housing, etc., the victory would have been even more tremendous and labour could look forward confidently to a General Election.

**Jane McVeigh**

(Paisley Labour Party)

## Modern industrial problems come to Wycombe

**As the by-election in Wycombe approaches the quiet semi-rural constituency is being made to face some modern industrial problems. Unemployment as at last coming to this prosperous corner of Buckinghamshire.**

Unemployment is now coming to this prosperous corner of Buckinghamshire, with the latest redundancies being made at Spillers-French bakery. Savage cuts in public spending have been made by the solid Tory council and many working class people face hardships from long council house waiting lists, the lack of buses and lack of leisure facilities.

This of course, breeds

**By Hilary Lewis**

(Wycombe CLP)

frustration and vandalism in the young and a certain amount of racial tension has built up whereas in the past there have been good race relations. Pakistanis and Italians form about 10% of the local population and they are the target of the National Front who have raised their ugly head in this election. They bring in people from outside to stir up racialism with their lies and they have at least one photographer, presumably creating a file of known 'Commies'.

It is very important that the Labour and trade union movement give as much

support as possible in the time before the bye-election not only to combat the racialism of the NF but also that of the Tories.

Young Socialists in the area are organising a mass canvass and Day of action on Sunday 23rd April—before the bye-election on April 27th. All comrades taking part should meet outside the railway station at 10.30am.

### 1945 Election

**Wycombe once gained a Labour MP in the 1945 election, which shows that if the Labour Party puts forward a radical socialist programme they can take seats even in the Tory heartland.**



# LEFT & RIGHT

## HOW TO SPEND YOUR CHILD BENEFIT

Worried about what to do with the kids during school holidays, or after school when you're still at work?

The most powerful of capitalist economies has the answer, of course. The Celebrity Car limousing service of the USA had a customer who hired a driver to take her three children fifty miles a day, five days a week, to a riding school.

They were picket up from their different schools, driven to the riding lessons and back home afterwards.

Just what you need? Well, if you're looking for a similar service here, you'd better start saving up your child benefit increases. The bill for this one customer was £500 a month.

## Militant Rabbis

"Man does not live by bread alone," says the Bible. One group of workers in Israel are taking that seriously. They may not undermine the economy, but they will certainly worry the more orthodox.

A group of rabbis in Tel Aviv is threatening to strike unless their salaries, paid by the Ministry of Religion, are increased by 14% to keep up with inflation. If the strike takes place, there will be no marriages and no supervision of dietary laws, although divorces and funerals will not be affected.

All in all, not a very good omen for those who claim that religion reconciles the hostile interests of Israeli bosses and workers.

## "Law and Order"

"Extortion and bribery are old problems."

Young criminals, muggers, protection rackets? No, this is the President of the CBI, telling the Secretary of State that the wheels of big business must be oiled.

Curbing bribery and corruption in business deals "could hit trade," he said, "We are anxious that there should be no question of British industry being put at a disadvantage in competing for contracts."

They don't really like it, you know, they just hold their noses and think of Queen and Country...and profits.

## Janus

Is it possible that one day you will see your Board of Directors represented at the TUC? Reg Bottini, former General Secretary of the Agricultural Workers' Union, is refusing to give up his place on the economic committee and the finance and general purposes committee, although his term of office in the union ended in January. But he is now a spokesman for the British Meat and Livestock Commission.

If we have no control over trade union leaders' "outside interests", what's to stop all the big companies buying up a TUC leader? And if a retiring trade union leader lands a nice little job with, say, the Electricity Board, what happens if the power workers look to the TUC for support?

## More 'Broad' than 'Left'

The following exchange at the National Union of Students' Conference will puzzle many labour activists:

**Question, tabled by City and East London College—given that the return of a Tory government would mean devastating cuts in education expenditure, do the Executive intend to call on students to vote Labour at the next election?**

**Answer, No.**

This reply came not from Tory students but incredibly from the Broad Left dominated Executive. The 'Broad Left' is made up of Communist and Labour Party members, plus 'independents'. Could there be clearer evidence that, as 'Militant' supporters demand, the National Organisation of Labour Students should campaign independently in the student field?

## FILM REVIEW:

# THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN ITALY

BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI

1900

A PRESENTATION IN TWO PARTS

Most Militant readers will not have the chance to see 1900, a film directed by Bertolucci about Italian politics in rural society during the twentieth century. The two monopolies who have carved up the cinema circuits between them will continue to feed most of us on a diet of Walt Disney and John Wayne.

As it is, 1900 was already several years old when it had its first public showing in Britain at the end of March. It's on show in Oxford Street, London, where a ticket for the two parts of the film costs £4!

But those lucky enough to have access to it should take the opportunity. The film follows two boys—Alfredo, son of a rich landowner, and Ulmo, son of a peasant who works the landowners' soil—through the first 45 years of their lives from their simultaneous birth in 1900.

### The Padrone

During their youth, in the early years of the century, established relationships between the padrone (landlord, Alfredo's grandfather) and the peasantry are beginning to change. Mechanisation, in the form of a primitive combine harvester, appears to the bewilderment and contempt of the peasants. The padrone's son, father of Alfredo, is behind the introduction of machines. Unlike the padrone who has some knowledge of the land and a paternal relationship with the peasants, he is primarily a businessman, concerned with immediate profit and loss. When the first padrone dies and he in turn becomes the padrone his reaction to a bad harvest is to halve the peasants' pay.

Among the peasants the Dolco family predominates. Young Ulmo Dolco often

By Martin Upham  
Hertford & Stevenage  
Labour Party

plays with Alfredo, though their backgrounds differ so widely. In the years before the war the peasants resist the wage cut by a strike which the landlords' family vainly try to break by themselves working in the field.

The army's attempt to evict peasant families after the war from their hovels meets mass resistance as the women lie across the cavalry's path while the men behind them sing 'Bandiera Rossa' with staves in their hands. Alfredo is preserved from conscription in the 'Great War' by his father's influence while Ulmo, like most peasants, has

owner refuse to contribute, repelled by the brutality of the fascisti.

Alfredo visits the towns to find them swarming with fascists and the bourgeoisie conforming with a shrug of their shoulders. On his father's death he himself has at last become the padrone and he returns to the farm. There he finds Attila has become the real power.

### Murder

When Mussolini murdered the Socialist Deputy Malmestri a storm broke which should have driven him from power but which he actually used to reinforce his need for a strong state. In the film there is a similar local



The peasants settle accounts with Attila to fight.

The Communist Party was founded after the war, following the mass occupations of the factories, and the capitalists begin to finance and promote Mussolini's Fascists. With the failure of the workers' leaders to take power and change society, the middle class and some peasants turn to the Blackshirts as an alternative.

### Blackshirts

On the estate the Black-shirt leader is Attila(!), a manic thug who is also foreman. In a chilling scene in a local church Alfredo's father drums up money for the Blackshirt cause; only Alfredo and one other land-

incident when Attila and his mistress murder a young boy during a sexual frenzy. There is an outcry and Attila uses it to incite a crowd against Ulmo (who has become a Communist), who is beaten within an inch of his life, while Alfredo, his lifelong friend, makes no attempt to intervene.

The Blackshirts are now the real power, despising the weakness of the new padrone and his ilk but willing to serve them. As they consolidate their rule there is no restraint on them and they blindly murder and pillage at the least sign of opposition. When Attila seeks to sell Ulmo it is too much for the peasants.

They had failed to help him when he was beaten and been

afraid to resist the arrest of their Communists. This time when Ulmo appears to them as a member of their class they pelt Attila with horse manure. But the revolt is short-lived and Ulmo has to flee for his life.

The wheel comes full circle at the end of the film in 1945. The fascist monolith cracks under the extreme strain of war, and the peasants rise against the blackshirts. They execute Attila and in the normal course of things would next shoot Alfredo.

But Ulmo's return illustrates his own limitations as he saves the padrone. He confuses the peasants with specious arguments to the effect that deposing the padrone is all that is needed.

Then the 'Nation Liberation Committee' arrives, (the farm is already liberated) and demands the peasants surrender their weapons to it. Urged on by Ulmo they sullenly agree, thus surrendering their chance to win a society without padrones. Alfredo survives, and he and Ulmo live to become two irascible old men, still quarrelling and fighting.

Bertolucci did not set out to tell the story of Italy in the twentieth century so we did not see the clash of blackshirts and trade unionists in the cities. Nor are the economic roots of Italy's twentieth century crisis laid out. But 1900 does give us the limited understanding of the peasants and the inability of Ulmo to recognise a revolutionary situation for which he has waited half his life.

### Warning

Equally telling are the portraits of Alfredo and his wife, morally repelled by the crude Blackshirts but still living as a padrone class from the benefits of fascism. Finally the menacing Attila growing in power is a horrible warning: our children will build on our work, he cries to his wife, just before the peasants put him down.

The film has a fatuous end, when he reduces the cheap political events to a quarrel between two cantankerous old men, but 1900 is an epic of Italian rural society, superbly filmed, and an ideal background for discussion by a LPYS or Party branch.

## BOOK REVIEW:

# IRELAND—The Socialist answer

The recently published pamphlet of historical reprints from the 'Militant' and 'Militant Irish Monthly' should be read by all socialists. It will give you a keen insight into the causes, nature and cure for the present tragic bout of 'Troubles', and is a testimony to the validity of the Marxist approach.

The first article is perhaps the most significant. Detailing the events in Northern Ireland in the summer of 1969—the sectarian clashes, the virtual uprising of Catholic workers against the brutal Stormont regime, and the subsequent intervention by

British troops—it outlines a clear class analysis and programme.

It explains that sectarianism is a monster once fostered by British imperialism, though now beyond its control, and points to the impossibility of the British Army acting in the interests of the Northern Irish workers. While linked to the capitalist system, an army can impose only pro-capitalist solutions. Against those on the left who fail to take up the problems of Protestant workers, the paramount need for workers' unity and a trade union defence force is firmly posed.

Subsequent articles give further evidence to the real

role of the army—the 'Bloody Sunday' massacre of January 30th, 1972, should never be forgotten—and they show how the evils of bloody repression, murderous sectarianism and grinding poverty can be overcome only by the Catholic and Protestant workers acting together through a virile trade union movement and a mass party of Labour.

Drawn together by a united labour movement fighting for socialist policies, the workers will go forward with their brothers in the South to create a Socialist United Ireland where the age-old problems of this, one of the poorest countries of Western

Europe, could begin to be overcome at last.

The final article is justifiably optimistic. It charts the collapse of last year's Paisley-led, sectarian "General Strike", and explains that the basis now exists for a fighting working class unity.

However, the missing, crucial ingredient at the moment is a bold lead from the top. It is the Labour and Trade Union Co-ordinating Group in the North, and the Marxists in the Irish Labour Party, who are today laying the foundations for the future. Buy this pamphlet, and aid their struggle.

John Hunt  
Upminster LPYS)



# Merseyside fight back

**One worker in seven on the dole. That is the grim prospect facing Merseyside this week.**

Already the unemployment rate is 10.9%, nearly twice the national average. Included in this are 19,000 young workers with no job and no prospect of getting one.

And these figures don't include the 100,000 workers on Temporary Employment Subsidy and the thousands of school leavers on Job Creation and Job Experience Programmes.

If all the planned closures on Merseyside are to go through, the rate will go up to over 14%. 7,000 jobs are under threat:

Triumph Speke, plant to be closed—3,200 jobs. Lucas Broadgreen, plant to be closed—1,450 jobs. Also 200 jobs lost in the Fazaderley plant. English Electric, one of three factories on the Gilmoor site to be closed with a loss of 670 jobs.

Western Shiprepairers, Birkenhead—yard to be closed with a loss of 625 jobs. Birds Eye production cuts—loss of jobs: 450. Courtaulds cutback of Furzebrook operation—324 jobs. FD Centre, Kirby garments factory to be closed with 324 jobs lost...

Cammel Lairds reorganisation, 160 jobs to be lost.

Booth concrete plant to be closed, 100 jobs to be lost. Taylors Bakery, Walton, to be closed—500 jobs threatened.

The axe hangs over more jobs at Otis Elevators, Golden Wonder, Massey Ferguson and Tate and Lyle. These firms came to Merseyside, making the most of government subsidies, with ready-built factories, grants, free labour under the Job Creation Schemes and other hand-outs.

## Wreckers

Now they plan to cut back and move on to greener fields. While British Leyland wants to close the Speke plant, they are stepping up investment in South Africa!

**By Richard Knights**

(Wavertree LPYS)

The bosses and shareholders are absolutely impervious to the lives they are wrecking, turning Merseyside into an industrial wasteland.

Where have all the government subsidies gone? What has happened to the profits they have salted away in the boom years? This is not secret information for the eyes of management whizz-kids only: it affects the lives of thousands of workers and their families.

These companies' books should be publicly opened and examined by the trade unions. If they have squandered and frittered away this money, instead of investing in modern plant and equipment and expanding production, what better argument for taking them out of the hands of these private wreckers, and bringing them into public ownership, under democratic workers' control and planning?



**Liverpool Trades Council call one-day strike**

# END DOLE QUEUES

**A one-day token strike, and a mass lobby of Parliament on the 9th May.** That was the call from the conference on unemployment organised by Liverpool Trades Council.

Delegates were determined to show their anger at the massive growth of unemployment on Merseyside, and the continuing situation nationally.

The conference, sponsored by the CSEU building workers' union, Liverpool District Labour Party and Liverpool Communist Party had among the 500 attending, large trade union delegations, especially from those firms threatened with closures or large redundancies.

## Take Over

It agreed to organise the May Day demonstration around the issue of "Unemployment and the Cuts". The campaign will be fought around the demand that the government take over those firms threatening closure or large-scale redundancies. It calls for the restoring of the cuts in social services; increasing real wages, and a big



Tony Mulhearn

expansion of house, hospital and school building.

On the question of youth unemployment, they called for increased training for skill, an extension of off-job technical college training, and the provision of training opportunities for all young people.

Tony Mulhearn, on behalf of the Liverpool District LP, moved an amendment, saying: "clearly ministerial and financial assistance will be ineffective as long as the means of production remain in private hands. For every job that government handouts

create, 20 are lost by a boardroom decision.

"The DLP is calling for the campaign to be linked to the demand for the nationalisation, under workers' control and management, of the 200 giant firms that dominate the economy, to point the way forward."

The amendment, backed by the POEU Internal branch and Crosby CLP, was, unfortunately, defeated.

Conference also called for the setting up of a council of action to co-ordinate the struggle against unemployment. Barry Williams, President of the Trades Council, explaining that the TC was a "council of action", and was already co-ordinating this activity. But the explanation was rejected.

This meeting has, however, provided for the beginning of a fight back, nationally, against escalating unemployment. It will be up to the labour movement and its organisations, to make sure that there is a massive response to the call made by the conference.

**Terry Harrison**

(Toxteth Labour Party)

# Let's see the books!

Last week Spillers-French bakery group announced the closure of 23 out of their 36 factories and redundancy for 8,000 workers. Those bakeries not being closed will be taken over by their rivals Rank Hovis McDougall and Associated British Foods.

One of the bakeries due to close is Taylors in Walton. Richard Knights spoke to the secretary of the Bakers' Union branch, Gordon Fyffe.

RK: What's the position with the closure?

GF: The loss of jobs will be 360 bakery operatives. Also drivers and office staff will push the figure up to 500.

We heard that the bakery was to close on April 7th. The attitude of the men is let's get the redundancy money, but when that runs out, what are we going to do then? We'll be on the dole; most of them aren't thinking about the future.

RK: What is the machinery like in the plant?

GF: Most of it is very old, some of the second-hand machinery is in very good condition, but on the whole it is in a bad state of repair (not the fault of the fitters).

It is always breaking down and we are losing time, and Spillers are losing money by paying us for doing nothing

So basically it's a problem of lack of investment.

RK: Who will control the baking industry now?

GF: Now two monopolies will control the industry, and if Rank Hovis McDougall aren't careful there will only be Associated British Foods. At the moment the top three control 80% of the industry.

I'd like to see the books of these companies opened to see where the taxpayers' money has gone.

RK: Has the demand for nationalisation been raised?

GF: I'm all for nationalisation, and this is the policy of the union. Also Eric Heffer is in favour of this.

## HAND-OUTS TO BOSSES

The 200 workers at the FD Centre clothing factory were given eight hours' notice that the firm was closing. They are now in 24-hour occupation to prevent machinery being seized. The workers were not given the legal redundancy warning, redundancy payments or wages due.

Dave Disley, FD Works Committee, spoke to 'Militant' about the latest situation.

**Militant: How is the sit-in progressing?**

Dave Disley: The situation at the moment is that the morale is still good. It hasn't waned at all, in fact it's improved.

In the factory there is £400,000 of idle machinery just going to waste, rotting away in actual fact. As for the Trades Council meeting this

Sunday, our main object in attending was to alert people to what we are doing, also to appeal to them for support in every way possible.

We are a prime example of people not sitting back and being dictated to.

**M: What support have you had up to now from other workers?**

DD: Massey Ferguson have given us the most support both financially and in terms of getting leaflets printed. Unfortunately some of the larger factories have not given us support.

Many of the women are really dependent on the money they earn here, on the dole we're only on £14. I was threatened with having my dole stopped. I've had two spot checks in three weeks.

**M: The machinery was paid for in part by the**

**government?**

DD: It was. It's a diabolical situation and the government must take the blame for it. Although they are providing jobs with subsidies it is wrong if the owners can leave the next day.

We've no way of looking at the books of the company to find out where the money went. I think some of the money must have gone into someone's back pocket.

The government have put so much money into this factory that they practically own it. I was told that there is a subsidy on machines of 40%, the wages are subsidised through Temporary Employment Subsidy, the factory was rent free for three years, telephone, electric and water was paid for six months.

## Fight Reduncancies and Closures

—says Eddie Loyden MP

Money has been poured into Merseyside through special Development Area Grants, Industrial Act grants and Development Certificates, totalling £400 million since 1974.

Nationally, these subsidies amounted to £397 million in 1977-78, and an incredible total of £1,874 million since Labour came to power in 1974—that is the volume of government support for private industry. But in spite of all those resources being pumped in, closures and redundancies are still taking place at a dramatic rate, particularly in the Merseyside area.

This is a clear indication of the absolute failure of government policy designed to prop up capitalism through such measures.

The threat has now become more serious, as industry begins to cut back its capacity. Industry is now cutting back capacity because of the continuing world recession and the absence of the long-awaited "up-turn" in the economy.

This shows quite clearly the need for an alternative economic policy based on socialist measures and a socialist planned economy.

The reaction by Merseyside workers, expressed at the recent conference, shows that the workers are on the move. Demands for the involvement of the leadership in policies to fight redundancies and closures should now be taken up by the TUC and the Labour Party National Executive.



Eddie Loyden



# HOSPITAL WARDS CLOSE AS FEWER NURSES BEING TRAINED

Four and a half thousand fewer nurses are being trained this year.

This alarming statement has been issued at a time when chronic shortages of nurses throughout the country have already meant ward closures.

The general nursing council for England and Wales has published figures to show how the numbers are dropping. A comparison between the nine-month period April 1977 to December 1977 with the same period in 1976 shows that there are 10% fewer student nurses (training for state registration) and 31.6% fewer pupil nurses (training for state enrollment). Altogether there is a reduction of 4,630 nurses.

SRN down by 10.4%  
RMN down by 11.3% (Registered Mental Nurse)  
RSCN up by 2% (Registered sick Children's Nurse)  
Combined SRN/RSCN down 17%  
SEN down 31%

What will this mean? A shortage of up to 30% of our nurses in the near future. How many more wards and hospitals will be forced to close?

At the Bethnal Green Hospital in London's East End, a ward has had to close due to the shortage of staff, mainly nurses. A public appeal is being made by the "Campaign to save Bethnal Green" for nurses to work within the hospital.

## Student Nurses

At a London Teaching Hospital shortages of nurses have led to planned closures of wards for 2 or 3 week periods. Due to the introduction of new training schemes for student nurses, there are fewer available to work on general wards, as they are gaining experience in

specialities, such as geriatrics or obstetrics. Even though there is not a numerical reduction, this leads to a "shortfall" of 116 nurses for periods of 2 or 3 weeks, three times a year.

Thus wards have to be closed as the remaining nurses cannot cope with the workload. This illustrates clearly how much we rely on student nurses to run our NHS.

## Low Wages

This problem will multiply when new directives from the Common Market, in an attempt to standardise training throughout the community, take effect in June of next year. These directives are that students should gain experience in four specialities instead of the present quota of two. The estimated cost of employing additional staff to cover this is £12 million, or will the alternative of closing wards be put into effect?

The Association of Nursing Management give various reasons for the 4,630 reduction in student nurses which include the bad publicity that

the NHS has received due to public expenditure cuts, the reductions due to cuts in the nursing budget and the fact that standards of entry have been raised.

The real reasons why fewer people have taken up nursing as a career must lie in the low wages, long shifts, unsocial hours and the prospect of the dole queue at the end of three years' training.

## NUPE

Nurses are poorly organised. About 20% of the students at my hospital are in a trade union. The majority of those belong to the Royal College of Nursing, a professional body which has recently obtained a certificate of unionism in order to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act. They are not affiliated to the TUC.



Photo: Laurence Sparham (Report)

In the present pay negotiations for nurses, the RCN has accepted the 10% offer as "a reasonable distribution of available cash," while NUPE, who represent 80,000 nurses throughout the country, have rejected the package because of its effect on differentials.

NUPE also demand a 35-hour week by 1979, reject increases in lodging charges and insist that if inflation erodes the value of the settlement, further negotiations must take place within the year.

Because of the way that NUPE is prepared to fight for better pay and conditions, more nurses are turning towards the trade union

movement. The public spending cuts are taking their toll; nurses are becoming more aware of what is really happening.

By returning to socialist policies, the Labour government could return to its manifesto pledge of not only saving the NHS but of expanding it. This would ensure a decent wage for nurses, guaranteed jobs for all trained nurses, improved training facilities and ensure the availability of a hospital bed when required.

**Jane Doyle**

(NUPE Nurses' Shop Steward, London Hospital)

## Workers' Notebook

While the Tory Press fumes about 'iron handshakes' for those steelworkers currently taking redundancy pay, spare a thought for their chances of getting a job. At 6.5%, the January unemployment level was a disgrace to the Labour government; but look at how bad things are in the steel areas:

Corby—8.6%  
Consett—10.8%  
Hartlepool—12.8% [with 1,500 steel jobs gone]  
Cardiff—7.7% [with 3,000 steel jobs to go]  
Ebbw Vale—10.7% [with mass redundancies imminent]  
Shotton—10.6% [threatened by the recent Select Committee]

It is bad enough to have the plants closed down without attacking these men, many of whom will never work again, as if they had become millionaires.

Department of Employment Gazette: January 1978 pp 74-5

Average earnings rose by 2.0 per cent between November and December 1977. The 10.5 per cent rise in earnings between December 1976 and December 1977, compares with an official figure of 12.1% price rises over the same period. And this figure underestimates how price rises affect the basic things that take up most of the income of the lowest paid.

## CAMBRIDGE ECONOMISTS: PREDICT

# FIVE MILLION UNEMPLOYED BY 1990

Denis Healey said that the "first purpose" of his Budget was to "get unemployment moving significantly down." This is most unlikely to happen this year even on his own figures, and for the longer term he contented himself with platitudes about the industrial strategy and the need for world expansion.

Recent White Papers on Public Spending and North Sea Oil (Militants Nos. 398 and 400) show that the government has no strategy for eliminating unemployment.

The Cambridge Economic Policy Group's recent Review has now come up with the chilly prediction that, if present policies are continued, unemployment will rise towards five million by 1990. In fact you don't need their elaborate computer model to reach that figure if you assume that unemployment will continue to rise at the recent rate of nearly 250,000 a year.

## Idle Machines

The Group suggests that a 50% increase in manufacturing investment is necessary to avoid mass unemployment. But it is absolutely wrong to

By Andrew Glyn

(Oxford Labour Party)

suggest that it is impossible to employ more workers in manufacturing without an investment boom. Hundreds of thousands more workers could be employed in existing manufacturing plant, if only it were profitable to do so.

The industrial areas are littered with empty factories and idle machines. Much of it may be old and inefficient but it could still produce socially useful things. In the context of a socialist plan, based on social need rather than profit, full employment would not have to await an investment boom.

But granting that higher investment is desirable to raise efficiency, how could new investment, plus rapid expansion, be achieved? The Cambridge Group quite rightly points out that large-scale closures of factories, as in shipbuilding and electrical engineering, have not brought recovery to those industries; nor have government hand-outs.

But they conclude: "In our view, there is no possibility of carrying through such a programme without extensive protection by means of import controls or other means of discrimination in favour of home industries, because this

alone will provide an assurance that new capacity can be operated at a high level of utilisation."

As to whether the capitalists would really modernise, the Group just puts its faith in 'financial incentives or controls' (type unspecified, planning agreements perhaps), ignoring the fact that in the past the capitalists have reacted to protection by complacency and profiteering rather than expansion and modernisation.

## Retaliation

But what of retaliation, which the Cambridge Group regards as the one 'really serious' objection to import controls? All they say is that if the refusal of other capitalist governments to "sanction import restrictions is the major obstacle to industrial and economic recovery in Britain, this should be made plain and the matter argued out on that basis."

This is just about as helpful as bluntly telling the Scottish fans that their team won't win the World Cup because the other sides won't agree to hop about the field on one leg!

The failure of the Cambridge Group to face up to the reality of the capitalist world system is strikingly revealed in the chapter by Francis Cripps, adviser to Tony Benn.

He proposes not simply import controls, but discriminatory controls against the strong countries—precisely those best able to retaliate.

So the Brazilian, Dutch and German teams are supposed to accept being confined to hopping all the more readily as that handicap would be restricted to those teams the Scots know they couldn't beat anyway!

As 'The Economist' (1st April) sourly notes, the Cambridge Group do not "notice that every controlled import is a lost job in the exporting country. And then it, too, could control its imports. As the process spreads, balance of payments constraints would melt away. Along with much else."

Unlike most capitalist economists, they see that the capitalist system, uncontrolled, means mass unemployment. They are quite right to mammer the government's complacency. But their own policy of import controls is a fantasy, not a magic solution of a new Keynes as Brian Sedgemore suggests ('New Society' 8th April).

What the Cambridge Group, and Brian Sedgemore, cannot admit is that it is impossible to control the capitalist system—other than by replacing it with a socialist plan.





## Question Time

It's a hard life serving the public as a manager of a nationalised industry, so in January the heads of British Road Services flew to Las Palmas for their management meeting as a change from the usual venue in London. They also took their wives along for the ride.

On being asked in the House of Commons: "In what way does this benefit the overall financial structure of BRS?", the Secretary of State for Transport, William Rodgers, replied that he would have to ask the Chairman of the National Freight Corporation because "I do not know the answer."

# 'Prevention of Terrorism Act' A threat to the labour movement

*History has repeatedly demonstrated that the activities of terrorist organisations will be used as a club to beat the labour movement, particularly its political and trade union activists. This is clearly shown by existing and proposed legislation in Britain.*

The Prevention of Terrorism Act which Parliament has just renewed for another year, was introduced after the Birmingham pub bombings, when revulsion at the toll of deaths and maimings led to public acceptance of harsh measures. The Act provides that a police officer can arrest, without warrant, any person whom he suspects of various activities concerning proscribed organisations.

A suspect can be held for up to seven days and during this time the police do not have to bring any charges or bring the detained person before a court. Under the Act's provisions it is virtually impossible to sue the police for false imprisonment as an arrest at a port of entry can be made on the basis of mere "suspicion" whether reasonable or not.

### Arbitrary

Nor is detention confined to adults; children have been detained, fingerprinted and questioned about their parents' activities.

Between December 1974 and February 1978, almost 3,100 persons were detained under the Act in Great Britain (excluding Northern Ireland). *Only 4% of these were ever charged with any offence and half this total was composed of people charged with minor offences such as theft, tax evasion and, incredibly, "wasting police time."*

The Act empowers the police to forcibly photograph and fingerprint all detainees without their consent. Although the vast majority of detainees are released without charge, their photos and

fingerprints are transferred to the police national computer for future reference.

The police have operated the Act in a completely arbitrary fashion. In April 1977, the national organiser of the Irish Musicians Association was taken off a flight to Dublin and detained. At no time was he questioned about terrorism although he was forcibly photographed and fingerprinted.

### Strike-breaking

Three students from Ulster Polytechnic who were attending an NUS sports conference were arrested at Leeds airport and were kept in isolation for two days in small, dirty cells with the lights constantly burning. *They were questioned repeatedly, not about terrorism, but about their political activities, education and previous employment.*

A frequent complaint in many cases is denial of access to a lawyer and refusal on the part of the police to inform anyone of the detainee's whereabouts.

The evidence suggests, therefore, that the Act has extended and legalised already ominous police powers of arrest and detention.

The Suppression of Terrorism Bill, at present going through Parliament, is about to destroy another traditional democratic right—that of political asylum. Persons who commit certain offences will no longer be able to plead political motives as a defence to extradition proceedings.

This will give legal effect to the provisions of the European Convention on Terrorism and will apply to refugees from all signatory nations, including countries such as Greece and Turkey.

Should a fascist or military regime emerge in any of these countries, any political opponent seeking refuge would in all probability be refused and returned to the tender mercies of his own rulers. Failing extradition,

the Bill provides for refugees to be put on trial in the country in which they apply for asylum.

The lessons of all such legislation must be made clear to every labour activist. Individual terror campaigns, carried out by groups such as the IRA and the Baader-Meinhof group, may arise from legitimate grievances or a reaction against the rottenness of capitalist society. But their methods of bombing, kidnapping and murder disarm and disorientate the organised working class. And this is the only force capable of tackling the root problems: the stranglehold of capitalist exploitation and the world super-powers.

They inevitably give the capitalist states the pretext for draconian measures. *Today these may be used against individuals but they will be retained for use against the whole working class in future struggles.*

The army, the police and the courts are not neutral. They are readily used as a reserve weapon of the bosses, for strike-breaking (as in the Firemen's strike) and anti-trade union legislation (the Industrial Relations Act).

### Union Strength

We must reject any moves to strengthen the hand of the state with new legislation. Labour Parties and trade union branches should demand that the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the Suppression of Terrorism Bill and all similar legislation is abandoned immediately.

The labour movement looks to the law for protection at its peril. The only guarantee of protection, even of our basic democratic rights, is our own organised strength.

### Charlie Monaghan

(Brighton Labour Party)

# NUR BANS FASCISTS

## step up

## the campaign!

By Tom Doyle  
(Paddington No 1 NUR)  
and Martin Elvin  
(Stratford ASLEF)

The decision by the NUR to take disciplinary action, including expulsions, against National Front members is absolutely correct and an historic step in the fight against racialism and fascism.

Although there is little sympathy for the NF and their policies among railwaymen, the decision has met with a mixed response. "It's undemocratic," "About bloody time," "You'll only encourage them," "Yes, get rid of the dirty gang," and "You'll only make martyrs of them"—these are typical of the comments being made by railway workers.

Those who understand what the NF's real anti-working class aims are, fully support the decision. Others, however, see the move as

from it!" This, claims the NFRA, is their aim.

The NF have said that in removing the left in the trade unions, much that is democratic would also have to go. Yet the membership of the unions are quite rightly demanding more democracy in the labour movement.

What has recently come to light from the newsletter is that the NF also keeps a detailed political file of trade union activists. It regularly prints names of local ASLEF and NUR branch secretaries with accompanying filth and smears against these workers.

It also prints their private addresses and telephone

calls for the de-nationalisation of the railway industry. "The railways must be handed over to people who have a moral and financial reason to make them pay," states the newsletter. This at a time when capitalism is responsible for over 1½ million unemployed and initiating the biggest attack on our standards of living since the 1930s.

### Democratic Rights

Here we can see the real link between the fascist National Front and big business. The Tory party are the open representatives of big business and have always been opposed to working class rights, but that does not mean that Tories should be expelled from the union.

In the case of the NF, however, they will be used by the bosses as a physical



The bosses will try any dirty trick to divide these trade union members

Photo: John Sturrock (Report)

being undemocratic or a weapon that may be used later against the Tories, or even the left wing.

Any member who is in doubt as to the correctness of the decision need only look at the sort of filth that is being peddled in the National Front Railwaymen's Association's newsletter. They claim that the unions should be demanding British people first for employment.

### Unity is Strength

In other words, they are once more going against a basic trade union principle that "unity is strength," and attempting instead to drive a wedge between black and white workers. This in an industry whose workforce and union membership has long been multi-racial.

The newsletter quotes Tyn-dal, the NF chairman, who said: "We should do what the Tories have not done and cannot do, fight the left on its own ground and wrest control

numbers in what is an obvious attempt to intimidate them. This is the real face of the fascist thugs; if verbal attacks don't work then they follow it up with physical attacks.

### Nazis

The newsletter further attacks Ray Buckton for stating that ASLEF members would not cross picket lines in the event of a miners' strike. Respect for picket lines is a basic trade union principle, so here once again we see the real intentions of an organisation which claims to be in favour of strong trade unions.

These are the same people who supported the Tories' Industrial Relations Act and the National Association For Freedom in their attack on the Grunwick strikers. The sort of unions they envisage are those that existed in Nazi Germany or Franco's Spain, unions run by the bosses where the workers are ruled with iron discipline.

The NFRA newsletter also

battering ram against the organisations of the working class, to destroy every democratic right to organise, strike or to demonstrate which is only safeguarded by the strength of the labour and trade union movement. This is the historical role that fascist movements have played in Germany, Italy, Spain and more recently in Chile.

### Campaign

Railwaymen must be in no doubt as to the real intentions of the NF to destroy their unions and their democratic rights. We must give full backing to the NUR executive by sending resolutions of support. However, it is essential that branches also call on the EC to instigate a national campaign of explanation with leaflets and meetings to counteract not only the evils of fascism but also the Tory press and media who have wasted no time in attacking this historic decision.





On 15 March over 2,000 workers turned out in pouring rain for the demonstration through Dundee. Thousands more stopped work for two hours. At one factory, workers were so enraged at

management's attempt to dock a day's pay from anyone who stopped for two hours, that they stopped the shift-work for 36 hours.

# DUNDEE IT NEEDS DYING

It was once the proud boast of Dundonians that everything traded throughout the British Empire was carried in jute sacks made in Dundee. It was Dundee mill-owners who first discovered that flax could be worked when combined with whale oil. Whaling was at that time the great industry of Dundee.

There have been some new industries set up in Dundee, usually attracted by incentives given by central government. The biggest new employer that came was the American-based multi-national, the National Cash Register Company.

## Decline

Now with the introduction of more durable and cheaper alternatives, the jute industry has declined and Dundee has been left with the legacy—high unemployment, poor housing, and little replacement industry.

While unemployment in Scotland as a whole stands at 8.9%, the rate in Dundee is nearly 10%, and male unemployment is 11%. Even the jobs created by the oil industry have largely passed Dundee by.

The 'Cash' (as it is known in Dundee) at first had several factories. Then the redundancies started. The NCR failed to respond to the new demands for electronic cash registers, orders went elsewhere, and now there is only one NCR factory in operation.

Many of the companies which came, light engineering factories like Timex, the watchmakers, did provide some employment but not on a large scale, and mainly for women.

Over the years Dundee has died as an industrial city. The once busy harbour no longer has the facilities for receiving modern ships.

# The mysterious press empire

DC Thomson & Co is one of the most notorious anti-union employers in Britain. Yet how many trades unionists, let alone readers of the 'Militant', can honestly say that they have not regularly read a DC Thomson publication at some period of their lives?

Apart from 'Beano' and 'Dandy', which probably sell 400,000 copies each every week, the firm publishes such other well-known comics as 'Topper', 'Beezer', 'Bunty', 'Hotspur', 'Wizard' and many others. Its publications for adults include 'Weekly News' (circulation around 1.3 million), 'My Weekly' (around 1 million) and 'Annabel'.

In Scotland, they have the 'Sunday Post' which, according to the 'Guinness Book of Records', is "the newspaper which achieves the closest to saturation...in 1971 its total estimated readership of 2,947,000 represented more than 79% of the entire population of Scotland aged 15 and over."

DC Thomson also owns both the Dundee daily, the 'Courier', and the evening 'Telegraph'. This huge publishing empire, still firmly controlled by members of the Thomson family, had a

turnover of £23 million in 1976. The family also have large interests in the Alliance Trust, the Second Alliance Trust, 27% of the Clyde Paper Co. and 25% of Southern Television.

The company is run like a paternalistic principality. Trades union membership is now permitted, as it is to be by law. Previously, all employees had to sign a declaration that they would not become union members whilst in the company's employ. The printing unions are now thought to have 64% membership in the firm's Glasgow works.

## Reactionary

But the company still refuses to grant negotiating rights, and such is its attitude that trade unionists still keep their membership secret. Wages are therefore low, a division of the amount paid in salaries and wages by the number of employees, shown in a recent company return, gives an average of £46 per week.

All the abuses of individual negotiation are rife. A former employee told me about a group of printers who produced a petition asking for a wage increase and presented

it to their manager; his reaction was immediately to screw it up and toss it into the waste paper basket, ordering them to return to work.

DC Thomson's are decades out of date, by journalistic standards, both in content and layout.

The contents of the papers are generally of the most trivial nature, with the emphasis on the doings of local worthies, trite happenings to local citizens, and the parish pump. What national and international news there is, and that is very little, is straight news agency stuff. The magazines are full of old-fashioned romantic stories and home-spun wisdom.

It follows that the politics of the Thomson press is of the most reactionary Tory-Unionist nature. Recent editorials in the 'Courier' have supported Mrs Thatcher right down the line on immigration, and greeted with horror the redundancy payments the government intends to make available to shipyard workers.

There is an incredible amount of 'scrounger' and union bashing. Even the political attitudes of Thomson's have their amusing side. When Churchill was Liberal MP for Dundee (until 1922) their newspapers ran a campaign of vilification against him. For years after, his name was not mentioned and even during the Second World War he was referred to only as the 'Prime Minister.'

## Complacent

Such is the complacent nature of the DC Thomson Press, however, that rumours of corruption on the City Council in Dundee, which have been rife in the town for many years, not only went uninvestigated, but were left unmentioned.

It is a disgrace that such a firm should exist in such a strongly unionised city as Dundee. Their grip on the local media will become even tighter if their company,

Radio Dundee, gets a license for local broadcasting. The so-called "freedom of the press" in Dundee and a large slice of Scottish publishing consists of the freedom of one small family to disseminate its own idiosyncratic views and attitudes. The case for nationalisation is glaring.

At the moment it would appear that the DC Thomson workers are cowed by the management. But even under the prevailing conditions, a good proportion of the workforce are trades union members, and the example of the Glasgow printers shows the desire for the rights of union membership.

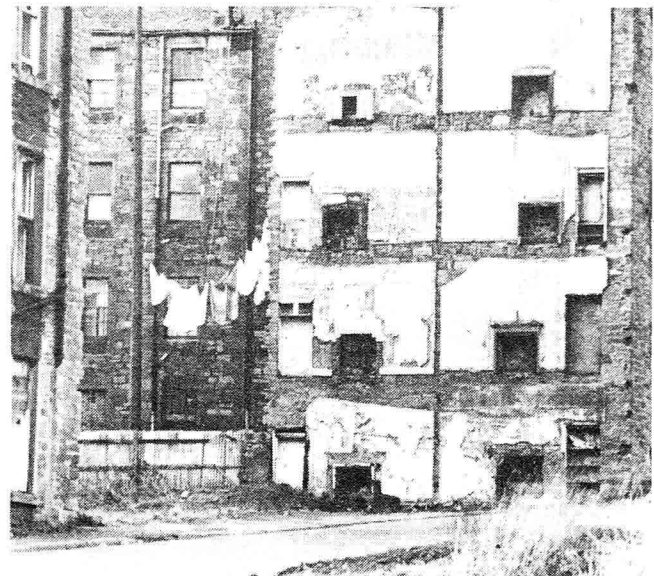
## New Moves

In 1926 the DC Thomson printers struck to a man and their papers were brought out by scabs. On returning, the workers (or those that could stomach it) had to sign a contract promising never again to strike and to hand in their union cards to the management.

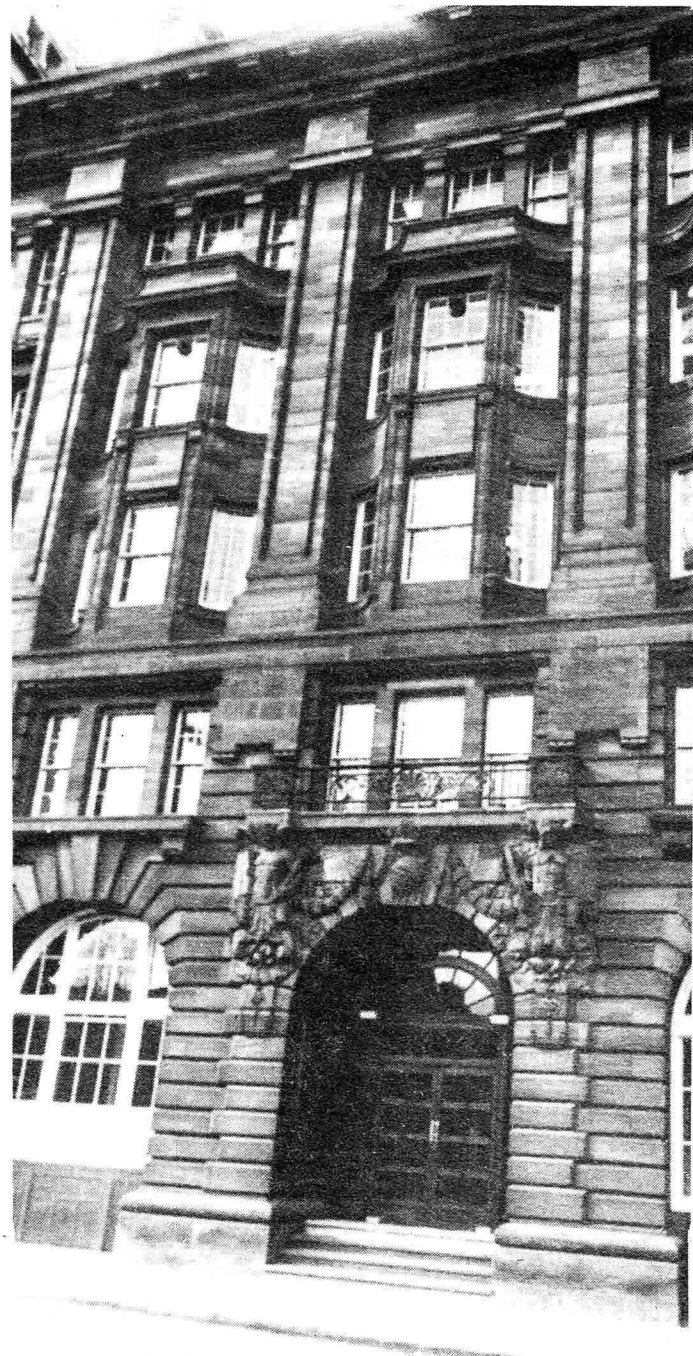
In 1952 a tremendous battle for union recognition was fought with national backing and backing from the whole trades union movement. This strike was beaten because the unions agreed to a Court of Enquiry (ironically set up by the Churchill government.)

Now the unions are making new moves, but through ACAS—and all trades unionists know how little that helped the Grunwick workers. Undoubtedly a determined action by the printing unions would raise the DC Thomson workforce from its knees and would gain the kind of support from the labour movement that the 1952 strike and the Grunwick workers had.

By Bob Rice  
(Dundee East LP)



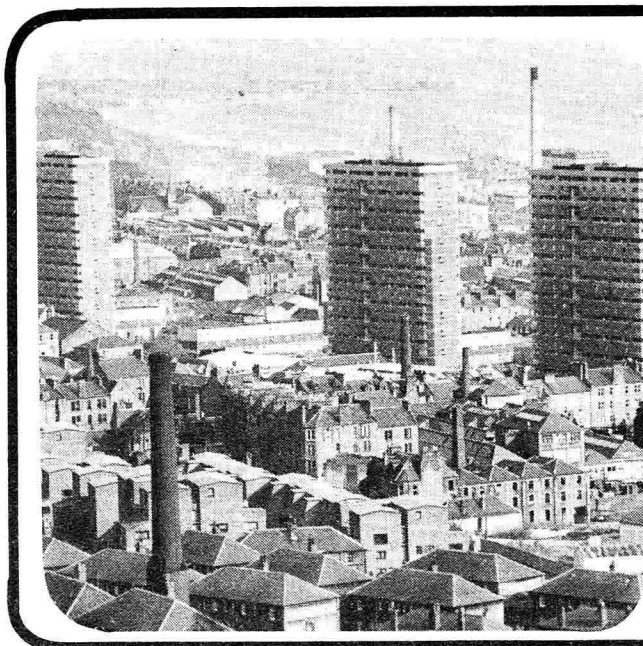
Dundee slums: Tall, dull, grey tenements



The home of DC Thomson empire, Dundee. Because of its secrecy mania, DC Thomson has been called the "Howard Hughes" of British publishing. Much useful information, however, can be found in 'The DC Thomson Bumper Fun Book' edited by Paul Harris [Paul Harris Publishing Ltd £3.75].



# DEE NOT BE A G CITY!



**Norma Craven  
(Dundee East  
Labour Party)**

**Reveals the cost  
of industrial  
decline and puts  
an alternative**

**Feature Photographs  
By Andrew Wiard  
Report**

The trade unions in Dundee believe that over the next few weeks another 400 jobs could be at risk. This in a city which once had more millionaires per square mile than any other city in Europe.

**The City, although situated in one of the most scenic parts of Scotland, is not just a depressed area, economically, it is a depressing city.**

Many thousands live in sub-standard housing. Many of the houses are the tenements built by the mill-owners for their workers. Tall, dull, grey, buildings with shared toilets and no baths.

The new council estates are, in reality, little better. They may provide basic facilities but the newest, Whitfield, is slowly being turned into a ghetto, a dumping grounds for tenants dubbed anti-social by the local authorities. Most people regard moving there as almost as a prison sentence.

Many of the houses are damp through ill-design. No wonder vandalism in the area is rampant. One assessment centre in the Dundee area has more youngsters from this scheme than anywhere else. Many of the 'new houses' are in need of basic repairs.

## Ghettos

Now the Tory-controlled council, or as they call themselves in Dundee 'progressives' have agreed to sell council houses. This will only increase the development of certain areas as ghettos. Those able to buy will do so only in estates with decent houses, leaving the slums of the future for those who can't afford to buy their home.

The housing estates in Dundee suffer from the same lack of facilities as others in cities throughout the country. Many of them have no real shopping centres or enter-

tainment facilities apart from pubs.

The city possesses only one small provincial theatre with no facilities to stage large-scale productions. In the city centre there are discos, which cater for the young but, with the high rate of unemployment, the cost of these and other facilities are beyond the pockets of many people. The cost of entrance to the central cinemas which are left is around £1, the same for discos, add the cost of transport, and these entertainments are at a luxury level.

## Schools

Educationally, Dundee loses out right down the line. Nursery schools which have been promised have never been built. With the change to comprehensive education, two schools were merged,

although separated by a very busy road.

## No Point

More youngsters in Dundee proportionately leave school at the minimum leaving age than anywhere else in Scotland. Why stay on? You may as well be unemployed at 16 than wait until you're 18. Many of the older schools do not have the facilities to offer a modern education, still using outdated apparatus, not having enough books.

This then is Dundee, a once great industrial city, unable to compete for industry. Many parts of the city have been laid waste by the demolishing of buildings, with no replacements. Many tenements have been empty for years, and stand desolate.

**The labour movement, however, has not been willing to see Dundee die as a city.** The Labour party recently

held a campaign against the raising of council house rents—a political campaign, demanding the nationalisation of the banks and finance houses, the bodies who take most of the rent money in interest charges.

Over the past two years, the trades council has held a number of massive demonstrations.

## Demonstration

In the labour movement there is a tremendous will to fight. On March 15th, another demonstration will be held with a two hour stoppage throughout Dundee.

The demonstration was called on the question of unemployment around certain demands:

- \* A new harbour, with a roll-on roll off ferry terminal and deep channels.
- \* A new ship-repairing yard,

and a rebuilt shipyard to replace the antiquated Robb Caledon yard.

\* A new dock complex in the harbour.

\* A new railway station, with both passengers and freight links with the new ferry terminal, and passenger interchange with the bus service.

\* A new petro-chemical complex at Barry-Buddon, a site at present used as a firing range for the Territorial Army.

\* A wide range of industries using the by-products of the petro-chemical complex, such as plastics and dyes.

If these demands were carried out they could mean the rebirth of Dundee as a major industrial centre. Yet with the deepening of the crisis of British capitalism even these basic needs cannot be achieved.

## Socialist Policies

**These are not the problems of Dundee. All the industrial centres of Britain now need new basic facilities like these. British capitalism cannot provide them. Only on a socialist basis can these be gained.**

The labour movement in Dundee and throughout Britain must go forward with socialist demands.

\* Build a million houses a year.

\* No redundancies.

\* A massive programme of public works to build schools hospitals and roads.

\* Nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy under workers' control and management.

## Robb Caledon Shipyard

# Workers demand modernisation

**By Alex Allen  
and Ewan Duncan  
(EETPU Robb  
Caledon, Dundee)**

Robb-Caledon Shipbuilders in Dundee now has a bright new sign on the yard gates, announcing that it is now "British Shipbuilders". For the 1,000 or so workers at "The Caledon" however, there is nothing bright or new about the yard, which is more like an industrial museum.

It is now 102 years old, and sometimes it seems that nothing much has changed. Only last year, a bending machine made in 1886 was finally removed. A crane in the boiler shop made in 1918 is still in regular use for putting sections of the engine into ships.

Yet the workers' skills have enabled this nineteenth-century yard to produce some of the most advanced ships of today, like the Post Office ships, which could sail round the world without a pilot, thanks to the modern navigational equipment installed by the Caledon workers.

The working conditions are about as old-fashioned as the yard itself. There are no covered slips and no heating, except that improvised by workers burning scraps of wood. There are no showers and inadequate toilets.

There is still no sick pay, pension scheme or bereavement leave. Inevitably, sickness, especially bronchitis, and absenteeism is high, in such oppressive working conditions.

The attitude of the management also seems stuck in the last century. It is illustrated by the story of the manager who was holding a conversation with a foreman

in the vicinity of the toilets. From where he was standing he could observe the doors of the cubicles, one of which was shut, and remained shut for 15 minutes. Convinced that a worker was contravening the rule that only seven minutes is allowed for visits to the toilet, the manager rushed off to get the Boilermakers' shop steward.

"A man has been in there for over a quarter of an hour!" he declared. "How do you know there's anyone in there?" the steward asked, and he pushed open the door to reveal—nobody! At least 20 minutes of a manager's valuable time had been expended on observing an empty lavatory cubicle!

The management is not held in great esteem here. Incidents like that make you wonder how they normally spend their time. Plans are forever being changed and jobs messed up. At least in the old days you used to see the manager about the yard. Nowadays you never see them.

## Remote

Let them eat scones! It had to be explained to this gentleman that most of the wives in question had to go out to work to supplement their husband's income and hadn't the time to sit around at home making scones.

Wages are well below those of comparable workers. With bonuses, the skilled men are earning £67, compared to £83 in Govan Shipbuilders on the Clyde, and £86 at the Kestrel Marine ship-repair yard, just upstream on the Tay.

The demand is for the full claim being negotiated nationally by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions: £70 for skilled men, and £55 for labourers, which would mean a rise of a third in overtime and holiday pay, plus a local increase to bring the wages to the same level as at Govan.

## Closure Threat

The biggest battle facing the workers, however, is against the possible closure of the yard, a threat which has been hanging over us for years and years. The worldwide recession in shipbuilding, combined with mismanagement in the yard, has meant that the workers have been living under a cloud.

There is no push from the management to get things done—things are just drifting along, and despite getting a small share of the Polish order, there is no certainty about the future of the yard.

One thing is certain though, and that is the workers' total opposition to any compulsory redundancies. This has been overwhelmingly agreed in three mass meetings and it applies even to a proposal to make retirement at 65 compulsory, where now it is only voluntary. We forced management to drop this. We are prepared to strike against any compulsory redundancy scheme.

What we propose, instead, is the modernisation of the yard. Plans for this were drawn up for the old management by consultants. They would have provided such improvements as covered slips,

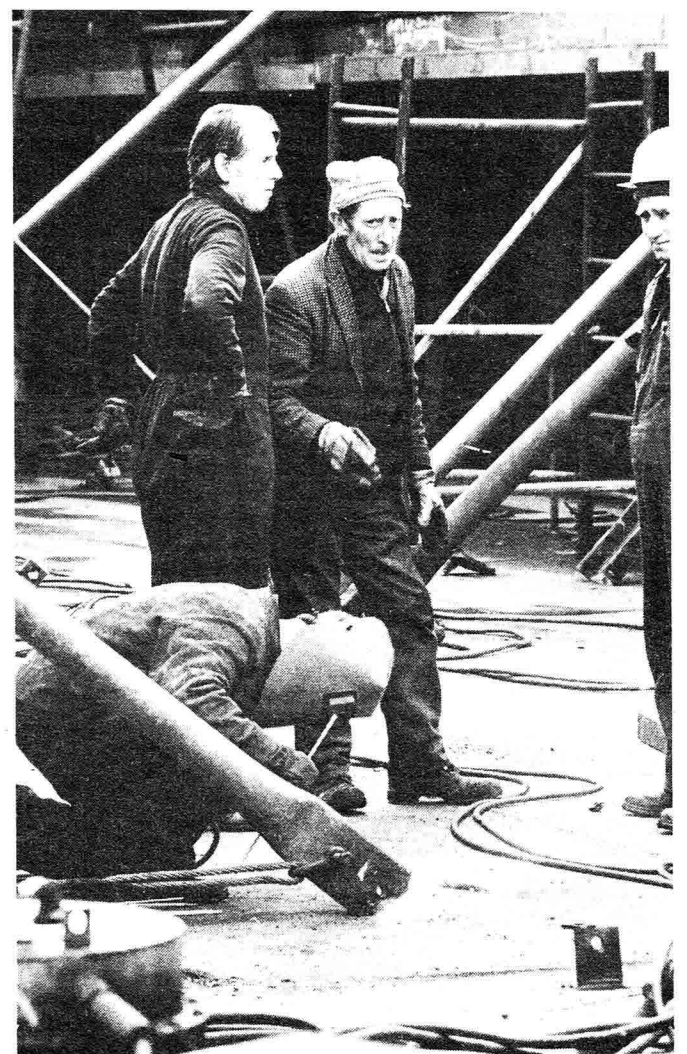
Because of a gap in the order book, the time trades (workers who fit out the ship after the boilermakers have built the ship itself) will have very little work for about seven months, while the Polish ships are being started.

These workers could carry out the modernisation of the yard, installing new equipment, and undergoing re-training. We have the skills to do this work, and there would be no need to bring in lots of sub-contractors. It is a perfect opportunity to keep the time trades in employment instead of sitting around, and at the same time to safeguard the future prospects of the whole workforce.

There are six different trade unions in the yard, (Boilermakers, Engineers, Electricians and Plumbers, Joiners and Painters, General Workers and the Draughtsmen and Office workers). There is a Yard Confed Committee representing the three main categories of workers, the Boilermakers, the Time Trades and the General Workers. But it is concerned only with yard issues, not with wages. This is not a good thing. *What we need is a joint negotiating body to discuss wages and conditions, as a means of unifying the workers in the yard.*

## Action

We are planning to start a Labour Party group in the near future. With the nationalisation of the industry and the need for new investment, workers cannot only be inv-



**Workers at Robb Caledon**

olved in trade union issues. A Labour Party group will aim to raise political questions in the heart of the workers' movement to bring a political consciousness to the workers.

It will play a role in elections and will make a contribution on the GMC, though it would be better if

less, it will mark a great step forward for the workers in this and every other industry, because ultimately it is only a political solution which will save the yard and our jobs.



# GREECE / PORTUGAL



Riot police outside Athens trolley bus workers' headquarters

Every day it seems that Athens is being hit by strikes of transport workers. In the last two weeks the underground railway, the 'Blue' buses and taxis have come to a halt for a 24 or 48 hour stoppage.

But the struggle which is setting the pace is the strike/lock-out of the Athens Trolley bus workers. Last week Militant spoke to Christos Anastasopoulos, chairman of the workers' union.

**Question:** How many workers are involved in this struggle?

**Answer:** 1,200, all the drivers, conductors and controllers. Everyone is solid.

**Q:** How did this battle begin?

**A:** On February 20th we

held a 24-hour strike and on February 24th we came out indefinitely. But after 30 days we decided to return to work and continue the fight with a series of lightning 3-hour strikes.

**Q:** Why?

**A:** Because the government

organised a strike-breaking force of coaches brought in from all over Greece. They even made a special ruling that these coaches could charge 10 Drachma a ride, instead of the normal 6 Drachma, all tax free!

**Q:** What happened next?

**A:** After two days back at work, during which we held two lightning strikes, the bosses locked all the workers out—even though a court has ruled in the past that this is illegal.

**Q:** What are your demands?

**A:** Better pensions, less

hours and new work contracts.

Until 1959 workers could retire, with a pension from the firm's own pension fund, after working nine years. To get a full pension you had to work 19 years. This was because it was officially recognised that we did "heavy and unhealthy work."

In 1959 when the government renewed the licence of the British company then running the buses it insisted that a new agreement was made. This said that workers could either retire with a pension from the IKA (State Pension scheme) at 60,

or if they had worked on the trolley buses for 30 years, any time after they were 50.

When in 1970 the company was nationalised the IKA ruled that all new workers could not retire until they were 65 and those workers who joined the company between 1959 and 1970 and who retired at 60 would not get a IKA pension until they were 65.

This hits 400 of the workers, in spite of the fact that the IKA still has a special levy on all Athens bus tickets to pay for the special scheme!

Our main demand is for retirement at 60. If in 1959 we could retire at 60 it is even more important now with the increased strain which we suffer working in Athens' heavier traffic.

**According to our health cards, 70% of the trolley bus workers have spinal, stomach, heart or nervous disorders. We are wrecks at 50, let alone 65. We must retire at 60 so that we can live in retirement for at least a few years.**

Secondly, we demand a 5-day, 40-hour week without loss in pay. We now work a 48-hour week.

Thirdly we want the regulations introduced by the old Colonels' Junta scrapped. These ban all trade union activity in the depots and on the buses. In addition there are special disciplinary committees which check on us.

There is no doubt, the government wants to smash our union.



Christos Anastasopoulos at the microphone at a meeting of the strikers

**Q:** Why?

**A:** Firstly the demands we are fighting for are those of other workers as well. If the government beats us it will beat the others as well.

Our union is the vanguard of the working class. We were one of the first unions to strike against the Junta in August, 1973. Even when the Junta arrested me the strike was solid.

Unlike other unions we are not controlled by the government or bosses. The government wants to destroy us and intimidate other workers. The government-run Greek TUC and Athens Trades Council ignore our struggle.

The government is using

the police to harass us. At the beginning of the strike the riot police arrested three of our members outside our office.

This is, of course, linked to the general government policy of attacking the working class. The government's slogans are: "We don't speak to strikers" and "Let them go hungry."

**Q:** How are the workers managing for money?

**A:** We have no strike pay. Some have taken other jobs, some have borrowed money. Under Greek law strike funds are illegal, but we are getting donations from other workers.

**Q:** What are your next plans?

**A:** We are trying to unite our struggle with those of the other transport workers. But it is difficult. We are in different small unions.

The leaders of the 'Blue' bus workers at first abandoned their struggle after the government took them to court and got them sentenced to two months' imprisonment for breaking some of the procedures in the labour laws. Now, however, after a struggle, this decision has been reversed and now selective strikes are going to begin.

The leaders of the left parties, PASOK and the Communist Party (KKE) have supported us, but the government does not listen.

After over 40 days of struggle we are at a critical stage. Soon the tourists will come and we will be needed

## Workers' gains under attack in Portugal

By Ed Bober  
(Hendon South LP)

At the beginning of this month Portugal's President Eanes dismissed two senior army officers, General Vasco Lourenco, and General Vasco Rocha Vieira. This change represents yet another step in the gradual erosion of the gains of the 1974 revolution.

It has been welcomed by the "moderate" or right-wing military hierarchy, who are trying to pressurise the President into sacking all officers who rose to the rank of general during the revolutionary movement of 1974 and 1975. They want to see these left officers replaced by "career soldiers".

Earlier this year General Spínola, the first president after the April, 1974, revolution, who was later exiled for attempting to stab the revolution in the back, was re-instated in his army post with £9,000 in back pay. This ex-fascist disguised as a democrat typifies the threat to Portuguese democracy that is creeping its way back into the decisive positions both in government and at the head of the army.

### Purge

Large sections of the army have been completely demobilised because of their revolutionary leanings. The Portuguese ruling class is trimming and reconstructing a new "reliable", i.e. anti-revolutionary, army.

But the right in the armed forces is not at all satisfied with the extent of Eanes' moves. They are pressing for more sackings to remove all traces of left influence from the army.

The changes in the army

follow closely the shift to the right in the government earlier this year. The Socialist government fell last November, and was replaced by a Socialist-Conservative (CDS) coalition in January.

SP leader, Soares, is still Prime Minister, but he is giving in to pressure from the IMF, and from Portugal's business circles to reduce living standards. He is trying to restore "business confidence" by bumping up profits at the working class's expense, and removing their hard won gains of trade union control at shop floor level.

The government has introduced a wage rise ceiling of 20%, yet prices are rocketing astronomically. Transport costs have gone up by 50%, gas, water and electricity 42%, 30% and 50%. Food is going up at about 50% per year. The new government's economic programme lays emphasis on the private sector as the "motor" of the economy.

Huge pressures of resistance against these moves still exist amongst the working class of Portugal. Government leaders are fearful of the precarious situation they find themselves in. They recognise the danger of new movements on the part of the working class to resist the decline in living standards and the erosion of the political gains of the revolution.

Many sections of the working class have declared their opposition to the CDS being in the government. Strikes and other industrial action still continue. Workers in the big Lisnave ship repair yard have come out in a number of short stoppages. This yard

accounts for 5% of Portugal's export earnings.

If the enormous strength of the industrial working class is still such a stumbling block to the introduction of measures against the gains of the revolution, the question arises—why is it not possible to consolidate the gains of the revolution, rather than live under the growing threat of further shifts to the right, and the possibility of a right wing military coup?

Unfortunately the SP leadership have dumped their declared programme of socialist measures, and created enormous confusion in the SP ranks and the working class as a whole.

### Threat

In 1975 Soares declared that the SP programme was "to destroy capitalism, not to correct its most unjust aspects." Last month he stated: "We shall not be able to move towards socialism without first creating a real democratic society...to do that we need to restore a certain balance and a certain economic stability."

The Portuguese workers have won tremendous democratic rights—to strike, to organise, to form political parties; Soares' "restoration of balance" can only refer to CDS pressures to try to denationalise sectors of the economy. This would strengthen big business and pave the way for more attacks on the working class. It poses the threat of the bloody destruction of their hard-won democratic rights.

The Communist Party, and left sections of the Socialist Party have expressed opposition to the present drift of government policy. But un-

fortunately they have not clearly put forward a programme for the total nationalisation, with minimum compensation, of all the major sections of the economy. This would destroy the power of the already weakened capitalist class and undermine the threat of organised reaction.

Portugal's bank workers pointed the way in 1975, when they occupied the banks and refused to leave until they were nationalised. This was because they had witnessed the banks' financial help to Spínola's supporters, in their attempt to organise a right wing coup.

In the heat of a mass movement of workers, the CP and SP leaders changed their programme overnight. From declaring that nationalisation of the banks and industry was years away, they came round to a position of support for the bank workers. The nationalisation of 60% of industry followed. This was a crushing blow to the capitalists, a gain which they have still not been able to reverse.

What is needed in the Portuguese working class is a Marxist programme to hold out a clear perspective for a real change in society to socialism, coupled with a programme for workers' democracy, and an internationalist approach to link up with the working class of Spain and Europe.

This would act as a rallying point for the Portuguese workers, who at the moment are becoming confused and demoralised by the failure of their leaders to point a clear way out of the crisis. On this basis it would be possible to consolidate the gains of the revolution, and ensure a Socialist Portugal.



## ISRAEL / ARGENTINA / USA

## Israel masses demand peace

The enormous burden of permanent military mobilisation, and the intransigent refusal of the right-wing Likud government to consider concessions to the Palestinians, are beginning to have serious repercussions in Israel—as we predicted.

On April 1st, an estimated 25,000 people turned out in Tel Aviv to support a "Peace Now" rally. What alarmed the government particularly was that the rally was not organised by left-wing organisations, but by a group of Israel's most respected citizens—reserve officers and NCOs from combat units.

Last month, 300 of these reservists wrote to the Likud prime minister, Menahem Begin, saying that they believed peace with the Arabs to be preferable to keeping the territory that Israel occupied as a result of the 1967 war. Later, they handed in a petition with 15,000 signatures.

The peace rally undoubtedly reflects the enormous war weariness that has built up, sharpened now by disappoint-



Begin

ment of the hopes built up by Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. The government's fearful reaction was indicated by the statement of Simha Ehrlich, the finance minister, who denounced the reservists' action as being "as near as they could get to staging a coup."

Last week also saw a further spate of industrial action in Israel. A journalists' strike closed newspapers and blacked out television for four days. A seamen's strike brought the merchant navy to a halt. And industrial disputes grounded El Al for two days.

## "Communists" back bloody dictatorship

News from Argentina suggests that the Argentine Communist Party (PCA) has taken another monumental step towards becoming the "left-wing" of the Videla regime rather than the vanguard of the working class.

Before the March 1976 military coup of General Videla, the PCA were calling for a "broad democratic civilian-military coalition". Afterwards they gave their "critical" support to the regime which has murdered and imprisoned thousands of workers.

The treacherous policy of the PCA derives from its total subservience to the Moscow leadership which prefers to trade with the military junta rather than support the resistance movement. Soviet-Argentine trade increased five-fold between 1972-75. At present, the leaders of the USSR are seeking to win contacts providing for Soviet

### Whitewash

"know how" to be applied to Argentine hydro-electric power projects.

News has now come to light of how this Soviet trading gambit is being matched by the attempts of the local stalinists to ingratiate themselves with the regime and whitewash its repressive acts. According to 'La Nacion' Internacional, Buenos Aires (20.3.78), the PCA has just dispatched a 30-member del-

egation to Western Europe, its task being to counteract and deny the denunciations of the Argentine dictatorship being made by organisations representing political refugees who have been forced to flee from the regime's rule of terror.

Though the PCA denies that the military dictatorship is a blood brother of the Pinochet regime, its claims are refuted by widely-accepted facts. According to one estimate, 10,000 Argentines arrived in Spain in 1977 alone ('Guardian' 22nd March). Whereas forty years ago, thousands of Spaniards were forced to take refuge in Latin America, today hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans are forced to live in Spain and other European countries in order to evade the attentions of brutal regimes such as the Argentine dictatorship.

The PCA's denial of this reality represents just another chapter in the 'Stalinist School of Falsification', falsification of reality in the interests of the soviet bureaucracy. However, while the PCA leaders are turning their backs on the Argentine workers, those workers are heroically building a combative resistance movement which, in spite of PCA betrayals, will sweep away the Videla dictatorship in the coming years.

Every strike and every step in class struggle produces new lessons and new questions for the workers. Not only the workers themselves, but all sections of society, the bosses and wider sections of the working class as a whole can be affected by a big strike. The US miners' strike, which ended on March 27, is a case in point.

The miners gained substantial wage increases, of over 30% and forced the coal operators to drop their demands for disciplinary powers against unofficial strikers. But they did not win everything they were fighting for. They still have to pay the first \$200 on medical cases although previously they had to pay \$700. This is a compromise though, they were fighting for a free health service. Also, despite winning a \$50 increase in pensions for miners who retired before 1975, they did not win their demand for equal pensions for all retired miners.

"The English method of mining coal under Government ownership is so orderly and civilised it is fast becoming regarded as the only answer to the chaos of the American system," Caudill told me.

Caudill, now Professor of Appalachian Studies at the University of Kentucky, is a voice worth listening to on the rending strains in the US coal industry after the longest and one of the most bitter strikes in its history.

"The miners are not happy with the new union contract they have just signed," Caudill said. "Many of the younger ones are quitting the union and going to work for non-union mines. Already more than half the coal worked in America is non-union."

"In three years, when the present contract comes up for renewal, the United Mine-workers' Union will be in such a state of decay it will represent no more than 35% of all miners. This could lead to the death of the union."

### Vietnam Veterans

"If that happens wages and benefits will decline. Then you will see wars in the coalfields more bloody and violent than the great battles of the 1920's." That was the time when 5,000 armed miners tried to overthrow the Sheriff of Logan County and ended up firing machine guns at 450 sheriffs' deputies, 2,000 regular soldiers and a sheriff's plane which was dropping bombs on them.

"Miners are changing, and the coal-owners cannot understand this. The average age of men in the mines today is only 31. Fifteen years ago it was 48. Thousands of veterans of the Vietnam war are working in the mines. These men not only have the miners' classic expertise with dynamite.

"In every one of their house trailers there are high-powered rifles and Magnum pistols. They won't be using the old nickel-plated Spanish revolvers next time."

American miners live in soul-destroying slums that would scandalise their English counterparts, Caudill says. They are packed togeth-

The agreement was only accepted by a narrow 57% majority of the men. On both sides it has provoked tensions and arguments. There are sharp divisions inside the Bituminous Coal Operators Association resulting from their partial defeat. And inside the mineworkers union there is a debate going on about why, after 110 days of bitter conflict in the great-est displays of class strength in post war history, the unions' victory was only partial.

On top of this, in American society as a whole a debate has opened up about the future of the mining industry. This interview, recently published in the 'Evening Standard', with Harry Caudill, America's leading authority on the coal industry shows that new questions are being raised in American politics as a result of the strike. Class politics is coming to the fore and even the question of state ownership of the coal industry is being discussed. This is unprecedented in post-war

American politics. It is an inevitable outcome of the failure of private ownership to meet the needs of the workers, and the economy as a whole. Further proof of the fact that in a period of economic crisis, society moves to the left as a result of a resolute and militant stand on the part of the organised working class.

Carter's Democratic government has continually gone against the

interests of the working class since it came into office. The invocation of the Taft Hartley Act, to try and send the miners back to work, was just one further example. These developments show the need for the formation of a mass party of labour in the US to ensure that in the coming period of class conflicts the workers have a party to represent their real interests.



Miners picketing during the coal strike

# American miners demand nationalisation

er in trailers almost in the shadow of huge pyramids of coal without decent houses, schools or recreation. The water is often contaminated.

"American coal owners still have the psychology of 18th century Scottish minemasters, who put iron collars on their men and kept 10-year old children underground for weeks at a time," said Caudill, whose father lost an arm in a mining accident.

"When I practised law in the mountains three women came to see me. Tons of rock had broken through the timber and roof bolts of a big company mine and smashed their husbands to death. Yet the company sent no one to the funerals. They did not bother to write a letter to the

widows, telephone or contact them in any way.

"If the three men had been roaches the company could not have shown less concern.

"Unrest in the coalfields is only beginning. It will end in the nationalisation of the mines. Public opinion is shifting that way.

### Comic

"A few days ago, the Governors of Kentucky and Tennessee took the amazing step of urging a state take-over of the railways, which in 1977 suffered their worst year since the Depression. In a year or so you will hear talk about nationalising other industries.

"Ironically, John L. Lewis the powerful ruler of the miners' union in the '30s and '40's, opposed state control of the mines because he thought the Government would be tougher to bargain with than the coal companies. Now the Government is regarded as a push-over.

"We have a weak President and the Vietnam veterans working in the mines fear neither God nor man. You should have heard them laugh during the last strike when Jimmy Carter's little judge in Washington put on his cap and ordered them back to work. They took not the slightest notice. It was the most comic thing they had ever seen in their lives.



Indiana National Guard confront miners' picket



# LETTERS

## Religion A Drug

Dear Comrades,  
I read with great interest the letter from T. Whitmarsh on the subject of Marxism and Christianity, especially after Ma Thatcher's recent 'sermon' on Christianity and the welfare state.

Christianity and indeed all organised religions must be seen from a class viewpoint. For example, see how the state religions are used for reactionary purposes in Israel (Judaism), India (Hinduism), Eire (Roman Catholicism) etc.

All religions are based on abstract notions and morals and are an escape from the real material world; they are to quote Marx "the opium of the people." Religious ideas hinder a true understanding of classes and developments in society as they attempt to deflect people into other worlds of gods and devils.

As regards oppression of religion in Eastern Europe, this has nothing whatsoever to do with Marxism. Indeed, in the Bolshevik Eighth Party Congress of 1919 it was explained that religious mysticism would only disappear through discussion and exposure and any attempt to repress it would be counter-productive.

Marxists believe that religion should be a private affair, that is not imposed on others, and would welcome any debate between the ideas of materialism and those of religious adherents.

Yours fraternally  
Dave Farrar  
(Salford LPYS)



Letters to 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## Private Dentists' Torture

Dear Comrades,  
I recently had to register with a dentist, not from choice but out of necessity. The cause? A lost filling and excruciating toothache which made me impossible to live with.

In such a situation you would think any dentist, from a sense of their vocation in life, would gladly accept me on to their books. Not on your life!

I rang at least a dozen dentists and when I stated I wished to be an NHS patient, I received the same reply: 'Sorry, our books are full and we've a long waiting list. There just aren't enough dentists in Canterbury, although if you're prepared to receive private treatment we may be able to make you an appointment!'

The Dental Association have issued posters to their members for display in surgeries stating that, because of the small amount of money they receive for NHS treatment, dentists will exercise their right to refuse treatment unless it is done privately. They're obviously not making enough profit out of the NHS, so they are prepared to make money out of peoples' suffering.

Comradely,  
Teresa Cairns  
(Canterbury LPYS)

## Missed The Point

Dear Militant,  
I have read the letter you printed (7th April) by Dave Grocott and cannot help feeling he has missed the point.

'Its a fact' in the 12-page Militant, like 'Workers' Notebook' in the 16-page provides a modest information service for activists, the sort of statistics that are not widely available. Obviously in a series of this kind every item cannot be fully explained: it would take too much space and defeat the purpose of the column.

From his letter Comrade Grocott seems to have grasped why it was recorded that more than one-third of Labour MPs were teachers or lecturers, namely that the PLP ought to consist mainly of industrial and, to a lesser extent office and other white-collar workers. The proliferation of academics in Parliament has been part of the post-war process of sliding into mere liberalism.

But making this point is not a slur on socialist teachers. On the contrary, we expect them to agree with it!

It should have been possible to contrast the composition of the Tory and Labour parties, the one mainly composed of businessmen and the other of trade unionists drawn from the workplace. Instead, the class nature of the Tory party emerges clearly, but the class identity of the Labour Party is smudged.

As for the House of Lords, that was really a separate point that did not particularly connect with teachers in the labour movement. It simply illustrates that their lordships receive money (our money) for old rope.

Yours fraternally  
Martin Upham  
(Stevenage and Hertford CLP)

## Flowers and Chocolates

Dear Comrades,  
A few weeks ago I had to stay in a hospital where there were a large number of nurses from Eastern Europe.

One day a Yugoslavian nurse told us that she would soon be getting beautiful flowers like ours because it was Womens' Day in her country. A Czech woman told me that the day was celebrated in her homeland by the giving of flowers or chocolates.

At first I thought it might be a Saints Day like St Valentine's Day and then I realised that it was International Womens' Day; the day named by Clara Zetkin on behalf of the Bolsheviks to mark the role of working class women in the first days of the Russian Revolution.

This day was set aside by the Bolsheviks not merely to celebrate the revolutionary role played by women but to develop it. International Womens' Day was intended to be a day of agitation and education of working class women throughout the world.

It was on this day that women in Russia began the process of their emancipation by their involvement in the revolutionary struggle of their class.

That proces was cut across by the failure to complete that revolution and the betrayal of Communist principles by the Stalinist regime which put back all of the measures aimed at freeing Russian women.

The emancipation of women is of course impossible without a socialist economy and real workers' democracy.

To me it was just another indication of the complete degeneration from Communism that even the women who commemorate this day, which once represented so much, don't recognise it as being anything greater than the day on which they receive flowers, or, if they are lucky, a box of chocolates.

Fraternally  
Susan Powell  
Remscheid Jusos

## Fair Shares

Dear Comrades,  
I've just come across a very good example of how the press trivialises and then slants the news against the labour movement.

Our local paper, the South Wales Echo only made one mention of the LPYS conference. In the smallest of items taking up less than a column inch at the bottom of a page the Echo reported that delegates rejected a call for 'sex parlours.'

Several days later in the middle of a page with a headline across two columns and taking up 5 column inches the Echo reported the Cardiff Young Conservatives' criticism of the motion on sex parlours in particular and of the LPYS in general.

There are no prizes for guessing who the Echo will tell us to vote for in the next election.

PS Watch out for details of debate with the Young Conservatives by the LPYS in Cardiff.

Yours comradely  
Eddy Street  
[Cardiff North CLP]

## REDUNDANT AND TRAPPED

Dear Comrades,  
Having a drink in a pub, I got into a conversation with a man about 60.

He had worked constantly for the last 43 years until a few months ago when he was made redundant and now he had little or no chance of getting another job. His wife works 40 hours a week in a canteen and brings home £25 a week and on top of that they get £5 social security.

They would be £2 a week better off if she stopped work but she doesn't want to. He wants a job as well, both for the money and his own self respect. He has the attitude that he should be bringing in a wage and finds it hard to accept that his wife has to work for them to have any respect and not rely totally on social security.

He spends the time when his wife is at work feeling depressed, worried and bitter. The doctor has given him pills for his nerves and told him to stop worrying or he might have a breakdown and have to go into hospital.

Since when is being unemployed something not to worry about? It is our society that should be put away.

The Social Security wanted to know about all their money. After years of work they have managed to save a bit but that is theirs. "I've been honest all my life but now I've got to lie," he said. The people sitting around all agreed.

He was bitter about how he was treated. This crazy society had forced him to lie, to rely on social security to live, and the only future it offers is worry with the possibility of a nervous breakdown. He was genuinely angry but what could he do? He felt trapped.

This man's problems can be repeated thousands of times. The Labour Government should be showing an answer to these problems not supporting the system that causes them.

Yours fraternally  
Bill Hopwood  
Newcastle North  
Labour Party

# GRATEFUL FOR WHAT?

Dear Comrades  
Six or seven workers at Clarke Chapman Ltd International Combustion, Manchester, have just received letters from the Personnel Manager congratulating them on completing 20 years' service.

The letter includes entitlement to membership of the Long Service Association, notifications of an award [watch or clock] and invitations to the Long Service Association's annual dinner to be held on April 27th. Invitations are extended to the men's wives [or lady friends] but for the honour there is a charge of £1.

As a wife of one of the workers I would like to say thank you to Clarke Chapman Ltd for your invitation and

for reducing your workforce so that others cannot take advantage of long service recognition. I would also like to thank you for the long hours, low basic wages, bad working conditions and dangers from chemical compounds, old machinery etc.

I am so overwhelmed with gratitude that I have decided to send £1 to the 'Militant' fighting fund to help other workers up and down the country understand that industry needs full employment of all its workforce and that profits must be used to expand and improve industrial and social wages and conditions.

Fraternally  
Ella Gamwell  
Ardwick CLP

## NO COMPENSATION

Dear Comrade,  
I work for Richard Dunstons, a shipyard at Thome. This shipyard however is owned by an American multinational called Ingrams which owns a number of firms.

Ingrams are carrying through a programme of redundancies caused by the world recession in shipbuilding. This shipyard has been privately controlled by In-

grams for 3½ years and the firm is not willing to concede any extra payments under the Government Redundancy Scheme eg payments in lieu and so on.

Under the present government, nationalised yards have negotiated large redundancy payments between the unions and the management. Yet all shopfloor members pay the same contributions; the unions should fight for the

same benefits for all workers and parity throughout shipbuilding.

Under nationalisation schemes all the shipbuilding industry of this country should be nationalised without compensation to gain workers' control.

Yours fraternally  
Bob French  
(Boilermakers Union, Thorne, Doncaster)



**£35,000 NEEDED BY JULY 8th****FIGHTING FUND CHART £70,000**

| Area                  | Target 26 wks | Target 52 wks | Proportion of target received | Received         |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Eastern               | 2,200         | 4,400         |                               | 545.11           |
| Hants & IOW           | 1,050         | 2,100         |                               | 716.01           |
| Humberside            | 1,100         | 2,200         |                               | 720.17           |
| Lancashire            | 750           | 1,500         |                               | 234.83           |
| London: North         | 3,850         | 7,700         |                               | 1,488.99         |
| London: South         | 1,900         | 3,800         |                               | 807.18           |
| Manchester & District | 1,450         | 2,900         |                               | 300.98           |
| Merseyside & District | 2,250         | 4,500         |                               | 740.84           |
| Midlands East         | 2,200         | 4,400         |                               | 926.12           |
| Midlands West         | 3,700         | 7,400         |                               | 1,533.44         |
| Northern              | 2,450         | 4,900         |                               | 907.81           |
| Scotland East         | 1,250         | 2,500         |                               | 476.29           |
| Scotland West         | 1,450         | 2,900         |                               | 392.76           |
| South East            | 1,150         | 2,300         |                               | 564.36           |
| South West            | 1,150         | 2,300         |                               | 488.94           |
| Thames Valley         | 850           | 1,700         |                               | 363.00           |
| Wales East            | 1,000         | 2,000         |                               | 421.05           |
| Wales West            | 1,150         | 2,300         |                               | 356.58           |
| Yorkshire             | 2,600         | 5,200         |                               | 807.61           |
| Others                | 1,500         | 3,000         |                               | 2,280.37         |
| <b>£</b>              | <b>35,000</b> | <b>70,000</b> |                               | <b>15,072.44</b> |

Progress Towards year's target ■ Towards July 8th target: ■

# A Bold Approach brings results

**THIS WEEK'S TOTAL: £1,047.29**

An excellent £340 collection at the Militant sellers' rally last Saturday helped push this week's total for the Fighting Fund over the £1,000 mark.

Ways in which every seller can help push up the weekly totals were discussed there in relation to the importance of the Militant for every worker — its ideas, analysis and programme must reach every activist in the movement and every activist must be approached to help it grow.

Commitment to give and collect regular donations are the key to a healthy fighting fund. L. Evans of Maestag has decided to pay £1 each week for his copy of the "best paper I've ever read". J. Tilley (Labour Candidate in Lambeth Central's by-election) pays 50p each week for his.

They can be assisted by the use of the weekly collecting cards available from the Militant offices. A. Jones in Brighton collected £9.86 with hers last week. The main weapon is the conviction of Militant supporters that Marxism is the only answer and that more than a 16 page weekly is needed. A bold approach brings results.

£16.80 has been sent from collections at Rover, Solihull, a total of £15.61 from Wandsworth GMWU members, £2 from readers at Alcoa (GB) Ltd, Port Talbot, £2 from members of St John's Lodge NUM, Maesteg, £3 collected last week from Liverpool NGA members and £1.11 at Cammell Lairds' shipyard.

Many other collections at workplaces and union branches can and must take place if we are to reach the target of £35,000 by July 8th. With just over £15,000 in the fund now that means an average of £20,000 in 12 weeks — an average of £1,666 each week!!

It also means many more Labour Party Young Socialist branches following this week's example of Hackney Central, who sent £5.40, Canterbury LPYS who sent £5 from a raffle, Hartlepool £1 and Neath who sent £2.17. It means many more individual members of the LPYS following this week's examples of S. Amor



(Stevenage), giving a 'fiver', R. Gaston (Gloucester) £2.67 and D. McAskey (Wirral), M. Cashman (Wallasey), C. Haines (St Pancras), D. Tarran (Stevenage) and M. Hogan (Garston) who were among the £1 contributors.

Others were C. Smale (ISTC no 1, London), P. Loundes (Salford), a Leeds FBU member, F. Glancy (EPTU, Edinburgh) and H. Langley (Wirral). P. Wardleworth of Poole gave £1.25 and G. Hensby (Tower Hamlets) and J. Atkinson of Hull ASTMS other 'fivers'. A 'tenner' came from a Basildon supporter, M. Singleton (Brighton) donated £9 and a Leeds GMWU member gave £15 in response to the LPYS conference he attended.

Maybe you would like to give this kind of amount as a donation but simply haven't got it. Once again Chancellor Healey has given you an opportunity! Prepare yourself NOW for giving your tax rebate straight to the Militant and asking others to do the same! Collect promises this week as well as cash!

R. Calenso of Abingdon YS has just given us a £30 rebate he has received before the new measures take effect. But the budget only underlines the

urgent need for the socialist transformation of society. Half measures will not solve any problems.

That's why we appeal to every reader to come to our public meetings, discuss the way forward and donate to the collections taken. Last week's included: — Peterborough (£23), Edinburgh (£28), S. Region LP Conference (£21), Newcastle (£11), Scottish LP Conference (£31.50), Brighton (£13) and a Trade Union Discussion Group in Ashington (£2).

Other ways of raising cash included a 'Marathon' in Coventry (£19 so far), discos and Geordie night at LPYS Conference (£64), sponsored walk, SE Dorset (£13), 'housewarming', Leeds (£19), Spanish evening, Brixton (£17), parties in Wallasey (£10.50) and Southgate (£7.0) and collecting 5ps, 1ps and ½ps in Peterborough (£6).

These are just some of the examples. Another £35 was donated by Wandsworth supporters attending the LPYS Conference, £16.40 came from Marsfield readers.

Many thanks to EVERY contributor and may there be many, many more, to get £35,000 by July 8th!!

## MILITANT NOTICES

### Militant Meetings

#### MILITANT PUBLIC MEETING

##### 'May 1968'

Massive General Strike in France — over 10m on strike  
Speaker: Clare Doyle  
(Militant Editorial Board)

##### 'May 1978'

The French Elections and Perspectives for Europe  
Speaker: Ted Grant  
(Militant Editorial Board)

Plus: **Sud-Aviation** — rare film of workers' occupation and May demonstrations  
Admission: 25p

Friday May 19th, 7.15 pm  
Place: University of London Union,

Malet Street, London W.C.1.

Near: Euston Station (Northern, Victoria, Metro, Circle)

Buses: 14, 24, 29, 30, 68, 73, 77C, 77A, 170, 188, 239

#### SOUTH WALES

##### Militant Summer Camp

Friday 26th — Monday 29th May (Spring Bank Holiday)  
Horton, Gower Coast  
Near Swansea

##### Political Programme

1. The Marxist Method
2. The Class Nature of the Soviet Union
3. What is Fascism
4. World War — Future Prospects
5. Marxism and the Trade Unions

##### Book Now!

Cost: £6.50 per person  
Cheques payable to R. Sewell.  
Further Details: R. Sewell, 99 Penderry Road, Penlan, Swansea. Tel: 33542.

#### CAMBRIDGE

##### Militant Readers Meeting

'The Menace of Toryism'

Hear: IAN ILET (Peterborough Labour Party)  
Monday 15th May, 8.00pm  
Portland Arms, Mithain's Corner, Cambridge

#### NEATH VALLEY

**Militant Discussion Groups**  
Resolven: further details: Peter Harris, 95 John Street, Resolven  
Glynneath: further details: Derek James, 21 Avon Street, Glynneath

#### GATESHEAD

##### Marxist Discussion Meetings

April 24th: Rise of Fascism 1923-33 (Peter Doyle)  
May 8th: The Degeneration of the Russian Revolution (John Flynn)

May 22nd: The History of the Trade Unions (John Pickard)  
June 5th: Workers' Control and Management (Wilf Flynn)

Phone Gateshead 774499 or 881165 for details

#### NEWCASTLE

##### Marxist Discussion Group for students, unemployed, and shift workers

Fridays, 1.30 pm  
Audio Room of Newcastle Poly Students' Union  
21.4.78 — N Ireland

28.4.78 — Fascism  
5.5.78 — Stalinism — Could it happen here?

12.5.78 — The Labour Party in Perspective  
19.6.78 — Role of Marxism in the Labour Movement

#### TYNESIDE

##### Militant Public Meeting

Speaker: TED GRANT  
Sunday April 30th, 7.30pm  
Bridge Hotel (Newcastle end of High Level Bridge)

#### HARLOW

##### Militant Discussion Group

'Historical Materialism'  
Speaker: DANNY PURTON  
Thursday 27th April, 8.00pm  
48 Morley Grove, Harlow.

##### Dance, Drink, Chat and Eat at the HARLOW MAY DAY SOCIAL.

Saturday 29th April, at 200 Rivermill, Harlow. 50p including food.

#### ASHINGTON

##### Militant Readers' Meetings

Venue: Ashington Labour Rooms  
May 2: 'France — 1968 and Now'  
Speaker to be arranged  
May 23: 'Where is Britain Going?'  
Speaker: Dave Cotterill  
Meetings start 7.30 pm

#### BRISTOL

##### May Day Militant Public Meeting

'Internationalism — the way forward for the workers of the world'  
Monday May 1st, 7.30pm  
Stapleton Road Tavern, Stapleton Road, Bristol.

#### SUNDERLAND

Militant Discussion Group. Every other Friday at 8.00 pm.  
April 28th — France 1968 and 1978.  
May 12th — Italian Politics and Perspectives.  
Phone Gateshead 774948 for further details.

#### SWINDON

##### 'What we stand for'

The first ever Militant meeting in Swindon.  
Speakers: BILL MULLINS (Senior Shop Steward, Rover Solihull) ROB CADWGAN (South West LPYS Regional Chairman)  
Sunday May 14th, 7.30pm  
Co-op Small Hall, East Street, Swindon.

### Publications

## TROTSKY



A MILITANT PAMPHLET 20p

Includes introduction by Alan Woods.  
Price 20p, plus 5p postage.  
Order from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

#### YOU could win

A holiday in France for two worth £250!  
A 3-room frame tent worth £150!  
A family caravan for a week or a "Galleon" British holiday worth £100!  
Plus a pocket camera, picnic set, sleeping bag, camp bed, deck chair, battery lantern and a football, if you bought every ticket for the MILITANT HOLIDAY RAFFLE to be drawn on Saturday July 1st!  
But if you just want to take a chance and buy a few books and sell as many as you can — Order now from: Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Price per ticket 10p, ten tickets in a book.

#### London Labour Students IRISH DEBATE

Speakers: HUGH DEENEY (Campaign for a Socialist Solution in Ireland) and a speaker from the Connolly Association  
Wednesday 26th April 7.30pm  
The Senior College Room, Union Building, Imperial College, Prince Consort Road, SW7 (Next to Albert Hall, South Kensington Tube).

**Campaign For Labour Party Democracy Conference** "It does look, without a doubt, as if compromise proposals are being projected in order to protect MPs who are not prepared to carry out Constituency or Party policies" — Emlyn Williams, President of South Wales Miners.

We must organise to stop the NEC reneging on its pledge on automatic reselection in 1978!

Working Conference: Saturday 20th May, 2-5 pm, Ruskin College, Oxford. Speakers: Bob Wright (AUEW Asst. Gen. Sec. and Presidential Candidate), John Miller (T&GWU National Officer) and Dennis Skinner (MP, Bolsover) and you.

Credentials 50p from Terry Hunt, Basingstoke CLP, 19 Richmond Road, Basingstoke, Hants.

## ADVERTS

#### RATES

CLASSIFIED: 5p per word, minimum 10 words  
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.  
All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

PAYMENTS must be sent with advertisements. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to 'Militant'.

#### Harlow

##### MAY DAY FESTIVAL

Ballet, films, rock group, speakers, 7.84 theatre group, trade union banners exhibition, disco, children's theatre, folk music, brass band, bierkeller, festival village.

Monday May 1st  
2.00 to 10.00pm

Tickets £1, 60p concession for OAPs, children and students.  
The Playhouse, Harlow 31945. 30 minutes by train from Liverpool Street Station. Organised by Harlow Labour Party and Trades Council.

#### TRADE UNION

##### DISCUSSION GROUPS

NEATH: Full Moon Pub, The Parade, Neath. Every second Tuesday, 8.00 pm, from 18th April.

PORT TALBOT: The Progressive Club, Station Road, Port Talbot. Every Thursday, 7.30 pm.

PONTARDULAIS: Kings Public Bar. Every Tuesday, 7.30 pm.

AMMANFORD: The Welfare Club. Every Monday, 8.00 pm.  
GLYNNEATH: Dinas Rock Hotel. Every fortnight, from Tuesday 25th April, 8.00 pm.

GWENDREATH VALLEY: Trade Union Discussion Group every Thursday, 7.15pm, Upper Tumble Social Club, Tumble.

#### BLYTH LABOUR PARTY

##### May Day Meeting

Speaker: TED GRANT  
Sunday April 30th, 12 noon  
Blyth Labour Club



**Spillers Bakeries:**

**Open the books!**

Interview with the North London District Secretary of the Bakers' Union, Paul Sagoo, at the union's district office in Walthamstow. Bro. Sagoo spoke to Mike Cleverley [Walthamstow Labour Party]

I spoke to Bro. Paul Sagoo amidst a continual barrage of phone calls from union branch officers and members, pressing him to act on their behalf and reflecting the anger of the membership at the way Spillers have treated them.

He is responsible for five bakeries in the Spillers Group. At Oxford, Greenford, where the plants will be taken over by the RHM Group and at High Wycombe, Dagenham and Wood Green where 650 full time and approximately 300 part time workers face the sack.

The chaos in the industry is reflected in the facts, as explained by Bro Sagoo, that at Dagenham, only six months ago Spillers installed new plant worth £3 million.

He explained that the story of surplus capacity is a myth. "After the 22nd April the only way that demand in this area can be met is my members, in other bakeries to work 10 or 12 hours per day. The in-shop bakeries, such as 'Country Cottage' are already working flat out. It will mean

that people who cannot shop early will just not be able to buy bread."

Recently the industry has been hit by disputes over the level of discounts offered to the supermarkets. Bro Sagoo showed how the workers' case had been proved correct. In spite of rising demand bread had become uneconomic to produce, not because of the high wages, (they don't exist) but because of the chronic state of the industry.

Lastly Bro Sagoo voiced the need for united action by the organisations of the working class. "The unions must pressurise the TUC to act to protect workers hit by this type of situation. My members believed they were protected by the Redundancy Acts, the TUC must be pressurised to have these workers properly protected."

"The companies are cutting each other's throats through competition but when they negotiate with us they get together and speak with one voice."

They are interested in one thing—profit. In the ruthless capitalist market, if it pays to

Recently at a Harlow school a parcel arrived with five new overalls for the cleaning staff. Hurray! Only one problem—they are to be shared by the eighteen cleaning staff!

Once upon a time every cleaner was issued with two new pairs of overalls on starting the job and one a year as replacements. Then came the cuts, now the overall issue is nearly insignificant.

The idea is that now the women are expected to provide their own protective clothing. Perhaps these ladies are overpaid and have purses bulging with money? Not on your life!

How many workers do you know who would be prepared to work a split shift day? Two hours in the morning before school starts, then two hours in the early evening, after school, for less than £1 an hour?

No wonder the school ancillary workers, over 500 of them in NUPE, are determined to campaign for at least one overall per year. As part of the campaign, they are sending copies of this cartoon depicting their plight, drawn by one of their members, to all people involved in the education cuts.

**Jim Langly**

(Senior Steward, Harlow NUPE)

**Where's our overalls?**



ALL IN TATTERS - ALL FORLORN "GORN"! ?  
WHERE HAVE ALL OUR OVERALLS "GORN"!! ?

sell up and throw thousands on the dole, the bosses don't think twice.

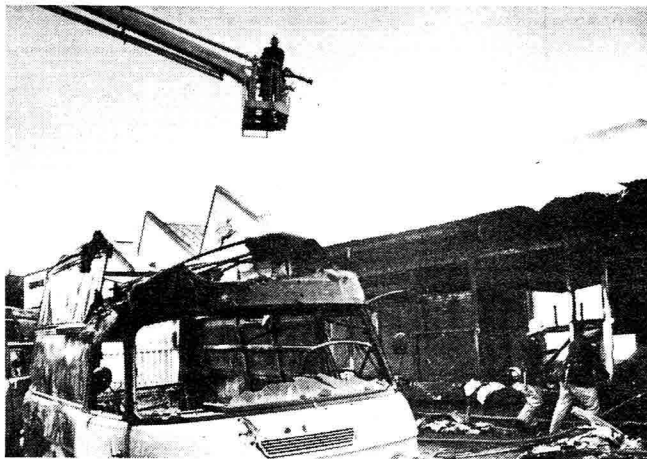
Hand-outs will not keep the wolf from the door for the unemployed workers. Every redundancy should be fought!

The union should lead the fight for a 35 hour week without loss of wages throughout the industry. If the bosses claim there's "overcapacity"—share out the work and put an end to the low pay that forces workers to work up to 80 hours a week to earn enough to live on.

If Spillers claim they can't afford it, lets see the books! There are plenty of housewives who can testify to the profits they have squeezed out of us!

**If these gangsters think producing our daily bread is too unprofitable, it should be taken out of their hands, without compensation except in cases where need is proved, and run democratically by working people to guarantee jobs, a living wage, and bread at a reasonable price.**

**FIGHT CUTS IN FIRE SERVICE**



The 10 per cent rise that was refused on December 9th and which was later to be the basis of the accepted offer referred to a rise for "all ranks within the purview of the National Joint Council."

Unfortunately, after December 9th, the new re-hashed agreement only affected those ranks up to sub-officer and that has created a lot of bad feeling among those officers who supported us in the strike. They are still waiting for their rise at the moment!

Another aspect of the agreement that is uppermost in the minds of the serving firemen is exactly how it is supposed to apply in relation to the reduction in the working week. There was agreement in principle that the working week would be reduced to 42 hours, and it is pretty obvious that a reduction in hours means more manning or a reduced fire cover.

In this particular area the union will have to be very vigilant about future developments. The setting for the change will be the Home Office enquiry that reported last year just before the strike. The whole basis of the report—and it will be seized upon enthusiastically by all the local authorities—was that the reduction in hours would have to be introduced "against the background of the government's policies on (a) pay and (b) local authority expenditure".

**Undermanned**

More bluntly, the report states elsewhere that "The capital expenditure figures provided for a very limited and sharply declining fire service building programme" and "there is no provision,

therefore, for increases in the number of firemen."

It is quite obvious that the county councils are operating on these lines. When the hours were last reduced from 56 to 48, in 1974, there was a massive recruiting drive that brought about an increase in the Tyne-Wear force of about 30%. There has been no big recruiting drive in the area that in any way compares to that of 1974, yet a proportional reduction in hours, ie from 48 to 42, would demand an increase in manning similar to that of 1974—that is, about 200 or so new firemen. (Since the strike, in any case, we must be undermanned by about 30 firemen in the brigade.)

**Army**

One of the county councillors in Northumberland recently had the cheek to state that the army managed to give the county adequate fire-cover with a much smaller number of men and with fewer machines, no doubt hoping that his outburst would lend weight to arguments for reduced manning. In fact it is well known that in the vast majority of cases the Army did not put out fires, they simply tried to contain them, and a glance at the

insurance figures for property lost would soon show how well the county was "adequately covered" during our strike.

Taking their cue from the Home Office report, the employers are likely to try to introduce the reduced working week by simply reducing the number of firemen on each shift and by increasing the work-load on the men on standby. This will be resented by the men. When a watch is on standby, there are a whole number of routines that have to be carried out: equipment is checked, the station is kept clean, hydrants around the area are checked, premises are checked for safety, there may be false alarms or exercises, and so on.

But then, of course, all this "routine" depends upon whether or not there is a fire. It is not generally known, but it has been calculated that during the first hour of a normal fire, a fireman expends as much energy as a normal worker does in a shift!

There is the element of danger that goes with the job and you have to be quite fit. For example, around our area, there are a number of farms. When we once had a farm fire, we had to run 15 lengths of hose from the fire hydrant to the fire.

Imagine carrying three big hoses at a time, running them out, and then coming back for more! After that a lot of people could be forgiven for collapsing with exhaustion.

There are certain limits to the manning—the number of men for each machine, and the number per shift, below which it would be wrong to go—it would reduce the fire-cover that is given to the public and it would therefore constitute a danger to life and property. Quite clearly, the Fire Brigades Union will have to be very wary about future developments in regard to the manning levels and the load on the firemen.

**Geoff Breedon** (Tyne and Wear Brigade) spoke to **John Pickard** (Gateshead West Labour Party)

**working in the union**

By Dick Massey

To be elected as a shop steward shows a vote of confidence in a worker to protect and advance the rights of the other workers on the job. Unfortunately there are two types of individuals who seek election to this office: one who seeks to earnestly represent the workers with no personal gain, the other who sees such a post as a foot on the ladder for personal advancement.

Sometimes they even sound ultra-left, but never miss an opportunity to ingratiate themselves with the management or employer and are rewarded "for services rendered" with piddling little jobs among the NCO's of the capitalist class. This goes on all the time.

But don't lose heart, we still have a strong virile working class movement. More prominent working class leaders seek greater rewards, titles etc, but they are swept aside by the growth and development of our movement, into the dustbin of history.

The factory floor is the point of the working class struggle and as a shop steward you become a leader in that struggle. Arm yourself and prepare to participate in their struggle, read the history of your class, and learn it well. You will then better understand what brutality and violence has been meted out by the bosses and the struggles and sacrifices made by your forebears.

Learn and digest agreements affecting your factory. The workers will enquire from you all the answers to the problems as they affect them and will expect you to enlighten them, but never try and bluff the workers, you will not succeed. If you don't know the answer they seek, tell them so, but tell them

you will find out.

Most important is to learn and know your job. Once the boss finds you are not going to be "bought" he will look for any weakness of yours to discredit you in the eyes of the workers. If you do shoddy work he will show this and have your name stuck on it.

Watch him, take a pride in your work, in your personal appearance, do not be late for work, do not lead the rush to the canteen or the clocking out point. You must at all times be an example, because if you fail on these points, not only will the boss trip you up, so too will the workers.

Never fail to be patient and courteous. Remember, not all workers have the ability to express themselves clearly, or to understand readily some points that you may wish to make. If they cannot understand the point you are making, do not blame them. Apologise for not making yourself clear and try again.

In any dealings with the boss never, never, go it alone, always have another shop steward or a witness with you. Never allow your position as their elected representative to be used to gain any advantage over your workmates, no matter how small; remember you are elected to serve them.

In your relations with the boss, be polite, courteous, but firm. If any of them ever addressed me by my christian name I politely but firmly pointed out that only my friends or relatives were permitted to address me so. If they dropped the prefix 'Mr' when speaking to me, in return I would likewise omit the prefix when I referred or spoke to them. They learnt to respect me and not try familiarity.



# Veto Thorn's sackings

The 2,200 workers employed by Thorn's in Bradford are facing redundancy as a result of the closure of the works.

Contrary to promises made in the past by Keven Crumplin, group personnel officer, and Fred Gosson (the happy axe man) production has been far from steady. Every worker knows that a plant makes its money on long production runs and prepares its future by developing new machines.

To prepare for redundancies Thorn's moved its "9,000" export-winning TV model to Enfield because it had gone down to runs of only 200. Once at Enfield the production shot up to four thousand sets taking away Bradford's bread and butter. Introduced to Bradford was a development line the "9,500" model, which in only 3 months saw 47 different types being developed.

## Cheap Labour

Cheap labour in the past brought Thorn's to Bradford, now with union organisation and decent wages they want to shed the people they employ, keeping the Baird trade name and the series of radio rental outlets. With the new developments in the TV industry however, there will be a reduction in the number of man hours needed to produce the sets. This should

be seen not as a chance for redundancies but as an opportunity for a reduction of the working week throughout the industry with no loss of pay.

Trade unionists and Labour Party Young Socialists in Bradford pledge their support not only over the next three weeks, when redundancy notices are to be issued and direct action will be on the

cards, but to give support throughout the fight to save these jobs. The Labour Government should veto the redundancies by nationalising Thorn's under workers' control and management, paying compensation only on the basis of proven need.

**John Ingham**  
(Labour Party  
Young Socialists  
National Committee)

## TRADES COUNCIL PLEDGES SUPPORT

By Pat Wall, President, Bradford Trades Council

The Bradford Trades Council stands opposed to the acceptance of any redundancies in the Bradford District. All three of the major sources of employment are now in decline. The wool industry has suffered a long period of contraction, the Tory controlled District Council has run down the labour force by a policy of demanning and now the sharpest decline is in manufacturing, the supposed salvation for this declining wool area.

If we allow the closure of Thorn's and other threatened redundancies to take place, one third of engineering jobs in Bradford will have been lost in the short space of twelve months. Bradford, at the mid-point of the M62, could soon become an industrial desert, a process already far advanced on Humber and Merseyside at either end of the motorway.

The first priority is to stand firm against the threatened closures and redundancies and to mobilise the whole labour movement to this end. The movement also needs to work out a fighting programme to deal with this whole question of unemployment. At the April meeting this Thursday, and probably at a special labour movement conference in a few weeks time, the Bradford Trades Council will seek to give such a lead.

# HACKNEY STRIKE FOR BONUSES

Over 600 Hackney Council building workers are on strike as a protest at management's refusal to implement that part of the 1977 agreement which would increase our bonus payments.

The shop stewards have been negotiating since January this year in an attempt to arrive at an agreement. But management are insisting that our bonus targets are cut by 10% on the capital and conversion section of the direct labour force in return

for conceding the national rate!

Management base their position on the fact that implementing the national agreement would result in increasing the total wage bill by more than 10% and therefore feel justified in demanding a 10% cut in targets.

At a mass meeting held last week (12th) a decision was carried by a narrow vote to work to rule as the best action to resist these attacks. The

shop stewards had recommended an all-out strike.

However, within a few short days it had been generally proved that this was not going to be effective in deterring the management's aims. Now site after site has opted for strike action as the best way to defend our living standards against these attacks.

**John Barratt**  
(UCATT Convenor,  
Hackney Direct Labour)

# Leyland sack convenor

Both the AUEW and TGWU have pledged 100% at Leyland's Parts Depot, Cowley, for the re-instatement of John Power, the site AUEW convenor, after Leyland's decision to sack him last week. He is accused of claiming too much travelling expenses for attending Leyland's Joint Negotiating Committee, expenses which Leyland had previously agreed to pay!

The Committee has recently been involved in negotiating a package of bargaining reforms. So far a hard line has been maintained by the

unions, especially by John Power, whose members stand to lose many of the conditions they have struggled to achieve in the past.

The unions are maintaining whatever technical offence he may or may not have committed does not warrant his dismissal. Consequently the AUEW District Committee has pledged its full support for a strike and will be asking for official backing while organising local meetings for all the district's 10,000 members. An Executive Council member is already involved

and negotiating with the company.

As well as being convenor for the AUEW at the depot for 12 years, John Power is also the district president of this union and chairman of the Oxford and District Trade Union Council, and recently he was selected as Labour's Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Aylesbury.

By an AUEW  
Member, Oxford



The picket at Garners in Oxford Street, London

Photo: Mark Rusher (IFL)

## GARNERS' STRIKE Success vital to all catering workers

Around a hundred trade unionists, and a number of Labour MPs and union officials attended a conference in solidarity with the Garners' strikers in London last week.

The secretary of the strike committee outlined the history of events which led up to the strike, which has now entered its 12th week. In January 1977 the Garners workers formed a staff association in response to the appalling conditions and wages suffered by them.

### Picket

The staff association attempted to win improvements in working conditions, and for sick pay to be paid to all employees who had worked for more than two years for the company but both these proposals were rejected by management.

Events came to a head when in October 1977 the Wages Council recommended increases in the wages of

Catering Staff, but the management of Garners did not respond. The Garners staff association attempted to put pressure on management for talks on pay but were met with a blank refusal. It was at this stage that the Garners' workers came to view their staff association as toothless and approached the TGWU who called a meeting to form a union branch in January of this year.

As another member of the strike committee put it "we joined the union because we wanted recognition as organised workers to counter our boss, who says he wants to be the George Ward of catering." He went on to state that the dispute will only be won if there is solidarity from other trade unionists and urged union branches to commit members to attend the picket regularly.

### Black Supplies

What is needed is a mass picket leading up to what would be a solidarity day

sometime in May, when there would be a call on the trades union movement to mobilise thousands of workers onto the picket line.

The strike committee urged that:—

1. All supplies be blacked.
2. There be a flying picket against companies supplying Garners.
3. Gas, electricity and postal services be cut off, and collection of rubbish bins be ceased.

### Victory Essential

The strike committee pointed out that it was essential to win this struggle for union recognition at Garners, and also Claridges, in order to ensure the growth of trade unionism in catering. A defeat would encourage reactionary employers and would be a setback to the trade union movement.

Dave Reid

## South Wales summer camp

Bookings are now coming in for the third Militant South Wales Summer Camp to be held on Friday 26th May to Monday 29th May 1978. All indications are that it will be just as successful as the previous two.

Many areas in South Wales are planning to get a good turnout. Anthony Tynan, an NUM Committee man from Ty Mawr Colliery, Rhondda, has pledged to get as many to come as possible. Peter Harris from Blaengwrach Colliery is working hard to get a record number down from the Neath Valley area.

It seems certain that this year's camp will be bigger and better than ever. Supporters are pulling out all the stops in Port Talbot, Maesteg, Neath, Llanelli, Amman Valley and many other areas.

Other parts of the country, however, have responded more slowly; but comrades should take up the lead of Bristol supporters who have organised well with co-ordinated transport arrangements.

The details of the camp are available on page 13.



Ted Grant will be among the speakers at the camp

What you have to provide is a tent and food for the weekend, although snacks will be provided free. There will also be a crèche for children and a live group as well as discos have been arranged.

The cost is only £6.50. Children aged 6 to 12, £1.50, under 5 years free. Bookings should be sent to: Rob Sewell, 99 Penderry Road, Penlan Swansea and cheques made payable to R Sewell.



# Militant

## GMWU: REGIONAL MEETINGS VITAL TO CONFERENCE

Delegates attending this month's regional pre-Congress meetings of the General and Municipal Workers' Union have important decisions to make.

The feelings of the membership of the third largest union on the future of the incomes policy are clear. A head of steam that had built up in the GMWU against any form of wage restraint burst onto the floor of Congress on more than one occasion last year. Since then shop stewards at every industrial conference of the union have agreed on claims ways in excess of the 10% 'guidelines'.

### 30 Motions

This year there are no less than 30 motions on the Preliminary Agenda insisting on free collective bargaining and some on a minimum wage for all (ranging from £50-£70). Delegates should ensure at this month's Regional Conferences that every one of these reaches the final agenda—at least for composition and a proper debate—instead of following a non-committal "Special Motion" to replace all of them.

Opposition to state intervention in collective bargaining is not enough. The whole idea of the Social Contract—that wage rises cause price rises—must be rejected. Resolution 102 is the clearest alternative. It explains the holding down of workers' living standards has served simply "to bolster up the profits of big business... [which] in the last quarter of 1977 increased by 31.8%."

**GMWU CONGRESS  
Militant Public Meeting**  
Scarborough, June 4th  
(first evening of Congress)  
7.30, The Talbot Hotel

Even with £20 million a day in the form of tax concessions, employment premiums, grants, etc. the capitalists still refuse to develop the economy as David Basnett (GMWU Secretary) has recently protested.

Yet the Executive's "New Economic Strategy", outlined in the March GMWU Journal, still proposes measures that merely tinker with the system. At best, they admit, "We would still be more than a million jobs short"! The "alternative economic strategies" put forward to Congress by some of the Scottish branches (86 and 132-134) are little different. Half measures—import controls, bigger subsidies, more government spending—don't tackle the basic problem. As explained elsewhere, in fact they only

### By Clare Doyle

cause more, fuelling the fires of inflation etc.

North Sea oil is the peg on which the Executive hangs its argument for an improvement in the economy. But it will make just 1% difference to the Gross Domestic Product this year and according to the White Paper, provide a maximum of £4 billion in tax revenue by late in the 1980s, with qualified advantages and making no fundamental difference to the enfeebled state of the economy.

Only public ownership of the monopolies, a real plan of production and democratic control and management by the working class will take society forward.

The union must fight on the pressing issues raised in the rest of the agenda—35 hour week with no loss in pay, retirement at 60, a campaign against spending cuts, a programme of nationalisation etc. It must put pressure on the Labour government to do the same—"Only socialist economic policies can ensure [its] survival" (Res 102). If the Executive continues to accept the government's capitulation to the demands of big business, it will be forced to oppose the genuine demands of the members.

Even the union's campaign against racism cannot be fully effective unless it is linked to the fight to wipe out its breeding ground—shortages of homes, jobs, hospitals, schools etc.

Nevertheless, the union statement on the National Front is a welcome step and should be followed up by the passing at Congress of resolution 230 from Croydon. "The NF aims to destroy the hard-won democratic rights of the labour movement." Ensure that "No member...of any fascist organisation holds a union card."

Finally, resolutions on the rules of debate in the union and on the pre-Congress mandating procedure reflect deep-felt opposition to the way they have been used in the past to prevent democratic discussion.

### Tackle Problems

the views of the membership must be allowed more sway. The Executive and full-time officials must move further into line with the interests of the workers they 'represent' and be completely accountable to them. They must be armed with realistic (not utopian) policies to tackle their problems. Delegates at the Regional pre-Congress meetings of the GMWU must play their part in ensuring that this process is stepped up.

PNP YOUTH MOVEMENT (UK)  
DISCO  
Punk, Roots, Reggae, Food, Drink  
92b Ladbrooke Grove, 22nd April.  
Buses 52, 15. 9 till late entrance 25p

### MOBILISE FOR THE ANTI-NAZI RALLY

Thousands of immigrants, black and Asian youths, Labour Party members, trade unionists, PNP supporters and Labour Party Young Socialists from all over the country will be taking part in the anti-nazi carnival in London on Sunday, 30th April.

The rally will mark the end of a two month ban on marches and demonstrations that was imposed in London under the provisions of the Public Order Act. The recent provocations by the National Front in Ilford and Brixton, coupled with the outrageous fascist bombing campaign, gives the carnival a special significance.

The rally is being jointly sponsored by the Hackney Campaign Against Racism and the Anti-Nazi League. Demonstrators will assemble in Trafalgar Square at 11 am and then march through East London to Victoria Park for a mass meeting which will be followed by a rock concert.

Every section of the labour movement must mobilise for this rally. The organised working class, armed with a bold socialist programme, is the only force in society capable of defeating fascism.

★ No platform for racists and fascists  
★ Black and white workers' unity to defeat racialism

## Rolls Royce, Coventry

# Sit-in continues

The sit-in by Rolls Royce workers at the two Coventry plants continues. With more than 8,000 workers now laid off by management, they are determined to resist the company's plans to undermine wage levels.

In negotiations, shop stewards succeeded in extracting an offer of a 9.7% wage increase. But management insisted on retaining 0.3% as a "contingency fund" to attempt to buy off the piece workers with an "earnings assurance scheme".

### "Wages War"

This is the nub of the dispute. Piecework was introduced by Rolls Royce management in order to extract the highest productivity possible without employing more men or machines. But the workers at Rolls Royce, by their organised trade union strength, have managed to turn it to their advantage.

The highest earnings in the Rolls Royce group are at Parkside, with the pieceworkers at the top. The other factories use these rates as a model in negotiations.

Workers suspect that if the management succeeded in buying off the pieceworkers now, it would be the first step towards driving down wages in the rest of the plant, and from there, launching an offensive throughout the country.

They are demanding the full 10% now, with no strings attached. The Coventry workers are determined to halt the attacks before they get into their stride.

"This is a wages war which we must win in order for the

company to remain viable and remain competitive," declared John James, director and general manager of Rolls Royce in Coventry. What a contradiction! While the press boasts about the new RB211 order, management is attacking the living standards of the highly-skilled workforce.

The men on the picket line are asking how much longer the government are going to tolerate these management wreckers of a nationalised industry. Before power was cut off to the plants, converting the work-in to an occupation, with the workers in control output actually increased.

This fight should be backed by every trade unionist. Already office workers in AUEW-TASS, laid off by the strike, have expressed their full support with a £2,000 contribution to the strike fund. If Parkside is beaten down, the other factories in the combine will be next in the firing line.

### Militant Mood

Their determination, in spite of management's divisive tactics and a barrage of attacks in the local press, is a sure indication of the mood of shop floor workers. They refuse to concede even 0.3% in the battle to maintain a decent wage.

The trade union leaders should take heed: their rank and file are in no mood to tolerate another year of wage limits.

### Darrel Cozens

(Coventry SE LP)

# Support the Claridges Pickets!

Among the highly expensive restaurants, hotels and the luxury cars, is a sight which is fast becoming more familiar in the West End of London.

A picket line. This time it is the workers at the exclusive Claridges hotel, who have been on strike since 10th April.

John Bex, a union representative at the hotel, explained that for four months now the workers have been fighting for recognition of their union, the GMWU, but that the management had rejected these justifiable claims. The issue that brought things to a head was the sacking of Richard Aldridge, a comit chef who is the shop steward at the hotel.

The management claim that he was sacked for bad workmanship. But this is clearly a case of victimisation and the workers are now determined to fight for reinstatement of their shop steward and recognition of their union.

It is essential to maintain the 24-hour picket line and trade union and labour activists will be welcome any time. Financial support is also crucial now and all donations should be sent to: GMWU, 154 Brent Street, Hendon, Middlesex, or take it along to the strike committee on the picket line.

By Martin Elvin

## closures from page 1

The Leyland management will now probably come forward with bigger bribes. These must be rejected. "No jobs for sale!" That must be the message of the labour movement!

No one has the right to sell any job. 1½ million workers languish on the dole! Our jobs are not the property of any individual: they belong to the entire working class.

A suggestion by the union officials that work should be shared out around the different divisions, including the profitable special products and the bus division, was contemptuously rejected by Edwardes. He is adamant that Speke will close.

He, of course, can always go back to the board room of Chloride, even if he manages to hack Leyland totally to pieces in the meantime. It is a scandal that he has had such unstinting support from the government!

The fight to save Speke must be taken up by the whole labour movement. A defeat for Edwardes will be a massive defeat for the capitalist class generally in Britain. It will give a boost to the determination of all those thousands of workers who like the Speke workers face imminent redundancy and a future of poverty, despair and isolation on the dole.

In particular other Leyland workers must come to the aid of those at Speke. If a forthright lead from the top is

given, then there will be a massive response throughout the combine. Derek Robinson, the chairman of the Leyland combine shop stewards' committee, has promised support. He has said that the whole combine is geared up financially and industrially in support.

The executive of the combine stewards' committee is meeting this week. They should issue a call to every Leyland worker: "All out on May 9th! Join the one day strike and lobby of Parliament called by the Liverpool Trades Council!"

The executive should then call an emergency meeting of the full British Leyland Trade Union Committee in order to mobilise support for a detailed campaign to defeat Edwardes.

The fight back has begun. But the only final answer is to take the resources of society out of the irresponsible grasp of the capitalists. Only a plan of production under full workers' control and management will save British industry and guarantee the future for the working class.

No redundancies!  
Fight the closures!  
Share out the work round the plants!

Full support for the May 9th one day strike and lobby!  
Stop the sabotage of industry!

Nationalise the monopolies under workers' control and management!

# Militant

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