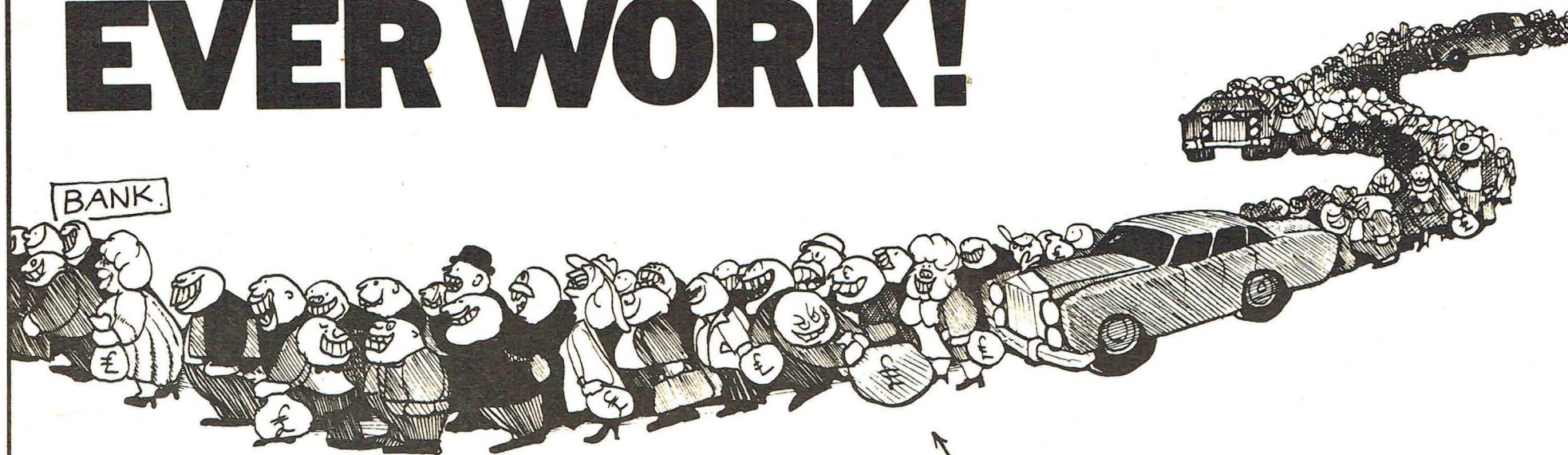


WHEN DID THE TORIES EVER WORK!



BRITAINS BETTER OFF WITH THE ~~CONSERVATIVES.~~

Big business is pouring millions of pounds into the Tories' election fund. Labour must answer this by mobilising mass support on socialist policies.

"Britain's better off with the Conservatives." The Tory Party has launched a massive propaganda campaign, buying up prime advertising space in town centres and busy shopping streets. They are trying to buy

vote in a big way. While housewives have to shop around to stretch their weekly budget, Ma Thatcher is going to town with £2 million in her purse.

Where does she get the money from in these hard times? From the big business firms who are reaping bumper profits as a result of the fall in workers' living standards.

While industry is run

on capitalist lines, the handful of rich families who own the biggest share of the country's wealth are laughing all the way to the bank. To make sure things stay that way, the bankers and businessmen are pumping millions of pounds into a political party that, if elected, will loyally do their bidding.

The Tory politicians are forced to present

themselves to the public as a 'national' party for 'all the people' in order to win votes. These creatures of the bosses, who unleashed the anti-union Industrial Relations Act and fought the miners, dockers and other workers last time they were in office, are now sickeningly posing as friends of

**Continued on
back page**

POEU RECALL CONFERENCE DEMANDED!

A 120-strong delegation of branch officers lobbied the POEU National Executive Committee on Monday calling for the reintroduction of the national overtime ban. The lobby was called by the Tyburn branch and every single London branch of the POEU was represented, as well as branches from as far away as the Midlands to the South coast.

As the deputation was leaving others were arriving from the North. The NEC's tactical arguments for the termination of the overtime ban were rejected wholesale. Evidence was shown that the vast majority of branches' up and down the country wish to continue the ban.

A poll conducted by the Tyburn branch showed that 168 branches, representing 72,640 members, wish to carry on the ban. Only 24 branches, representing 9,289 members, wish to lift it. The residue of some 30,000 were

Colin O'Callaghan
(London POEU)

still awaiting branch decisions or were unable to be contacted.

The points raised by the delegation were: (1) That the friction between branches and members referred to as the reason for lifting the ban was clearly shown by the poll to be totally unfounded. (2) How can the work to rule be effective without an overtime ban? Work piled up throughout the week would be cleared

at the weekend on overtime.

(3) The national overtime ban was introduced in solidarity with those members suspended for carrying out the instructions of the union. With 400 members now suspended how could the NEC justify the removal of the action in their defence?

(4) The NEC decision had brought about disunity and confusion within branches, turning branch against branch, work section against work section, and morale in some branches has been destroyed by what they see as a de-escalation of the campaign.

The unanimous call was for the reintroduction of the overtime ban in conjunction with a work to rule and selective stoppages to further our claim for a 35-hour week with no loss of pay now!

POEU members eagerly buying 'Militant' at the Lobby



THIS WEEK:



The meaning of Dubcek centre pages

The Great Manningham Mills Strike page 11

Where are the Islands in the Sun? see page 6

Fight a Socialist Campaign

Tony Benn has correctly described the next election as "historic" and the most important since 1945.

The Tories have given the working class and the labour movement ample warning of the devastation they will wreak if they come back to power. Every dirty trick and every penny of their estimated £4 million "fighting fund" will be used in an attempt to defeat Labour. The ad men of Saatchi and Saatchi have already been busy with their massive poster propaganda campaign attempting to depict Labour as the party of unemployment.

The naked class campaign of the Tories should be met with a "bold socialist" programme. This is a demand which Tony Benn has raised. Yet nothing of the kind has emanated, or is likely to emanate, from Callaghan or the Labour cabinet. On the contrary, all the signs point to Callaghan wanting a milk-and-water Manifesto and a bland "presidential" campaign with his "comfortable" image set against Thatcher's "stridency".

The 'Financial Times' [27 July] recently gloated over Callaghan's interview on TV: "anyone who watched...saw how the Prime Minister purred with pleasure at being described as Britain's best Conservative leader, a throwback to Stanley Baldwin in the 1930s." In a similar vein, 'The Economist' described him as the most Conservative Prime Minister since Lord Salisbury!

35-hour week

Callaghan and the right wing seem bent on eliminating any socialist or class appeal from the Manifesto. Thus the 35-hour week, he declared, "would not provide an easy solution to the problems of pay restraint or unemployment" ['Financial Times'].

The fear of any manifesto commitment to the 35-hour week was also shown in the censoring of the Labour Party Young Socialist Broadcast. Yet the 35-hour week enjoys massive support in the trade union and labour movement.

So does opposition to any further round of "wage restraint". This is shown by the strike of the industrial civil servants and the determination of all civil service unions to organise a common front to resist a further worsening of their conditions. But a 5% limit on wages has been announced by the government.

Right-wing spokesmen, like William Rodgers, advocate a permanent straight-jacket—a "permanent pay policy"—for the trade unions while the

government ratifies massive increases for the tops in the nationalised industries.

At the same time, the demand for the nationalisation of the clearing banks and insurance companies, which was accepted by the Labour Party Conference by a crushing 6 to 1 majority, was not even mentioned in the last joint statement of the Labour Cabinet and TUC. The unemployed will not see much hope in a document which says: "the problem of full employment within an acceptable period is daunting." It is within the power of the labour movement completely to eliminate unemployment, but only if it is armed with a programme to end capitalism and establish a sane, planned economy.

Delusion

The right wing are under the illusion that the recent revival of support for Labour is a vindication of their policies. In this they are at one with some sectarian groups on the outskirts of the labour movement. In despair, these groups have pointed to the vote at the Hamilton by-election where Labour increased its vote over the 1974 figure. This, they imply, shows that the working class have been duped into supporting the policies of the right wing.

It indicates nothing of the kind. Faced with the threat of the Tories, red in tooth and claw, the mass of the working class have rallied behind their traditional party, the Labour Party. It is despite the policies of the right wing, not because of them, that there has been some recovery by Labour.

It is possible that this mood among the working class, which can be fuelled by Thatcher's diatribes against Labour during the election, can carry Labour to victory in the election.

The mood of the trade unions is shown by the unprecedented establishment by the TUC of "Trade Unionists for a Labour Victory."

But it is not certain. All the signs point to the outcome being determined by the election campaign itself.

It is therefore crucial that the local Labour Parties, trade union branches and shop stewards' committees, exert enormous pressure on Labour's National Executive Committee and Cabinet for a socialist manifesto and campaign. A Labour victory will not be assured by bromides about "the family", nor by the smiling image of "Sunny Jim".

The millions who remain sceptical can only be won to support Labour by a concrete programme which answers their prob-

lems. The Tories' demagogic campaign on unemployment can easily be answered by putting the blame where it really lies—on the shoulders of the Tories and their capitalist system.

Labour promised "an irreversible shift in the power of wealth in favour of working people and their families" in 1974. The experience of the last four years has demonstrated that this is not possible within the framework of a diseased and decaying system. Only by taking control of the handful of monopolies which control industry, with minimum compensation on the basis of need, can the disease of unemployment and poverty be eradicated.

The rank and file must inundate the NEC with resolutions demanding action of this kind. Despite the holiday period, a determined campaign would evoke an enormous response. Why have the Tribune Group of MPs not taken up such a campaign within the labour movement? A few critical speeches in parliament or in NEC committees is not enough.

The labour movement is faced with the biggest challenge for a generation. Yet the kind of Manifesto and campaign which could determine the outcome of the election and the fate of the working class for the next period is, it seems, to be decided not by the movement but by Callaghan.

Experience

A meeting of the NEC and Cabinet to decide the manifesto will take place but "custom and practice" leaves it to the Leader to decide. This "convention" is thoroughly undemocratic, and the NEC should demand that it be ended for this forthcoming crucial battle.

The decisions of the Party Conference must be incorporated into the Manifesto, particularly the demand for the nationalisation of the banks.

Contrary to the myths peddled by the right wing, Labour has always done best when it has stood on a radical programme, as in 1945 and in the last election. It has fared badly when the right wing have had their way, as in 1959 and in the 1970 election.

A fighting socialist campaign can guarantee victory. A right-wing dominated campaign runs the risk of allowing a vicious Tory government to be unleashed against the working class. The rank and file should loudly raise its voice to ensure that it is the former, and not the latter, which prevails.

BRIGHTS NURSERY, ROCHDALE

Working mothers need nursery places

By Linda Chester
(Rochdale LP Womens
Section)
and Sheila Woodhead
(Wardle LP Womens
Section)

On Tuesday 1st August, nearly 200 angry people attended a public meeting arranged by the Labour Party Women's Section in a room provided by the NUTAW. The subject was the closure of Bright's Nursery—the only one in the Rochdale area to offer a practical nursery service to women workers.

Letters telling of Bright's intention were handed to mothers last week. Their immediate reaction was one of stunned amazement, but this soon gave way to frustration and anger as they realised that the closure would mean loss of jobs and severe financial straits for most mothers with particular hardship for one-parent families who are dependent on Bright's.

One mother said that municipal nurseries were no use because they close at 3.30 pm—long before she finishes work. Another said that she didn't enjoy going to work but she desperately needed the money to keep the wolf from the door. Another woman pointed to the need for many women to have an independent source of income to help them cope with unstable marriages.

The women's sections, aware of the many young mothers dependent on Valium and Librium and of the abysmal nursery provisions in the area, were already campaigning for pre-school services when news of Bright's closure broke. They were quick to offer their help and within a week of the announcement the public meeting was held.

Councillor John Connel (Prospective Parliamentary Candidate) pledged his support in the campaign and was impressed by the determination of the audience. Mrs Carol Benson, speaking for the mothers, outlined the facilities at Bright's, and said there was no alternative for the women there. She was strongly opposed to sending her children to child-minders



Children at South Oxford Nursery—closed by Tories

and this was repeated by several speakers from the floor. Instead of closing nurseries, she said, we ought to be extending nursery facilities generally.

Mr Alan Buckley, a social worker, said there should be nursery facilities on every housing estate and at every factory.

Margaret Crear (Royton and Wardle Women's Section) reminded the audience that the John Bright group of companies had been built mainly of the cheap labour of women. The company opened the nursery in 1950, not for humanitarian reasons, but because due to the labour shortage, it had needed to attract young mothers back to work. Now, because of unemployment, the nursery service is considered an expensive luxury to be dispensed with.

Bright's claim they can't afford to keep it open in spite of profits of £506 million this year. This is a decrease on the previous year but they can hardly blame their own workers who take home on average £2,607 a year and have only had an increase of 6.9% this year.

The audience was so used to the myth that Bright's were losing money that they were flabbergasted to hear what the company profits were. They were even more startled when they heard that the dividends paid to shareholders were the same as last year, despite the drop in profits, and that they were the only people being asked to pay.

It was pointed out that nursery education is invaluable and yet they are expected to pay in the most important years of a child's development for services that are free later. Bright's workers pay £6.50 a week and other working mothers £13. Women workers are doubly exploited and employers make profits out of them and they pay the bosses for doing so.

An important aspect of the campaign is who should control nurseries. Among the demands to protect the services in future was the call for trade unions to share the running of nurseries together with staff and local authorities.

The recent TUC document on pre-school services says: "The responsibility of the state to safeguard the very young as long as the responsibility of pre-school remains largely in the unregulated, exploitative market...As things stand at present both our very young children and their parents are being grossly and inexcusably exploited."

The meeting set up a committee with one delegate from each of the women's sections, one from each of the Bright's mills, one worker from the nursery and two other parents. They will discuss a pilot scheme to be put to the local council with recommendations based on the TUC document.

They called on the TUC to back up its own report and along with the labour movement and the parents to fight to keep open the present nurseries and massively extend pre-school services.

London Manifesto

On Monday July 24th an historic decision was taken when the Executive of the Greater London Labour Party decided by a vote of 15 to 14 that in future the Manifesto for the Greater London Council elections should be submitted to a Conference for discussion, amendment and final approval. While the Executive still has to decide at its next meeting whether the Mani-

fest should be discussed at the normal Annual Meeting or at a special Conference this decision in principle is an important step forward. All Labour Parties and trade unions in London should send messages of support for this decision to the Executive to ensure that no one tries to reverse this decision at the next Executive meeting on September 11th.

MILITANT: Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth.
Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office.
Editor: Peter Taaffe, Business Manager: Dave Galashan. Published by Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN, Tel: 01-986 3828.
Printed by Cambridge Heath Press Ltd [TU], Mentmore Works, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Labour Party Conference

By Robert Jones
(Secretary, IOW CLP)REJECT ARBITRARY
USE OF 3-YEAR RULE

The Isle of Wight Constituency Labour Party's resolution to this year's Annual Conference, which would have committed the Party to mount a campaign for the 35-hour week if carried, is one of the latest victims of Standing Order 2 (6), the notorious "three year rule".

The CLP has been informed by the Conference Arrangements Committee that the resolution is out of order, because its subject was dealt with in Composite 23 at the 1976 Conference. In fact, there are a number of resolutions for Conference this year which call for amendments to Standing Order 2 (6), but even under existing rules, the Conference Arrangements Committee's decision is open to question.

CAMPAIGN FOR 35-HOUR WEEK

"This Conference, concerned at the current indications that unemployment will continue to grow and at the ineffectiveness in any long-term sense of the government's efforts to counter unemployment, notes that, on the basis of the current working hours, a reduction of the working week to 35 hours would create 10% more jobs, thus facilitating

the employment of all those currently unemployed, registered or otherwise.

"Conference therefore demands that the Party leadership in Parliament immediately bring forward legislation to implement a 35-hour week without loss in take-home pay, and instructs the National Executive Committee to put all possible pressure

on the Parliamentary leadership to ensure this is carried out.

"Furthermore, Conference calls on all sections of the labour movement to actively support this policy, and attempt to bring about a 35-hour week without loss in take-home pay in any sphere in which they have influence."

The relevant Clause reads: "When the Annual Party Conference has, by Resolution, made a declaration of a general Policy or Principle, no Resolution or Motion concerning such Policy or Principle shall appear on the Agenda for a period of three years..." But Conference has never made a "declaration of Policy or Principle" on the

subject of the 35-hour week!

Composite 23 was defeated in 1976 after Judith Hart MP, speaking for the NEC, had opposed Clause (c), "that where a firm lays off workers its books are opened to trade unions and the firm nationalised. Let it be clear—it was on the basis of Clause (c) that the NEC opposed Composite 23; it was on the basis of

Clause (c) that Conference rejected the Composite.

It is true that Clause (a) of Composite 23 called for a 35-hour week—but the NEC expressed no opposition to Clause (a); Conference voted down the Composite because it could not accept Clause (c). How does that amount to a "declaration of Policy or Principle" on the 35-hour

week?

Unemployment will be debated at the next Conference. There are resolutions from trade unions and CLPs, no doubt forewarned of the position the Conference Arrangements Committee would be likely to adopt, which call for a "shorter working week", or a "reduction in working hours." The TUC has declared its position on the 35-hour week, and must fight for it.

But the Labour Party, because of this perverse interpretation of the Standing Orders, will be without a clear commitment to implement this measure which could help the one and a half million on the dole!

This may be of some relief to the Party leadership, but it cannot be acceptable to the labour movement, which has recognised the need for the introduction of a 35-hour week without loss of pay.

The Isle of Wight CLP delegate will try to overturn the Conference Arrangements Committee's ruling when the Conference is held, and we call for support from all CLPs and trade unions sending delegates to bring the 35-hour week to the centre of the debate, where it belongs.

BRICK LANE



Anti-fascists occupy end of Brick Lane

photo: Julian McKittrick

NF THWARTED AGAIN

All night last Saturday a group of Bengali youth and other anti-Nazis, including Labour Party Young Socialist members and 'Militant' supporters, stayed on the pavement at the top of Brick Lane to stop the National Front from claiming their previously 'traditional' selling pitch.

Over the last few weeks, since the vicious and appal-

ling racist murders in the East London area, the National Front have really seen their vile campaign of racist lies and filth backfire, as hundreds of Bengalis and others have made a determined effort to drive them away from Brick Lane.

If they ever sold any papers before, they must now be selling even fewer because of the successful counter moves.

But the most important side to the weekly confront-

ation is the Sunday morning dissemination of propaganda in Brick Lane market. Here socialists have been making ground. Papers such as 'Left' and 'Militant' are sold, and numerous leaflets given out. The local LPYS has received a tremendous boost as a result of other LPYS members coming from all over London to campaign here for working class unity against racialism.

Last Sunday, a pathetic

group of about 60 fascists stood at the top of Brick Lane yelling abuse at passers-by. Some of their shouting was of a racist nature, but some of it was pure venom for the world as a whole.

I spoke to one passer-by, who told me he had never been involved in any political activity and yet when he passed the NF contingent they yelled "scum" at him. The fact that he was white shows how demoralised and disorientated the NF have become. This worker was so repelled by them that he bought a pamphlet from me to read our arguments.

Murray's visit

One highlight of the morning was the fleeting visit of Len Murray to the Anti-Nazi demonstration. While he was there, Mohammed Iqbal—a trade unionist for 15 years, formerly a T&GWU shop steward and now in the G&MWU—asked him why the TUC had done nothing in Brick Lane. "The TUC was

"Today's TUC claims to be left wing and yet in Brick Lane what have they done?"

Len Murray replied that the TUC were going to do something in the near future; he was just going round to see people in the area to find out their feelings.

Len Murray's presence there should serve as an example to all 11½ million members of the TUC. As Kevin Fernandes pointed out, speaking for the LPYS at the

rally after the march: "What we need to crush the NF and defeat these racist murderers is the mobilisation of masses of workers".

Every trade union branch, every shop stewards' committee in the country should mobilise for the big day of action on Sunday, August 20. The whole labour movement must show its solidarity with the workers of the East End who have been subjected to the hideous and menacing presence of these racist thugs.

One month ago a gang of fascist thugs attacked a group of workers leaving a Brewery in the area. August 20 is an opportunity for every worker in the country to show his outrage at these attacks on fellow workers. We must mobilise thousands of workers to demonstrate conclusively that the NF will not be safe if they show their faces.

At the same time, August 20 must be the start of a political campaign to defeat fascism, by showing working people the socialist alternative to the horrors of capitalism.

On this basis it will be possible, not only to achieve a once-off massive mobilisation, but also to hold these workers in the struggle through a socialist perspective to get rid of the capitalist system which is the breeding ground for fascism.

By Ed Bober

(London LP Executive)

CHRYSLER - heading for a crash?

Chrysler, the multi-national car company, lost 120 million dollars in the first quarter of this year on its US operations. Since 1970 its share of the US market has slumped from 16% to 12.1% this year.

Wall Street experts have little confidence that Chrysler can continue its US operations without state intervention. They say that investment of \$7.5 to \$10 billion is required in production of small cars to meet government regulations.

This will affect workers in the UK as it has been admitted that profits from overseas subsidiaries are used to pay off centralised losses.

By Paul Walter (Coventry SE LPYS) and Tom Smith (Chairman, BL Special Products Combine Committee, personal capacity)

Some experts predict that the US authorities will not generate funds for the continued existence of Chrysler UK when the deal between the UK government ends in 1979. By this they are committed to meet half of the losses of

Chrysler UK up to £15m. If the parent company can't or won't meet its side of the bargain due to the cash crisis then serious difficulties will face UK workers.

'Engineering News', in which this report appeared, quoted Sir Keith Joseph and the Conservative Party's attitude of last year to another Chrysler crisis: "We would have let Chrysler crash."

The terrible cash crisis facing Chrysler and the fall in world trade must place the continued existence of Chrysler UK in jeopardy. The

current rise in new vehicle registrations is a temporary phenomenon.

Take over

It makes even more important the complete nationalisation of the 'big four' under workers' control and management as the first step to a planned transport system. Only this, linked to a socialist planned economy, can remove the threat to jobs in the car industry.

The Tory wreckers must be

shown for what they are. Labour must be returned at the next election but workers must ensure through their union branches and Constituency Labour Parties that their MPs are committed to Clause Four of the Labour Party constitution, for ownership of the means of production.

For the nationalisation under workers' control of the 'big four'!

For a socialist transport system!

No redundancies!

Sailing
on
Troubled
Waters

"Britannia rules the waves," was the nostalgic comment. Not so now. "Troubled Waters", one of the BBC's recent Risk Business programmes, showed the once prestigious position of Britain's shipping and freight business. It also provided an insight into the decline of one of capitalism's industrial and political lifelines.

British shipping has come a long way since the day of 'Onedin' and gunboat diplomacy. Due to the lucrative trade and the cut-throat nature of the business in the 19th century, cartels (price rings) were formed 100 years ago. They now have the polite name of conferences but the result is the same.

The £1,000 million a year Britain earns in shipping fees is now under attack from the developing countries and the Soviet Union. The difference in treatment by the BBC of this twin-pronged assault was perhaps significant. With the developing countries the background music was lively and progressive guitarists, whereas Russia was introduced with a piece of sombre orchestral work.

From the position of transporting 40% of world trade, we now account for 8%. Britain has managed to keep its 'Plimsoll line' from sinking by massive investment in new ships that specialise in containerisation and modern technology, largely due to government grants and tax concessions. But this has not stopped the growth of South Korean shipping by 2,000% in the last 15 years, Singapore by 6,000% and India by 600%.

Soviet shipping rates are 40% below the 'cartel' prices of the west and pose a mortal threat to Britain. In response, the leading lights of British shipping (whose bulbs have dimmed) have called for government subsidies and, as the managing director of P&O put it, the "anathema of protectionism."

It is somewhat ironic that such is the anarchy and rottenness of British capitalism that a government subsidy of £28 million is being given to the shipbuilding industry for 24 ships for Poland and six ships being built for India (as part of Britain's overseas aid programme) will cost her nothing. Shipbuilding, itself a former bulwark of the economy, is now more akin to a monstrous scrap-yard.

To avoid the somewhat ominous conclusions of the programme of protectionism, restrictions, and policing of merchant vessels, which could lead to military conflict, we need to fight for:

★ Public ownership, control and management of all aspects of shipping freight, dockyards and shipbuilding.

★ Nationalisation of the banking and financial institutions, because as the programme pointed out, they held the purse strings.

★ The rationalisation, socialisation and harmonisation of shipping internationally to benefit the workers of all countries.

By Brian Debus

(Erdington Labour Party)

250 YOUNG SOCIALISTS AT SUMMER CAMP

A week packed with political discussion, sporting activities and entertainment. That was last week's enormously successful Labour Party Young Socialists Summer Camp.

250 visitors came from all over Britain and from overseas to attend this first-ever event. Despite the almost monsoon conditions spirits remained high in the heart of the beautiful Forest of Dean where the camp was situated.

All the mass meetings and seminars were well attended throughout the week.

Although there was a vast range of subjects on offer for discussion, the political level was always high. Many serious issues were raised and concentrated on in the discussions, not least the problems of racialism and Fascism, world peace, the colonial revolution and Stalinism in Eastern Europe.

Indeed one of the best events was the Czechoslovakia 1968 Rally addressed by Rob

Jones, who gave a really inspiring account of his own experiences in Prague '68 and of the cold, calculated and cynical way in which the mounting aspirations of the Czech workers were suppressed by the Eastern European bureaucracies.

Recreation

In every discussion and debate one theme emerged and re-emerged: the need and power of the world working class to transform society in its own interests.

The incisive analysis of the Marxist method was equalled only by the correctly-placed optimism and faith in working people to consciously determine the course of history.

Determining outdoor activities at the camp was sometimes the weather, nevertheless they were a huge success.

The number of comrades to be seen limping towards the microphone at the end of the

week testifies to the popularity of the sporting activities.

These ranged from tugs of war (eg. YS National Committee versus female comrades) to the Welsh rugby team versus the rest of the world. Every afternoon footballers dodged the tent-peg holes and in the evenings the disco marquee competed with films specially laid on and even with the local "real ale" pub up the hill. Indeed if comrades felt a little "Old" or "Peculiar" it may have had

more to do with the brew up the hill than with "Desperate Dan's" catering which came in for some (light-hearted) criticism.

Entertainment

The two club-nights revealed some latent talents amongst Young Socialists. Welsh comrades found a novel way of raising money for the Militant Fighting Fund by refusing to stop singing until they had been forcibly driven

off the stage by loose change.

Andy 'Larrie Adler' Bevan, at one point disguised as a Londoner, added his own vocal chords to the guitar chords supplied by DJ Dave Nellist.

In an "Any Questions?" quiz the National Committee "Respect for Theory" faction were soundly defeated by the "Lumpen" faction although it was clear which team quiz master Eddie McParland sided with. John Woulfe (West Midlands NC member)

achieved ultimate fame when he found himself starring in a "This is your life" show which cast some doubt upon his parentage amongst other things.

A week packed full of activities from which everybody gained and learnt, enjoyed by all, and rivalled only by the second LPYS camp—next year.

Julian McKittrick



Swedish comrades doing a turn at the Club Night



Jeremy Birch [Selly Oak Labour Party] spoke on the Colonial Revolution, its significance and development in this epoch of imperialist decline. He pointed out that the two-thirds of the world's population who live in the "Third World" have to endure inhuman conditions of poverty, degradation and mass unemployment—with housing in many of the giant shanty towns nothing more than tents or tin shacks.

The transformation of society along socialist lines was therefore a life and death issue for these peoples, as capitalism had proved itself utterly incapable of providing for their basic needs. That capitalism is in an epoch of wars and revolutions was never truer so far as the 'Third World' is concerned.

However, because of the lack of a developed industrial working class in countries like Syria, Ethiopia and, more recently, Afghanistan, a leadership modelled on the Stalinist bureaucracies of Russia and China was on the order of the day in the absence of a Marxist tendency to bring about genuine socialist democracy for the workers and peasants. Nevertheless, tremendous advances have been made through the nationalised planned economies, in tackling the enormous problems that capitalism can only worsen.

The Cuban Revolution in the late 1950's and early 60's marks a testimony to this. Without the mass organisations of the working class based on the trade unions, deformed workers' states have inevitably grown up, with the peasantry acting as the main basis of the revolution rather than as a supporting class.

The best material and political aid that the British working class could give to the revolutionary developments in the 'Third World' would be the socialist transformation of Britain and the establishment of real workers' democracy. Since, as Comrade Birch concluded, "for the mass of the people in the 'Third World' it is either a socialist revolution or continued misery under capitalism."

Geoff Stout

OUR VERDICT



"It's been a first class experience. I loved the way everything was conducted in a democratic manner. All the debates have strengthened me politically. The debate on "World Peace" has made me more determined as a socialist and has given me a clearer perspective of the need and importance of the PNP to bring about a united world force of black and white to create a socialist transformation of society."

Keith Hollingsworth

"Coming from Sweden and the Swedish Young Socialists (SSU) it's really refreshing to experience the enthusiasm and the high political level of the LPYS. In particular I learnt a lot from the meeting on the Czechoslovakian events of 1968. The camp as a whole was an excellent combination of social activities and political discussion. I think the LPYS sets an example to other socialist youth organisations of how to carry out political work amongst working class youth. I'm convinced that with their policies the LPYS will grow into a mass socialist youth movement so that with the rest of the British labour movement they'll be able to change society in the interests of working people."

Lena Johansson
(Swedish Young Socialists)

"I think there was a high level of political debate, the subjects were interesting—but I don't think it's possible to achieve socialism without a highly developed socialist consciousness without a highly developed socialist consciousness in society. I am critical of the idea that a general strike over wages could be the basis for a socialist revolution, for example. I think that in comparison with Sweden all the main speakers were very good. I think nearly everybody at the camp enjoyed it—including me."

Henrik Westander
(Swedish Young Socialists)

MILITANT v TRIBUNE v MANIFESTO

The first session of the camp was a lively debate between the three main political tendencies in the labour movement.

Rob Sewell opened the debate on behalf of *Militant* by explaining the ideas and programme of the Marxists in the Labour Party, and explaining clearly the very real crisis of British capitalism.

Neil Kinnock MP on behalf of *Tribune* began by saying that he agreed with nearly everything Rob Sewell had argued but that he disagreed with the strategy of *'Militant'* for achieving its aims; "Our only disagreement is that I want to see a more gradual approach", he said.

Ian Wigglesworth MP on

Steve Glennon
(LPYS National Committee)

behalf of the 'Manifesto Group', however, said that he fundamentally disagreed with the cases of both the other speakers. He rejected the ideas of *'Militant'* and *'Tribune'* as "statism" and believed that cooperatives, as opposed to nationalisation, was the road that the labour movement should seek.

Unemployment

In a very lively debate Rob Cadwgn (Bristol NE LPYS) pointed out that if the MPs of the 'Manifesto Group' had to suffer the living standards of

ordinary working people then they might change their views. Responding to Ian Wigglesworth's assertion that if the workers ran society they wouldn't know what to do with the money, Rob presented a full list of areas in desperate need of money.

Chile

Ian Byrne (CPSA National Executive) asked why only 5 *Tribune* MPs had voted against a 5% wage limit in Parliament and how Ian Wigglesworth, as a CPSA advisor, could support public expenditure cuts which meant unemployment and extra work for CPSA members.

Several speakers in the debate referred to the lessons of the Chilean tragedy, which resulted from policies similar to those of *'Tribune'*. Unfortunately but significantly no one could be found amongst the audience, to support the ideas of either the 'Manifesto' or *'Tribune'*, in the open discussion.

This debate showed that *'Militant'* is recognised as an important tendency of the labour movement, in fact the leading one among labour's youth. In summing up Rob Sewell pointed out that the LPYS and *'Militant'* believe that only through a thorough debate of the various ideas, in a comradely manner, could the problems facing the working class be overcome by working out and implementing a socialist programme.

FIGHT FOR JOBS

Dave Cotterill, leading off the seminar on "unemployment", described how modern society was now seeing the return of levels of unemployment not seen since the 1930s. Out of 20 new members in his own LPYS branch, over one third were either unemployed or expected to be soon. He explained that unemployment is characteristic of capitalism, and the lunatic waste of resources it means.

Many different questions were raised in the discussion, including the need to oppose all forms of redundancy, voluntary as well as enforced, and taking up by the trade

unions of the fight for the 35-hour week.

It was pointed out that though Labour's youth were the first section of the labour movement to take up the fight against unemployment in 1970, our campaign could not promise to create even a single job. What we can do is offer young workers and those on the dole a fighting socialist alternative to a system which puts the profit and luxury of a few capitalist parasites before the livelihood and welfare of millions of workers.

Cathy Sandler

(Marlybone LPYS)

Left & Right

FRIENDLY BOBBIES?

In the May issue of the NF journal 'Spearhead' there is an article by Martin Webster complaining about the change in the police's attitude to the NF. The article is entitled "Now the Police are Mobilised Against Us", and complains, among other things, against the police ban on demonstrations.

While complaining about the less favourable attitude of the police, however, Webster reveals a remarkable instance of police co-operation with the NF:

Following an NF complaint that distribution of a leaflet by the Board of Deputies of British Jews in February 1974 was a breach of electoral law, a Special Branch officer and a Fraud Squad officer were "engaged in a month's long nationwide investigation."

No prosecution of the Board was made, but local leaflet distributors were taken to court. The Appeal Court later acquitted those charged as the leaflets in question did not actually state "Don't vote NF".

The police, however, appealed to the House of Lords, "who ruled that its distribution was unlawful, except where a candidate in a constituency where it was distributed accepted responsibility."

As Webster says: "Not many people know about that police operation which, with the investigation and all the court actions, must have cost hundreds of thousands of pounds. But it was an historic affair."

REAL VALUES

Tory spokesmen are always preaching about the need to defend "traditional values" and preserve "our great British heritage", bla, bla, bla... As these Tories are not usually very explicit about the things they are defending, it is helpful that Mr Nicholas Fairbairn, Conservative MP for Kinross and West Perthshire has been more specific: "The first tailor I ever went to," he told the 'Daily Telegraph', "told me to judge a man by his shoes and that is still true. That is why those who do not wear shoes that are polished and bright are dimwits and slubberdegullions." Well, now we know!

SUNNY SPAIN

Young Socialists are not the only ones enjoying holidays this week [at the gloriously wet Summer Camp] for in Spain debutante Lucy Fox and her boyfriend, Victor Lownes, head of that vital national asset, Playboy, are enjoying a short ten-day vacation sweltering in the blazing sunshine at the luxurious Marbella Club. However, Victor Lownes, who as Chief Executive of Playboy is paid a salary of £247,000 a year, almost £5,000 a week, has yet to acquire a suntan, as he spends all day playing backgammon against his good friend Arab millionaire Aboul Khawaja, from whom he has so far reportedly won a mere £250,000.

GALBRAITHIAN DIG

Witchdoctor bites witchdoctor. Professor J K Galbraith, champion of Keynesian deficit financing, couldn't resist a dig at his more fashionable rival, Milton Friedman, advocate of the tight money supply.

"Sir, It is not in my kindly and compassionate nature to have pleasure in the discomfort of a professional colleague. And certainly I find none in the 30 per cent inflation rate, the other deep economic disarray that is causing suffering in Israel leading to resignations from its government, grave concern among its friends. But I do not think that conservatives elsewhere in the world should be allowed to forget that Mr Begin's first action on coming to office was to call on Professor Milton Friedman as his economic adviser. And as my friend would justly have taken credit for success had his policies here [or elsewhere] been so endowed, I am sure he will similarly take responsibility for failure in a manly way. Yours faithfully, J K Galbraith."

It probably gave Galbraith all the more satisfaction that his letter was to 'The Times' [3 August] whose editor, William Rees-Mogg, is a fervent disciple of Chicago's monetarist guru.

THE YORKIE PHENOMENON

"A classic recipe for success," trumpeted the introduction to the centre page spread 'Product Profile' in last week's issue of 'Campaign', the weekly magazine of the advertising industry.

What could this be referring to? Had the creative team at some advertising agency worked out the correct marketing mix for dragging capitalism out of its crisis? Were the one-and-a-half million unemployed soon to be swept into jobs to keep pace with the booming demand in an economy where all the wheels would be turning?

Well, not exactly. But it was a brand new product which had "instigated a complete change of marketing strategy from its major competitor." I had to admit that sounded promising.

Perhaps the great British genius had popped up to save us once more, just in the nick of time. It must be some new invention or process that was going to turn back the tidal wave of imports and drive the impertinent Japanese, Germans, French, etc. etc. out of their dominating position in the British market.

Well, not quite. But it was the amazing success story of Yorkie, the chocolate bar which, in the 12 months since its launch, had eaten up 20 per cent of the market in chocolate bars. Don't laugh, when you're in the kind of state that British capitalism is in, any success is worth savouring.

"The concept of Yorkie was of chocolate as food and nourishment," enthused Michael Cooper-Evans of J Walter Thompson, the agency responsible for the promotion of Yorkie.

It seems that the competition—particularly Cadbury Dairy Milk—in an attempt to control prices [?] had cut down on the size of their bars which had become very thin.

"Yorkie's success is based on its shape and its thickness," continued Cooper-Evans. "It delivered what people wanted from a chocolate bar." Rowntree's market-

ing director added excitedly, "We kept on getting the response that it was good to eat."

Cadbury reacted to this threat from Rowntree by redesigning the packaging and shape of Dairy Milk and by spending £600,000 relaunching it. Cadbury's marketing director admitted that during the early '70s they constantly reduced the size of Dairy Milk: "It was important to keep up the apparent value of the product...we decided to keep the surface area large which implied a reduction in the thickness of the bar...appearance was more important than taste."

Thus, provided with an opportunity, Rowntree stepped into the ring with their champion: "A grown-up chocolate bar with sustaining qualities. It tastes nice and it is cheerful and companionable."

All very amusing...But these "jokers" spent £1,000,

'never mind the quality feel the width'

By George McDonald

(National Union of Journalists)

000 promoting Yorkie and £1,000,000 promoting Dairy Milk. This year the figures will be £1,000,000 on Yorkie and £1,500,000 on Dairy Milk. And these are only two of the dozens of chocolate bars on the market.

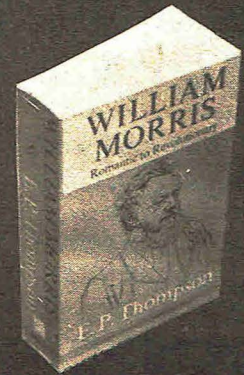
Given the increasing amount of poverty and misery in Britain, the joke soon begins to turn sour in the mouth. Because the joke is on us.

A planned socialist economy would do away with this insanity and replace it with a system where products—including chocolate bars—would be produced for human need and not private profit. Where the countless millions of pounds now being squandered on the advertising of products which are virtually identical apart from the name on the label, would be used to provide things that people actually need, small things like houses, hospitals, schools and jobs.

News from nowhere

william morris's works

reviewed by peter lee



William Morris is well remembered today for his wallpaper and tapestry patterns. But he was also one of the earliest popularisers of the ideas of Marxism in this country.

In 1884 he founded the Socialist League, which was a split-off from Henry Hyndman's Social Democratic Foundation, and numbered Marx's daughter Eleanor among its members. The League did not last long: it failed to orientate towards the everyday struggles of workers, remaining on the level of abstractions, fell into the hands of anarchist tendencies, and rapidly collapsed.

Morris's own political ideas can be seen in two of his major political writings: 'Dream of John Bull' and 'News from Nowhere'.

The first is set around the times of the peasants' revolt in feudal England. The peasants beat back an army of the King's men come to sort out their rebellious village. But the real meat of the tale comes after the battle when Morris talks to the village priest in the church,

explaining how the present feudal form of society will give way to a new form of society organised on very different lines.

Morris lays bare all the contradictions of capitalism, which to the priest sound like insoluble riddles. Men will be set free from serfdom, and yet will own nothing and be forced to sell their labour power to survive, goods will be plenty and trade worldwide, and yet poverty will still exist, men will finally throw off this new form of slavery, wage slavery:

"Then shall those that labour become stronger and stronger and so soon shall it come about that all men shall work and none make to work, and so shall none be robbed, and at last shall all men labour and live and be happy, and have the goods of the earth without labour and without price."

The story is romantic, set among the rough and cheerful villagers of England, yet the class analysis of the historical process is sharp and easy to understand.

The second of Morris's socialist tales takes us for-

ward in time to after a successful socialist revolution, which he puts at 1952. If only he had been right!

Few workers today would find anything relevant in the details of life and dress which Morris describes.

His major concern was with the ugliness and lack of grace and naturalness of Victorian times, so all his characters are fair and noble. The ladies wear long white flowing garments, somewhat like the ancient Greeks, and the men are strong and rather like the villagers in the first tale.

Perhaps the best bit is where he discovers that the Houses of Parliament is now being used as a warehouse for manure because of its convenient site on the Thames! But some of the details are not so unrealistic. There is no money, and family relationships are not as narrow as in a capitalist society, although people still get married if they want to.

Much of the story reflects Morris's own prejudices, but the real merit of it is in the enthusiasm and joy which comes over from people who have control over their own

lives, who walk with their heads held high, freed from all the burdens that we know of: having to find the rent, to feed and clothe ourselves, and being forced to go out to work most of the day to pay the bills.

Morris's political writings are largely pure fantasy. They are good reading to escape from the present world, but they also contain many of the basic ideas of socialism presented in a very readable form.

★ Political writings of William Morris [ed A L Morton] (£1)

★ 'News from Nowhere', 'Pilgrims of Hope', 'A Dream of John Bull' by William Morris (£1.95)

★ "William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary" by E P Thompson (£3.90)

Order from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN (add 25% for postage)

Who are the real scroungers? **PART 4**

By Tim Lewis
(Wakefield LPYS)

ISLANDS IN THE SUN

A favourite pastime of the real scroungers, the bosses, is tax avoidance through tax havens. These are islands or countries which have low taxes. If they also have a beautiful climate, that's an additional advantage in case the occasional visit is necessary.

By moving capital to them, a large firm can avoid paying taxes in Britain, and yet reap the profits from their factories in Britain. Loose company laws in these havens also make it possible to conceal the real owners of com-

panies and to adopt accounting practices that would be illegal in Britain. In many cases, individual businessmen also hold bank accounts which serve as a depository for fees and payments on which they wish to avoid tax. Some of

the well-established tax havens are exotic, remote islands, like the Cayman Islands. But two are on our own doorstep—the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

£

The practice is for a UK based business to buy up a small and similar business in the Islands. So, for example, an electrical firm with its base in England will take over a small business in the Islands to form a nominee company. It is so extensive that, although only 75 square miles in area and with little industry, Jersey has companies registering at present at a rate of 1,500 a year. Since 1973, there have been 10,000 new registrations. Laing Construction, Spillers, ICI, Barclaytrust and Hambros [merchant bankers] are up to their necks in the muck. The Midland Bank Trust Corporation [Jersey] has deposits of £116m—all there to avoid tax.

Japanese manufacturers are registered in European

tax havens en masse. Profits travel the tax haven trail back to Japan. But because profits are better abroad, the profits of British firms don't come back to investment in Britain, but abroad. Fiddles can be openly worked through the local High Street bank. Because Jersey prints its own bank notes, big investors can profit from currency speculation.

There is a vast trade in raw materials centred in the Islands. The result is that the prices of essentials are artificially inflated—at our expense. Businessmen make huge personal gains as well. Personal fortunes invested in 'trusts' in the Channel Islands are estimated to cost the UK at least £1,000m in lost tax revenues a year.

£

An American oil company paid its employees only small salaries in Norway where it was operating, but large sums through Jersey.

Unfortunately for them, some get caught. Mr Cohen, an English solicitor, landed

his private plane in France and was caught with £75,000 in crisp new English bank notes. J Binstock, a lawyer, is hiding in Spain because of his deals in the Isle of Man.

£

M Dun, of the British Islands Reform Group, alleges that "bent officials at the Bank of England and bent lawyers, [are] like confetti on the ground." The Bank of England, which has much information on the money deposits, refuses to disclose this information to the Inland Revenue. Even the Treasury turns a blind eye.

It took a systematic campaign by the 'Sunday Times' in June 1976 before the Treasury stirred itself to stop "one £60 millions tax dodge" operated by the Rossminster group of 'smugglers' based in the Channel Islands and other havens.

So much goes on that "the Islands' economies have over the years developed in such a way that their continued prosperity is now entirely dependent on their low tax

status," according to Colin Powell, Economic Advisor to the State of Jersey. Jersey sets up official committees to get round the UK tax laws. Its courts refuse to help the UK Income Tax collectors. The EEC refuses to control them and they don't come under the tax and monetary union, which shows the role of that body in keeping the interests of the bosses.

These islands are manipulated by the wealthy to distort, interfere with, and destroy the economic plans of neighbouring countries. Jersey was even used as a base to supply military equipment to South Africa! Yet Edward Heath sailed into the Island and was able to confirm that "no threat to the Island's tax haven status would exist if the Conservatives were in power."

The pressure of big business and the Tory Party has meant that nothing has been done. The Wilson Committee [named after Sir Harold] to Review the Functioning of Financial Institutions blatantly ignored the whole issue. We in the labour movement must pressurise our leaders to end this disgusting scandal once and for all!

ANOTHER TANKER SPILLAGE

The news last week that a tanker carrying 38 tons of highly inflammable propane gas jack-knifed and overturned in a densely populated area at Loughton, Essex, once again highlights the dangers of transporting hazardous and highly explosive chemicals by road.

In the Loughton accident, one of the three gas cylinders ruptured—and it was only sheer chance that a major catastrophe like the ones in Spain and Mexico two weeks ago was averted.

In both disasters, tankers carrying liquified gas exploded on collision and sent fireballs together with a rain of ignited liquid over a wide area. It only took a matter of seconds to incinerate hundreds of people and hideously burn thousands.

In the Mexican holocaust, people as far as ten miles away suffered burns as the wind diffused the gas which detonated with the slightest friction.

This latest accident, following a number of serious mishaps in the last week alone in which many people were treated for formaldehyde,

methanol and chlorine poisoning has provoked widespread indignation—especially when it was revealed that the local village could have been wiped out had the gas ignited. The driver of the tanker, moreover, compounded the fears of the residents by saying that he knew that the accident would happen some day. He went on to say that the company has had a number of such accidents in

the past!

It is hardly surprising that there is such a high frequency of accidents involving chemical containers when 41% of all petroleum products are sent by road. These are in addition to other highly toxic and noxious chemicals like ammonia, chlorine and sulphuric acid.

Even more surprising, there is at present no compulsory system for iden-

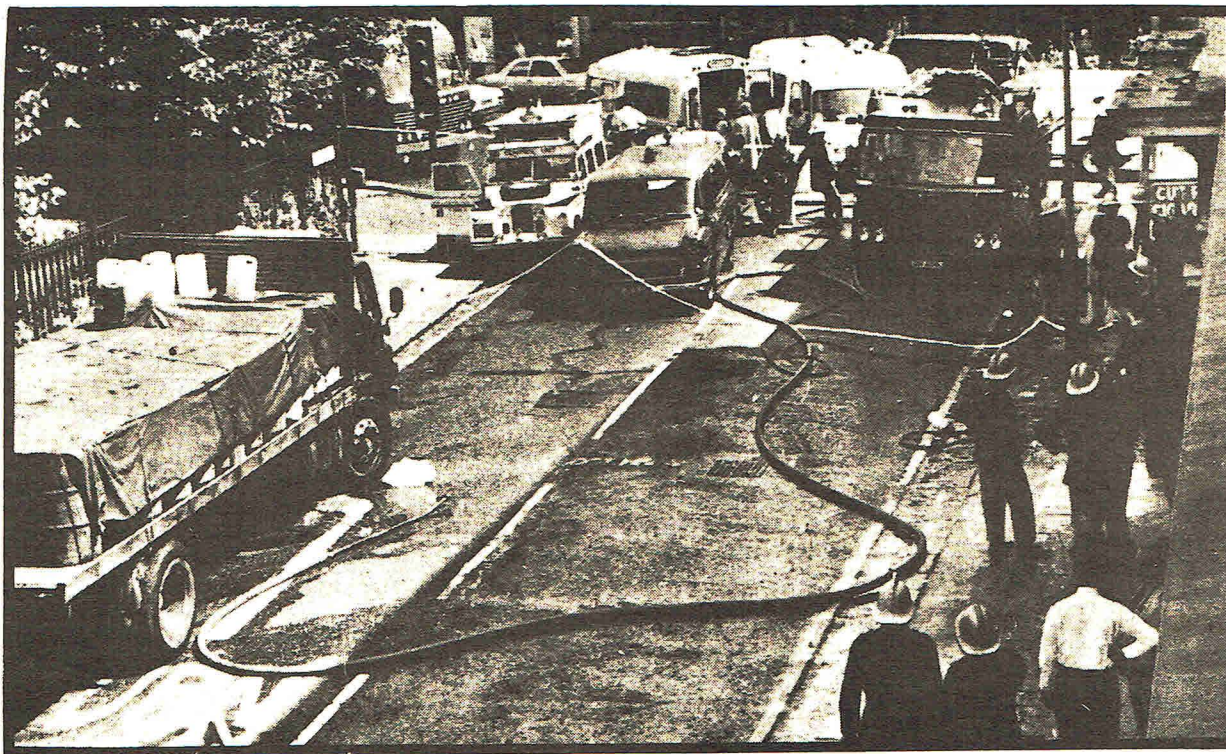
tifying the chemical in case of spillage, nor standard methods for treating and rendering harmless, and above all guidance for treatment of people exposed and overcome by fumes.

The present signs say nothing of the poisonous nature of the chemical, that is whether it damages the nervous system or is a cumulative poison, its antidote, and above all how to

neutralise and dispose in case of spillage.

The labour and trade union movement must take up the fight for initially a re-routing of dangerous chemicals from densely populated areas, until a safe method of transportation system can be introduced and for a more effective labelling system.

By Ronnie Sookdheo



REAL WAGES

The last few months have seen a slight recovery in average real wages, according to official statistics.

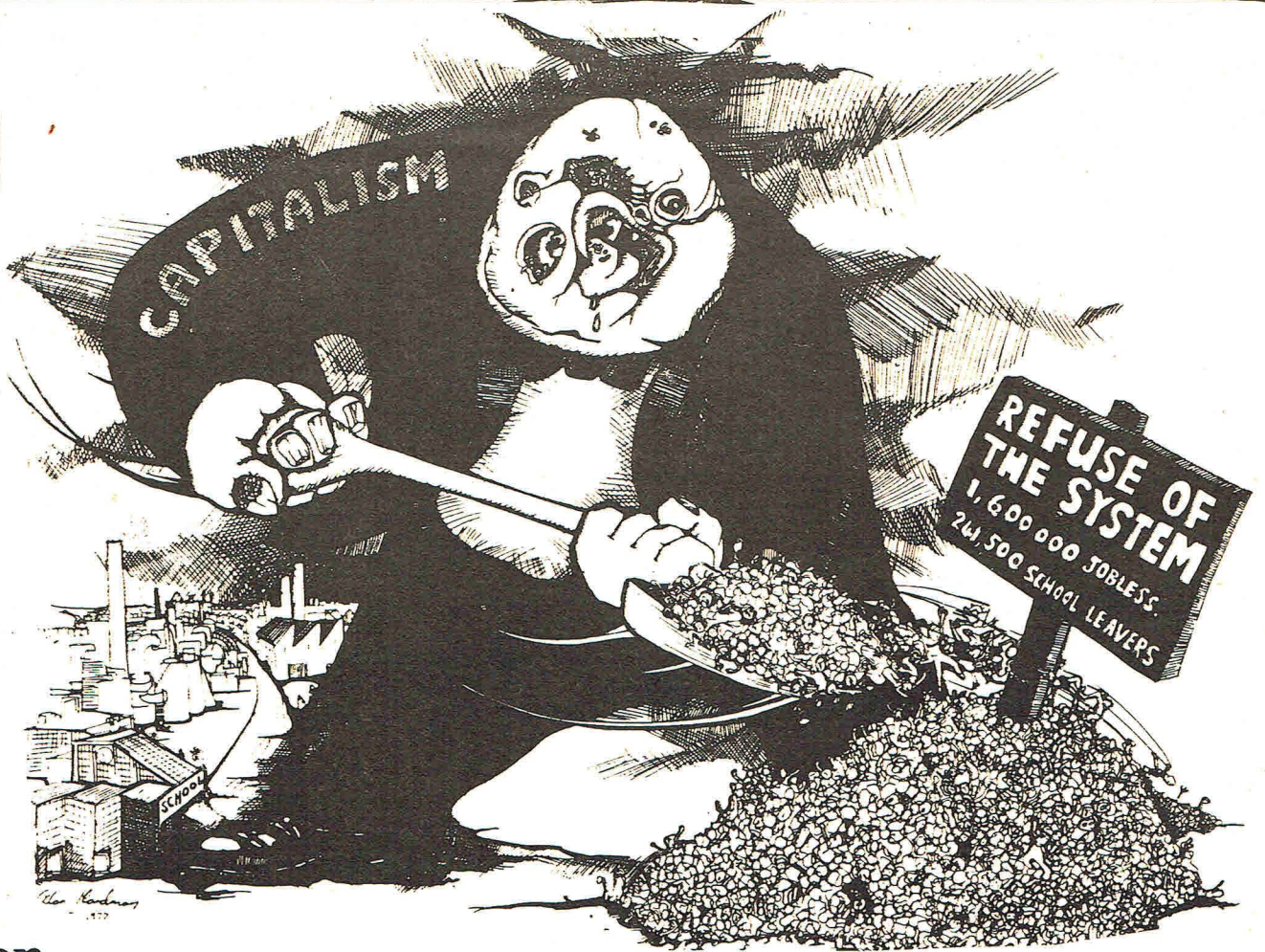
In the twelve months to May 1978 earnings rose by 12.5% and retail prices rose by 7.7%. After taking account of the budget changes in income tax, back-dated to April 1978, take-home pay (gross income less income tax and national insurance) rose by 13.8% for a married man with average earnings. Allowing for the increase in prices, the real rise in take-home pay was 5.6%.

In money terms, the average take-home pay for a married man with two children with average earnings increased from £67.34 in May 1977 to £71.12 in May 1978 (at constant May 1968 prices). "Average male earnings", however, include salaried staff and management and exclude the unemployed.

Even the improvement shown by the official figures has to be put in perspective. The Labour Research Department calculates (Facts Service, 29 July) that "the recovery in living standards in the last few months means that real take-home pay has now returned to the level first reached in 1972."

In other words, even according to the best figures workers have six years' lost ground to catch up!

A day in the life of a Careers Officer



“It’s a difficult position to be in, knowing you’re sending someone to a lousy job, yet knowing that at the moment he wants that job more than anything in the world.”

This town is not in an area of high unemployment—just above the national average—and youth unemployment is much less than in many areas in the Midlands and the North of England. But it is high for the South, and no less degrading and demoralising for the youth in the dole queue.

Many of the school leavers have few if any academic qualifications, and are defined by our society as having “little to offer” because of this. Despite what the bosses say, school leavers are keen to work, and have a lot to contribute if given a chance. But because of the way our industrial system is organised, there just aren’t the opportunities for them to show what they are capable of doing. There are few job vacancies around, even for people with ‘O’ and ‘A’ levels, although life certainly is easier for those with paper qualifications.

It’s the job of the Careers Officer employed by the County Council Education Department to help those young people, mainly school leavers, to find work by canvassing local factories, offices and shops for vacancies, and arranging for them to go along for interviews.

Most of the young people I talk to these days are this year’s school leavers. But some are last year’s, and still haven’t started their first jobs. They are pretty demoralised at this stage, and little wonder! They’ve been reject-

ed for jobs time after time. Most of the morning was spent on the fairly “routine” business: signing young people on to claim supplementary benefit, sending them along for job interviews if their abilities, aptitudes and interests matched up with the few job vacancies available, and more often than not, sending them away with the faint hope of a possible vacancy next week.

Besides this, there were several incidents which stuck in my memory as being worth relating, and which show just what young people are up against (apart from lack of

youth who applied to him for a job that the only reason he was not acceptable was that he “didn’t employ black people”!! When asked for an explanation by me, he repeated his “reason” for rejection, and refused, when told he was breaking the law, to reconsider the youth. As a result he has been reported to the Race Relations Board, but that won’t help the lad to get a job.

Another case that morning showed the injustices of the capitalist system. A 16-year-old youngster had, totally out of character, been tempted to dip into the till of the news-

★ A youngster came in to seem me, worried because he could not afford to buy “respectable” clothes to go to interviews in. £10.35 dole money, after all, is only meant to keep body and soul together! I sent him along to DHSS to apply for a clothing allowance, but even if this is successful, it will be weeks before it comes through.

★ A young girl I talked to was upset and nearly in tears because her supplementary benefit had been suspended for six weeks. Her crime? To “voluntarily” leave a lousy job as a kitchen assistant where

a more innocent and unsuspecting school leaver. Yet another firm to put on my personal blacklist.

Many of the jobs that employers ring us up about are really lousy with low wages (many under £20 a week), long hours and poor conditions, but young people are so keen to work that they will accept anything, often against the advice of careers officers.

It’s a difficult position to be in, knowing you’re sending someone to a lousy job, yet knowing that he wants that job more than anything in the world at that moment. He knows that if he doesn’t work and is forced to claim benefit, the capitalist system will condemn him as a lazy good-for-nothing scrounger.

It’s an indictment of the system that virtually the only employers who treat their employees reasonably well as regards conditions are the nationalised industries, far from perfect though they might be, the local authorities, the NHS, and the civil service. It’s no coincidence that they have got strong unions.

These incidents indicate the injustice of the system; a bosses’ system. Naturally in this situation when the bosses break laws brought in by their apologists who run the system for them, they more often than not get away with it. If by some fluke, the law is used against them, they are fined a few pounds and merrily continue as before.

On the other hand, when youth offends against the law of the land, “justice” demands that full retribution is exacted and the ‘culprit’ is squeezed dry.

Roll on the day when we finally get rid of this rotten exploiting system and build a socialist planned economy run by the working class for the benefit of all, where every school leaver will be able to do a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay.

All workers must support the LPYS demands of:

★ A job for every school leaver.

★ A share-out of work with no loss of pay—a 35-hour week now

★ Young workers to get a fair percentage of the full adult wage (to be paid at 18).

★ A minimum adult wage of £70.

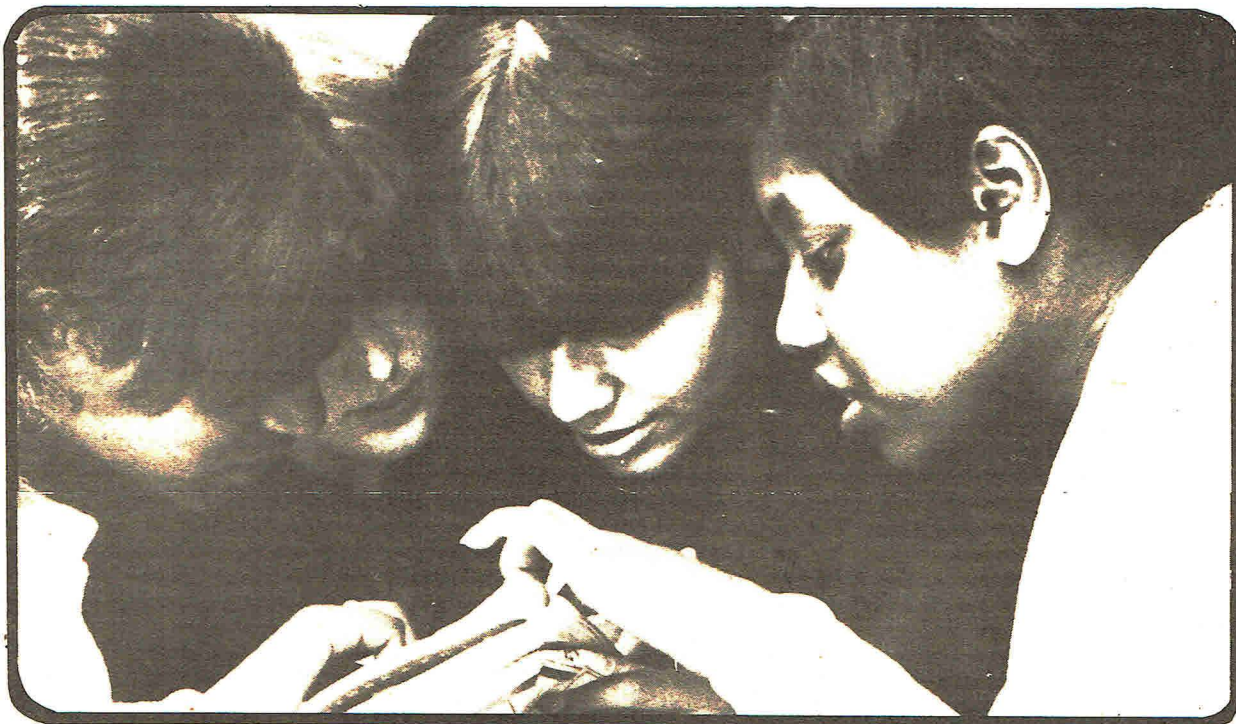


Photo: Romano Cagnoni (Report) (11)

School leavers going through the newspaper searching for jobs

agents where he worked. His employer, without hesitation, not only sacked him but called in the police. The youth was fined over £90, and now has to pay this off at £3 per week. This no doubt seemed a fair arrangement to the magistrate, £90 being a small sum to him, but that youth is now without work, he is on a six week suspension from unemployment benefit because he was sacked for “industrial misconduct”, and his supplementary allowance has been reduced. So he now has the princely sum of £6 per week to live on, £3 of which has to be paid into the court. Although desperate for a job, he’s not going to find it easy to get one, particularly if employers ask him to provide a reference.

★ One of the first things to come up was a case of racial discrimination. Everyone knows that many bosses discriminate against black youths applying to them for jobs, but most of them are very difficult to catch out since they often refuse to give reasons for rejecting anyone. If they do give reasons, they say that rejection is because of “poor educational standards” or “unsuitability”. A case presented to the Race Relations Board needs pretty solid evidence before it even has a chance of being heard. So much for our “tough” race laws! This particular case was exceptional in that the employer laid his head on the block by telling the black

job opportunities) in their attempt to earn a living.

★ One of the first things to come up was a case of racial discrimination. Everyone knows that many bosses discriminate against black youths applying to them for jobs, but most of them are very difficult to catch out since they often refuse to give reasons for rejecting anyone. If they do give reasons, they say that rejection is because of “poor educational standards” or “unsuitability”. A case presented to the Race Relations Board needs pretty solid evidence before it even has a chance of being heard. So much for our “tough” race laws! This particular case was exceptional in that the employer laid his head on the block by telling the black

she had to work long hours for £18 a week. All I could do to help her was to send her along for a couple of job interviews and hope she’d be successful.

★ Later in the morning a community worker rang up to say that a young worker’s mother had told her that her son was being forced to work long hours overtime at a local factory, and some days has to work an exhausting stretch of 11 hours. Whether he’s paid overtime or not, it’s still illegal for someone under 18, even voluntarily, to work these hours. With any luck, the overworked and undermanned Factory Inspectors will be able to force this employer to cut down on the hours without the youth losing his job. On the other hand, the boss is more likely to sack the youth and take on

Czechoslovakia 1968 P

THE MEANING OF DUBCEK

Ten years ago on 20 August, Russian and Warsaw Pact forces invaded Czechoslovakia. The toppling of the Dubcek leadership and the brutal repression of the movement of workers and students opened up a period of turmoil throughout Eastern Europe.

It also provoked a series of crises and splits in the western Communist Parties, the effects of which are still evident.

To mark the tenth anniversary of the invasion, we are here reprinting an article by Alan Woods, first published at the end of 1968, in which he clearly relates the momentous events that shook the Stalinist regimes and explains their significance.

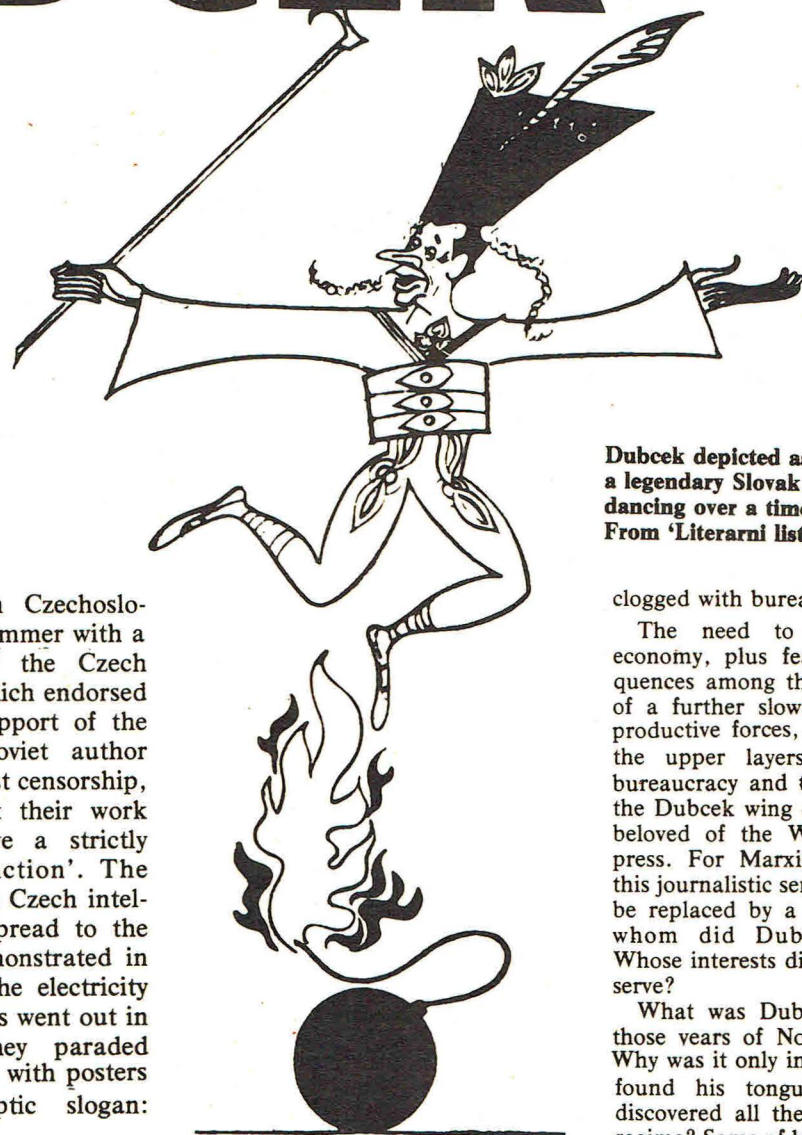


Alexander Dubcek

The movement in Czechoslovakia began last summer with a stormy session of the Czech Writers' Union, which endorsed a resolution in support of the protest of the Soviet author Solzhenitsyn against censorship, and affirmed that their work would 'never serve a strictly propagandist function'. The ferment among the Czech intelligentsia rapidly spread to the students, who demonstrated in the winter when the electricity failed and the lights went out in their hostels. They paraded through the streets with posters bearing the cryptic slogan: "Give us light."

The Secret Police brutally attacked the demonstration, wounding several students. It was a measure of the nervousness of the bureaucracy then that they strove to pacify the students by offering to pay the hospital bills of the injured demonstrators. This offer was met by the bold demand that those responsible for the outrage must be punished and the press must publish all the facts about the incident. The student leaders warned that if the papers did not tell the truth they would march to the factories and explain the facts to the workers.

The split in the bureaucracy and the fall of Novotny which followed these events cannot be explained simply by the actions of the writers and students, but must be seen against a background of the slowing down of economic growth and the crisis of the Czech economy in the last few years. The crazy attempt on the part of the various national Stalinist bureaucracies of Eastern Europe to build socialism in 'their own' countries has led to a situation where each state attempts to construct every branch of industry 'independently' and without consideration of the inevitable restrictions imposed by the old capitalist national boundaries.



Dubcek depicted as Janosik, a legendary Slovak "Robin Hood", dancing over a time bomb. From 'Literarni listy' 1968.

clogged with bureaucracy.

The need to rationalise the economy, plus fear of the consequences among the Czech workers of a further slowing down of the productive forces, led to a split in the upper layers of the Czech bureaucracy and the emergence of the Dubcek wing of 'reformers', so beloved of the Western capitalist press. For Marxists, however, all this journalistic sentimentality must be replaced by a simple question: whom did Dubcek represent? Whose interests did his programme serve?

What was Dubcek doing in all those years of Novotny Stalinism? Why was it only in 1967-68 that he found his tongue and suddenly discovered all the evils of the old regime? Some of his 'liberal' friends had very sudden conversions indeed. For instance, Jiri Hendrych, the Party spokesman on cultural affairs, who in January was preaching sweetness and light and calling for 'fresh approaches' to the creative intelligentsia, at last year's Writers' Congress, stormed out of the hall, with the words: "I have finally reached the end of my patience with your people." Subsequently, he was behind the expulsion from the Party of a number of militant writers.

The main plank of Dubcek's programme was economic reform. His proposals broadly agreed with the 'Libermanist' policies introduced in East Germany in 1963 and in Russia in 1965. Under the scheme the directives from the central plan would give way to plans drawn up by individual enterprises or associations of enterprises. Far from abolishing the privileges and wealth of the bureaucrats, Dubcek aims to increase the wage differentials, to grant 'incentives' to the factory managers. The move is, in fact, a Bonapartist manoeuvre on the part of the tops of the regime to balance on one set of bureaucrats (the factory managers, 'technologists', etc.), as against a different layer (state bureaucrats).

An article in the 'Sunday Times' (21st July) graphically revealed the social stratum on which Dubcek leans for his stable support. In an interview, a Czech factory director gave his reasons for backing the new leadership:

Thus, throughout the 'Fifties, the Czech bureaucracy tried to force the development of heavy industry, to the detriment of consumer production, leading to a chronic imbalance between industry and agriculture, a lop-sided development of industry itself, chronic shortages of consumer goods, and unbelievably, actual overproduction in a nationalised, planned economy! The myopic planning 'from above' which decreed production of heavy industrial products, and still more heavy industrial products, together with all the inefficiency, bungling and mismanagement of a bureaucratized economy, led to the widespread stockpiling of goods, which often became useless.

The necessity of 'meeting the plan' led to the replacement of quality with quantity: so that those consumer goods which were produced, could not be sold on the world market, while their price put them beyond the reach of the Czech workers. A State Commission in 1964 reported that of 4,000 production lines inspected in 50 factories, only one-third could be judged of competitive standard. The Czech economy, which had been the showpiece of the Stalinist world in the 'Fifties, was grinding to a halt,

Alan Woods' article, written at the beginning of September 1968, was first published in 'Spark', Winter 1968.

FRANCE

FRENCH WORKERS FIGHT 'AUSTERITY' ATTACKS



Demonstrators against the government's 'austerity' programme

French workers, frustrated by the defeat of their parties in the March elections and angered by the attempts of the ruling class to make them pay for the crisis in French society are moving firmly onto the offensive on the industrial front.

At the same time the bosses, having held on to political power by the skin of their teeth, are looking pessimistically to the future and are preparing themselves for the bitter battles that lie ahead.

The economy now faces a slowdown for the rest of 1978. Even the French Employers' Federation (equivalent to the CBI) has complained at the low level of investment, and the growth of production has already begun to fall, reflecting both the general world economic stagnation and particularly the lack of faith of the French capitalists in their system's future.

Unemployment rose by 5% in June alone and is expected to be between 1,200,000 and 1½ million by the end of the year. Inflation, much to the workers' anger, has been given another twist by the cutting down of government subsidies and is now running at 12% per annum according to official figures.

With most of the recent rises coming in basic necessities: foodstuffs, gas, electricity, transport, rents, etc., it is the workers' pockets which have been hit hardest. The result of the government-created price rises on utilities (some ranging up to 20%) and the coming rise in private sector prices—the 'Financial Times' reports that "the effect of the liberation of industrial prices has yet to be felt"—will be a drop in workers' purchasing power. It has been estimated that demand for consumer goods, which has been the main stimulus for the economy in the last six months, will fall by 0.4%.

This austerity programme has forced more and more workers to take militant action to defend their wages, jobs and conditions.

In May car workers occupied their factories. Naval

By Helena Wray
(Southgate LPYS)

dockyard workers struck for three weeks to gain parity with other workers and won substantial concessions.

Since September last year state employees have taken part in more than ten 24-hour strikes and numerous days of action against the austerity programme. The mood of militancy has been reflected by every section of the working class.

Unions representing 2½ million civil servants are in deadlock with the government over the question of wages. Catering workers in the Bank of France struck for nearly two weeks and gained an 8.5% wage rise.

Not reported in the bosses' press but to be found among the pages of the Communist

Party's paper 'L'Humanité' are literally dozens of small strikes, demonstrations and occupations, with workers fighting not just for higher wages but against sackings and victimisation and for shorter working hours, better conditions and longer holidays. Nurses, telephonists, cement and metal workers are just a handful of the groups involved; **the whole of the French working class is in a fighting mood.**

Bosses' dilemma

The ruling class is in a cleft stick. The economic crisis means that they have little room to manoeuvre or make concessions to placate the workers. On the contrary they need to dramatically cut workers' living standards to save their system. But any measures they take only meet with renewed resistance from the working class.

They are faced with the choice of either outright attacks on the working class which would quickly lead to open confrontation or to try to buy time by leaning on the workers' leaders to hold back

the movement. This second policy was edged at by President Giscard d'Estaing when he invited opposition leaders to have discussions with him early in July.

However, these discussions were recognised by most of the bosses to be useless as class antagonisms are now too strong to be softened by such gestures: "The policies defended by the PS (Socialist Party) and the PCF (Communist Party) are totally incompatible with those pursued by the President of the Republic and the majority," commented 'Le Figaro' (3.7.78).

Knowing that struggles are inevitably fast approaching, the ruling class, having gained some small measure of credibility from the election result, is letting slip its mask of moderation and is preparing for battle. Henry Krasucki, secretary of the CGT (Communist controlled trade union) described the bosses' tactics over the past period: "First of all they gambled on demoralisation by presenting the struggles as being superficial issues. Then they tried isolation. All that having been without effect they have turned to intimidation." ('L'Humanité' 5 July 1978)

Intimidation

One example of the bosses' intimidation is at the Renault plant at Flins where there were recent strikes and the management was forced to make concessions. Now 60 redundancies have been announced including those of five union representatives.

This victimisation has been recognised by the workers as a blatant attack on the right to strike and to organise. Strikers, union activists and workers involved in any sort of battle with the management are now likely to be sacked under the cover of redundancies.

There have even been cases of physical intimidation; one boss in Lyons was actually arrested for shooting and wounding a trade union representative!

Looking to the two main workers' parties, the Socialist Party and the Communist Party, are thousands of

workers thirsting for political ideas and radical change. This has been reflected by the shift to the left of the PCF in the past period and by the growth of the left wing CERES group in the PS.

However, the leaders have not always shown themselves to be willing to fulfil those workers' aspirations. The right wing of the PS led by Mitterand showed its unwillingness to challenge capitalism by its acquiescence to the capitalist Left Radicals in the Union of the Left. Now, instead of leading workers against the right wing government they enter into discussions with the President, considering it "useful" and a "good method" to discuss with him "the great interests of France."

Split

There are signs of a split within the French ruling class. Some of its more sophisticated tacticians would like to bring the right wing PS leaders into the government. This was proposed by Lecanuet at last month's Congress of the Giscardian Union of the Democratic Front.

They see this as a means, at least temporarily, of holding back the struggles of the workers by giving legitimacy to the government's policies. At the moment they see this as preferable to escalating confrontation.

These ruling class overtures have provoked enormous turmoil inside the PS ranks with the left resisting such open class collaboration and the right, led by social democrat Michel Rocard, seeing this as preferable to remaining in opposition with the PCF. At the moment PS leader Mitterand is trying to straddle both camps fearing a split in his party.

Over the past couple of years the PCF has shifted dramatically to the left. However, in many cases it is left talk not backed up by a concrete programme. For example on the 14th July (Bastille Day) 'L'Humanité' thundered against the cant of capitalist 'liberty' and concluded: "And today the Bastilles are there to be

taken, stone by stone." But nowhere in that edition did that outline a programme that could take the Bastilles 'stone by stone'.

In answer to the price rises 'L'Humanité' demanded an end to the most "unfair" rises and the introduction of a form of family allowance to be paid for by a tax on banks and industry, but nowhere mentioned the need to take over those monopolies so as to really control their wealth. The truth is that the PCF leadership, frightened by the growth and the support of the PS, shifted left as a purely cynical, vote-catching move and has yet to prove that its fine words can become fine deeds.

Even if the leaders were willing to carry out the full PCF programme of the nationalisation of the top nine firms and their subsidiaries, as a left wing government would be under enormous pressure from the masses to do so, it would still be a path fraught with danger for the working class. If large sections of the economy remained in the bosses' hands there would be no doubt at all that they would use it to sabotage the work of the government so as to demoralise its supporters and bring it down as was the case in 1936 when the Popular Front of Socialists, Communists and Radicals came to power but failed to break with capitalism and was thus itself broken and discarded.

Workers' Control

Only a full programme of nationalisation of the 'commanding heights' of the economy under workers' control and management, with the working class mobilised to defend those gains, can avoid this danger.

In the future it is very likely that a left wing government would be elected during a period of mass struggle. Armed with such a programme, the workers' parties could quickly and conclusively bring those struggles to a successful resolution.



French workers spend a larger share of their wages on food, so the recent price rises have seriously hit their pockets

It is over a year now since the Tory press took up its campaign against Marxism in the British labour movement. At that time right wing Labour MPs and cabinet ministers such as Shirley Williams argued that socialists who believe in the existence of a class struggle—labelled by Harold Wilson as “comers-in”—had no place in the tradition of the British labour movement and should somehow be removed from the Labour Party.

This view is consistent with the “official” history taught to each new generation—that the trade unions and Labour Party have always been “moderate” organisations of “responsible” people who rejected such foreign notions of class conflict and mass struggle. But the real traditions of the British working class are light years removed from this one-sided view. Those mighty organisations of labour were built by the mass movement of the workers themselves in times of bitter conflict and upheaval, always in the face of the ruthless and openly biased intervention of the state on the side of the employers.

It was out of a huge wave of militant industrial struggles involving dockers, gasworkers, match girls and many others in the 1890s that the Labour Party was created. In this article Keith Narey, Chairman of Manningham Branch Labour Party, who was last year picked out for attack by the Tory press as a Marxist, gives an account of how one such battle led to the formation of the Independent Labour Party, a forerunner of the Labour Party.

The Great Manningham Mills Strike, 1890

The Manningham Mills strike of 1890 in Bradford was a turning point in the history of working class struggle, not only for the local movement but also having repercussions nationally.

It clearly showed the basic class conflict between labour and capital, exposing the sham paternalism of many mill owners, and furthermore highlighted the true class loyalties of the Liberal party.

The owner of Manningham Mills was one of the archetypal ‘entrepreneurial’ capitalists who had built the wool trade in Bradford, mainly by purchasing the patents of all combing machines so that he could monopolise the trade with his own Lister-Donnithorpe machine.

His name was Samuel Cunliffe Lister, later to become Lord Macham after spending £800,000 of his profits on buying country estates at Swinton Park and Jervaulx Abbey.

He had amassed his fortune by building up his mill in Manningham to a massive complex employing 5,000 operatives. Due to the lack of trade union organisation among his largely female

workforce, he was able to cut wages during the 1880s.

The workers grumbled that the 30% reductions during this period were never restored in boom years. The last straw came when, in response to the McKinlay tariff, Lister announced wage cuts of up to 35% in certain departments.

Low wages

The managing director had the cheek to describe the wages of 14/- per week as “unnaturally high” and pleaded for reduced wages to defeat foreign competition. Those words have a similar ring today and the argument was proved just as fallacious then when it was pointed out that most of the competition came from Germany where wages were almost double those at Lister’s!

By Keith Narey

(Chairman, Manningham Branch Labour Party)

The workers angrily drew attention to the previous year’s profit of £138,000 and the dividend of 10%, the feeling being that past profits should help to bolster present losses.

Lister’s attitude to the workers and that of his managers contributed to the tension and one of the operatives remarked that:

“...the opinion of the work people with whom I am acquainted is that there are too many gentlemen to maintain who wear collars and cuffs; also petty under managers strutting about with pencils and notebooks who might be better employed...”

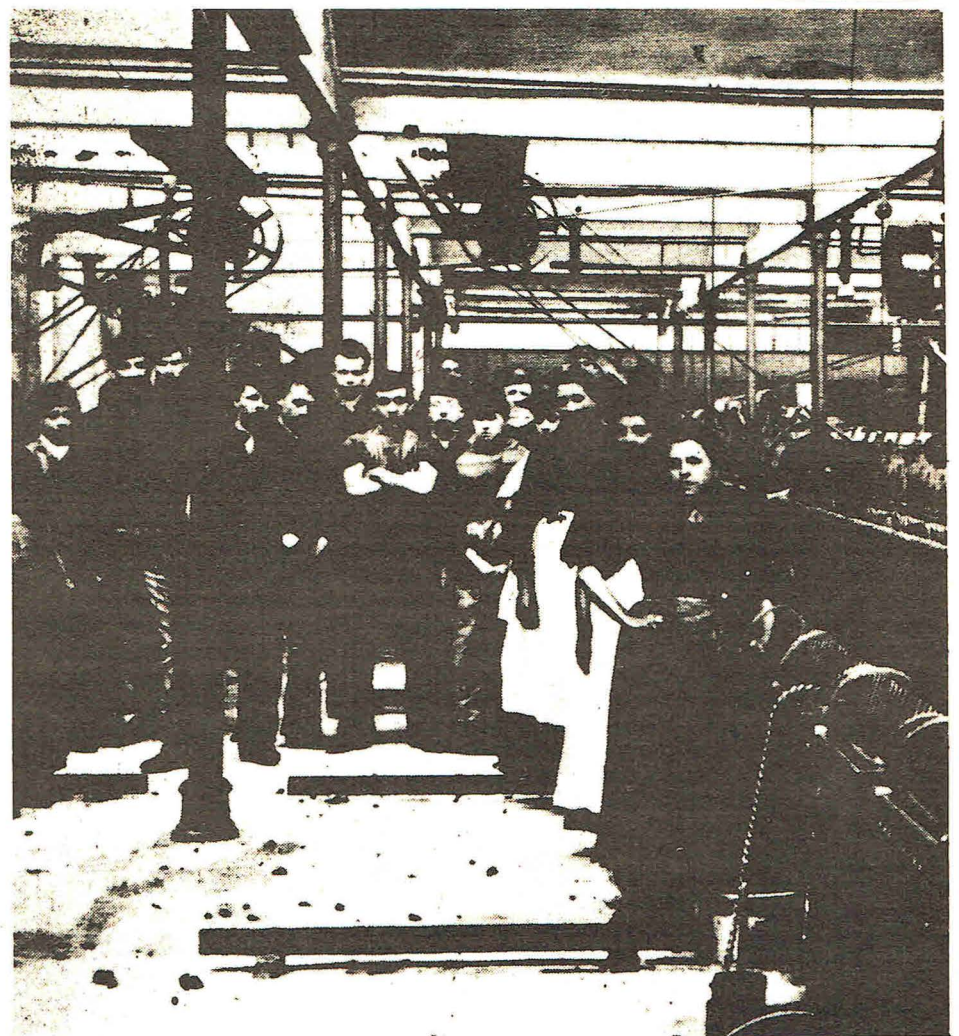
Despite the lack of union organisation, after negotiations with the directors had failed, on the 16th December 1890, the operatives walked out in protest—in the middle of winter and just before Christmas. They called on the Weavers’ Association and Bradford Trades Council to help them organise. The result was widespread working class support for the strike.

Appeal

The Weavers’ Association circulated 25,000 copies of a manifesto calling for trade union support, outlining the significance of this dispute for the working class. An excerpt reads:

“In the face of these low wages we are of the opinion that we should be doing not only an injustice to ourselves but to the whole of the textile industry in the West Riding of Yorkshire by accepting the proposed reductions...help us fight against this enormous reduction. Our battle may be your battle in the immediate future. We trust, therefore, that in our present state of need and disorganisation you will liberally support us.”

This appeal raised a magnificent total of £11,000,



The men and women whose struggles and sacrifices built the trade unions and the Labour Party

mainly from trade unions, and a large amount from the Yorkshire Miners’ Association.

The strike united many diverse political elements in the trade unions, and brought to the fore many radicals in previously moderate trade unions. The support of socialists such as Fred Jowett of the Bradford power loom overlookers, Ben Turner and W H Drew of the Weavers, as well as Ben Tillet and Tom Mann, helped to politicise the strike and pave the way for future developments.

The Bradford Trades Council was also politicised, with the radicals gaining control against the liberals, and organising street collections, public meetings and concerts to support the strikers.

Mass meetings

Lister aroused the anger of the strikers by accusing the women of walking round in fine furs while the men drank the profits from the begging bowl. He also threatened to close the Manningham Mills altogether as ‘uneconomic’, but these arguments, again familiar to workers today, were exposed by the strike leaders, with reference to the wages paid in other concerns in the area which were higher.

The ranks of the strikers were swelled by other departments of Manningham Mills walking out in sympathy, especially the overlookers who refused to train blackleg labour and were subsequently locked out and then fired.

The meetings called by the strike committee rapidly broadened into mass public sympathy meetings, and began to debate the political issues involved. The Tory council, dominated by wool merchants and mill owners, reacted by sending in the police to intimidate and harass pickets and members of the public attending the meetings.

Public protest meetings against these tactics, organised by the Bradford Trades Council, reached massive proportions. At several open air meetings attendances reached between 60,000 and 90,000. The watch committee responded by banning all open meetings except under

licence.

This led to a massive outcry against suppression of free speech. Demands were made to liberal councillors but they sided with the authorities. The police replied with arbitrary arrests, and in one case a seventeen year old girl was charged with ‘intimidation’ against two burly male black-legs!

The dispute now attained national prominence and underlined the political, as well as industrial, struggle between capital and labour, adding to the socialists’ demand for an independent political party.

In defiance of the ban on public meetings, the strike committee and the Trades Council organised a meeting on Sunday April 12th 1891. The vast crowds overflowed into the public square by the Town Hall, and after arresting Ben Turner and Councillor Harry Saunders from Rotherham, the police cleared the square.

The following day large crowds gathered in the town centre, determined to fight the council’s ban on public assembly and free speech. Extra police were called in, along with 106 members of the Durham Light Infantry.

The mayor read the Riot Act, and the streets were cleared, first by police with batons, then by the soldiers with fixed bayonets.

The ensuing street battles, which raged from the afternoon until midnight, with the crowds hurling knives and stones at the troops, became something of a legend in Bradford labour history, and were described by some as being ‘like scenes from the French revolution’.

Starved

This was followed by a meeting on the following Saturday of 90,000 people in the town centre. The crowd was so vast that five platforms of speakers were required simultaneously in order to address the audience.

The strike, however, was being starved to an end. With a hard-faced attitude similar to that of the Tory Party today, the Poor Law guardians refused relief to strikers and anyone who refused to blackleg, local traders were

forced to withdraw credit and after nineteen heroic weeks the workers were forced back.

But from this defeat came some great victories. Trade union organisation was boosted by thousands of new members and new unions sprang up to take in unskilled and casual workers. The Bradford Trades Council shed its liberal leadership and became committed to independent, working class politics.

One of the strike leaders, Charlie Glyde, later to be secretary of the Gas Workers’ Union, said at one of the mass meetings: “We have had two parties in the past; the ‘can’ts’ and the ‘won’ts’ and it’s time that we had a party that will.”

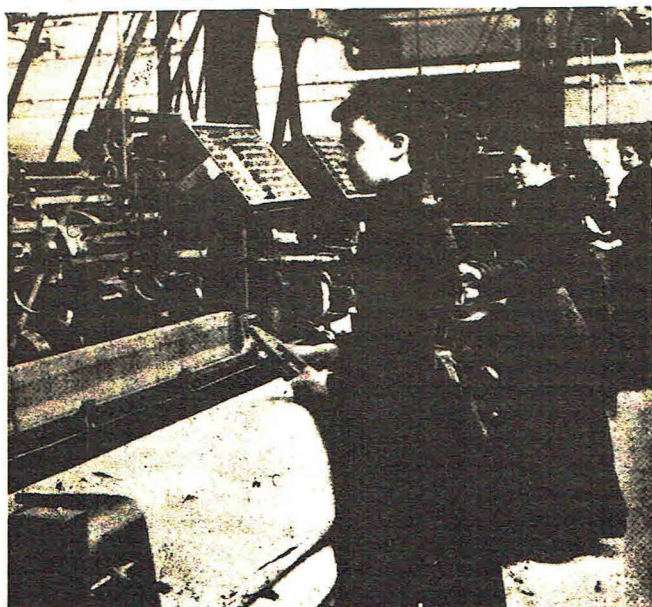
The ‘party that will’ was formed a month later at Firth’s Temperance Hotel in East Parade, Bradford. This was the Independent Labour Party, which was to have its national founding conference two years later in Bradford. The leaders stated: “The Labour Party intended to have labour representation in the Town council and to take the whip out of the hands of those who have been flogging them...”

The first Independent Labour councillor was elected in Manningham in November 1891 and the next year Manningham returned two ILP councillors, one of whom was Fred Jowett, later destined to be the first ILP MP for Bradford in 1906. His words in the 1892 elections form a fitting conclusion to this episode of labour history.

First on the strike itself: “In the Lister strike, the people of Bradford saw plainly, as they had never seen before, that whether their rulers are Liberal or Tory, they are capitalists first and politicians afterwards.”

And finally to the Liberals and Tories: “You have run this machine too long, we see the prejudicial results of your management — starvation, misery, crime and a state of general unwashedness, body and soul, and we mean to take the matter in hand and try to make a better thing of it ourselves.”

The climate was ripe for change, Manningham provided the catalyst and the opportunity.



Bradford weavers in the 1890's

LETTERS TO: Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

LETTERS

The wrong approach

Dear Comrade

Last week I received a catalogue of Labour Party publications from Transport House. Among the information papers listed on page 25 was one entitled 'The Right Approach (Tory Policy)'.

At first I laughed at this title but my laughter quickly faded as I began to realise how well it reflected the apparent attitude of this present "Labour" government. No matter how much nicer Labour's Tory policies are intended to be, they can only result in higher unemployment and lower living standards.

It is a good job 'Militant' exists to highlight 'The Correct Approach (Socialist Policies)'.

Yours fraternally
Stan Donnelly
Leyton CLP

HOW TO CREATE 800,000 NEW JOBS

Dear Comrades

While reading through the *Sunday Times* I came across an article by Hugh Scanlon.

It was going on about all the jobs that could be created by a 35-hour week and earlier retirement. He also mentioned that British workers had three weeks' holiday per year while Swedish workers had a minimum of five weeks.

But, he had left out the amount of jobs that would be gained. So I did a bit of calculating and this is what I found.

With 20 million workers

each having an extra two weeks' holiday a year equals 40 million weeks worth of work needed. Divide by fifty (the amount of weeks in a year) and you get the amount of new jobs created.

The result astounded me, to say the least, and by checking I found the figure true. It's more than the 35-hour week would create and I'm surprised that *Militant* have not taken this up sooner. The result? 800,000!

Yours unemployedly
Kevin Duncan
Harlow LPYS

WHAT IT'S LIKE WITHOUT A UNION

Dear comrades

Despite extensive government legislation and intense union pressure in recent years, working conditions for many still remain in a state most aptly described as primitive.

At the "establishment" where I have temporary employment during my college vacation I am left to wonder what the labour movement has fought for. The staff room is furnished with a rough-hewn table, four battered wooden chairs and packing cases. Judging by the accumulated dirt it must be months, if not years since the room was last cleaned.

The toilet facilities are sickening and the only washing butte with a pile of newspapers, if you prefer newspaper on your hands to drying them on your clothes.

These conditions are surely not only undesirable but also illegal. My grievance is intensified by the squire-like manner of the proprietor who has resorted to employing fourteen- and fifteen-year-old boys during their school holidays in order to minimise his labour costs.

Government legislation is pointless unless it is actively enforced and in this case it clearly has not been. The company is strictly non-union and I was advised that if I wished to retain my job for the remainder of my vacation I should not let the boss know I am a member of the Labour Party.

Capitalism is as strong as ever and situations such as this will only be ended by united action on the part of the labour movement.

Yours fraternally
Ian Poulton
Yeovil CLP

NO EXPLOITATION ON £43 FOR 61 HOURS?

To the Editor of 'Militant'

No unemployment? No exploitation? No inequalities? Over the past three months I had applied for thirteen jobs—all applications being unsuccessful.

Finally in desperation I was forced to obtain a job as a sales assistant in a local chemist's. I am on a 61-hour week [Mon-Fri 9 am-8 pm, Sat 9 am-6 pm] with a wage of 75p per hour [£43.20 per week] and lunch hours not paid.

This is a typical example of how employers can exploit the unemployment situation by getting away with cheap labour and thereby increasing their profits. While I am not even able to afford a day's holiday the manager is able to afford a huge silver Mercedes, send his daughter to a private school, and take a three-week holiday to the Canary Islands!

These kind of examples really indicate the inequalities in our society, and my experiences have made me more determined to fight for the implementation of socialist policies: for the basic demands of a 35-hour week, a £70 minimum wage and an end to exploitation, all of which could be achieved by nationalising the major monopolies, putting them under workers' control and management and producing on the basis of need and not on profit.

The LPYS and the whole labour movement must fight for this.

Candida Burford
Paddington LPYS

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

Dear Comrades

I have just got hold of the Annual Report for the year ending March 1978 of Boots Chemists. A rundown goes as follows:

Sales	£884m
Pay	£140m
Profit	£107m
Profit after tax	£51m
Profit reinvested	£40m
Dividends	£11m

Now let's take a closer look: the £884 million is from sales all over the world; these include some of the poorest countries in the world.

£140 million was paid to 67,081 employees, but not equally. First, you have the shopfloor people. These are paid about the same, but you then have a shop manager who is paid more. Then you have an area manager, then a regional manager, plus of course many people who do not work at all, they just pretend to.

The average take home pay for the shop floor people is £55 take home pay per fortnight. The profit was made entirely by the hard work put in by the shop floor but it doesn't go back to them, it goes to a number of shareholders.

These include insurance companies, pension funds

and a lot of private individuals who are clever enough to have shares in many different names plus their company's, and their families etc. This makes the report show that out of 100,000 shareholders there are 90,000 private shareholders. Every employee gets a copy of the Annual Report and they don't understand the clever trick the capitalists have played on them.

The company reinvested £40 million for more profit next year. They have no thought for the employees: a heater or cooling fan, changing facilities, these can all stand aside in the fight for profit.

£107 million overall profit: how many of the employees could do with a pay rise? The rest, after the pay rise, could be put into the health service. The amount of hospitals and equipment that could be built and made is enormous. Finally, £11 million in dividends for parasites. A few honest hard working people have shares and I don't begrudge these people or old age pensioners a penny, but I do begrudge the lazy capitalists every penny they get.

Yours sincerely
Anthony Tynan

UNITY IS STRENGTH

Dear Comrades

I enclose a letter written by my seven year old son which I think really sums up the tremendous feeling of solidarity that we all had after this year's Tolpuddle.

Yours comradesly
Bridget Shaw

Dear Militant

Mummy took me to Tolpuddle on Sunday. It was wet but it was great. The village was very small and there were lots of people so it made me feel sort of strong somehow.

Ian Shaw

SUPPORT TAXI DRIVERS

Dear Sir

I am writing to ask your paper if they know about the way British Railways discriminate against licensed Hackney carriage drivers (taxi drivers). They operate a franchise system for a certain number of cars, namely forty in the city of Cardiff, when there are at the moment 170 licensed cabs in this city.

The privileged forty enjoy a very good standard of living, where the rest of the drivers have to try and eke out a living on the town. I would add this is going on throughout the country where over

200 stations are involved.

Our brother trade unionists have managed to free two stations, but we need all the support we can muster. As a reader of your paper, and proud of the things that you unearth, I would hope that you could find space in your paper to help our cause.

Best of luck in the future and carry on with your excellent paper.

Yours sincerely
T Hawker
Chairman,
Hackney Carriage
Owners' Association

'BAN BLOOD SPORTS'

Dear Comrades

As you are probably aware, the NEC of the Labour Party has referred the question of the abolition of blood sports back to the Home Policy Committee for reconsideration.

I believe that this may be the result of a campaign by the "hunting fraternity" who wrote letters to their Labour MPs and PPCs saying that if the Labour Party fulfilled this pledge, they would not vote Labour again(!)

Just as they, outside the Labour Party, can have "campaigns" to endeavour to maintain this barbaric ritual,

I feel that we, inside the LP, can show our support to the Home Policy Committee's action in the name of socialism by forwarding the following resolution to the NEC:

"This party believes that killing for pleasure, be it humans or animals, is inconsistent with socialist principles and therefore urges the NEC to include in the party's manifesto for the next general election, the abolition by law of field sports."

Fraternally
Sue Bookbinder
Derby LP

HERBIE BELL

Dear Comrades

We wish to record also our appreciation of Comrade Herbie Bell.

Looking amongst his books and papers, you see a history of the labour movement since the 1920s. He was involved in all the working class struggles of that time. One of his membership cards is for the unemployed workers' movement, dated 1929.

You mention in your article that Herbie worked tirelessly during the strikes on the Tyne during the war. This was after a hard day's work in the shipyard—against a very vicious campaign by all the press—and he was already forty six.

After the war he held Marxist discussion groups, when it was a most difficult task, due to the postwar boom. He joined the CND as a Marxist, always putting a clear political solution, against the woolly-headedness of most of the CND.

He never had it easy. Nor did he ever choose the easiest path. He didn't live to see it, but he started many on the road towards socialism.

He will be remembered for this.

Jack Rawling
Daisy Rawling



Donate in memory

Dear Comrades

Enclosed is a donation of £10 for the fighting fund which I send in the memory of Herbie Bell who was given such a fine tribute in 'Militant'.

Those of us fortunate enough to be counted among Herbie's friends were enriched by the knowledge, zeal and integrity of the very dear, kindly man. Herbie's unquenchable spirit will surely live on to inspire.

Yours fraternally
Veronica Campbell

NO TO 5% WE NEED A 100% RISE!

"5% is not enough!" Even the TUC leaders understand that that is the feeling of every worker. It is a feeling that must be channelled into a fight for a complete change in policy in and through the trade union and labour movement.

For a £15 rise now, a minimum wage of £70 for all workers and a working week of 35 hours!

This is what the Militant consistently campaigns for, not just as a "good idea" but confident that the implementation of a socialist programme could provide these and many other basic necessities for workers and their families. Capitalism has proved itself to be incapable of taking society forward.

If you don't believe us, read more of the Militant and the pamphlets we produce. If you do believe us and want to see the fight stepped up, please give us the money to do it.

We have got to be able to use more up to date equipment to get the paper out faster and better and our immediate aim is to be able to

bring back the red in the Militant. Enormous sums of money are involved—in fact, an additional £20,000 by the end of September. Keeping up with increased running costs and expanding our editorial and clerical staff have only been made possible by the excellent donations already received this year.

With another £1,129.18 this week our total for 30 weeks stands at £30,533.85—an average of over £1,000 a week!

But...we all need more than a 5% rise. The Militant actually needs a 100% rise! To get near the three-quarter year target of £52,500 in the next 9 weeks we have to double our income. We need every penny our readers can spare.

This week's special credits: All at the Labour Party Young Socialists' Camp for the collection of over £300.

Pirrie Ward Labour Club, Liverpool, for their donation of £25.

Hampstead supporter who collected £30 to fight NF attacks.

Woolwich supporters—nearly £70. East of Scotland

£41, Bristol £18.47 and 'Regular buyers in Oxford' £3.60—all in response to our appeal to **protect the Militant**.

Salford reader who gave £18.44, Teeside reader who gave £22 and many others who donated tax rebate money, as we have been asking every reader to do.

Trade Unionists in Tower Hamlets who donated a total of £36.45 for the same appeal and 9 Liverpool NGA supporters who gave £16.07 between them.

A Bristol student who donated £25 she very much needs and Falmouth reader who scraped together £9.10.

Supporters fighting racialism who collected £6 on the recent demo in Leicester, one who collected £1.09 at Brick Lane, London, in appreciation of Militant's coverage of events there, others who collected £5.14 on the Enfield demo and £6.34 at the Southall ANL Carnival.

Young Socialists in Chester for their £3.50, W Notts for their £1.53, Hendon for £1.20 and Barnet £5.36.

Fareham Labour Party members contributing £1s and 50ps amounting to £12.50

£52,500 NEEDED BY OCTOBER 7th

FIGHTING FUND CHART £70,000

Area	Target		Proportion of target received	Received
	39 Wks	52 Wks		
Eastern	3,300	4,400	[Progress bar]	1,507.88
Hants & IOW	1,575	2,100	[Progress bar]	1,552.60
Humber-side	1,650	2,200	[Progress bar]	1,018.10
Lancashire	1,125	1,500	[Progress bar]	366.03
London: North	5,775	7,700	[Progress bar]	3,200.54
London: South	2,850	3,800	[Progress bar]	1,791.16
Manchester & District	2,175	2,900	[Progress bar]	1,031.84
Merseyside & District	3,375	4,500	[Progress bar]	1,462.36
Midlands East	3,300	4,400	[Progress bar]	1,571.93
Midlands West	5,500	7,400	[Progress bar]	3,161.87
Northern	3,675	4,900	[Progress bar]	2,014.14
Scotland East	1,875	2,500	[Progress bar]	776.81
Scotland West	2,125	2,900	[Progress bar]	830.34
South East	1,725	2,300	[Progress bar]	1,379.12
South West	1,725	2,300	[Progress bar]	1,104.37
Thames Valley	1,275	1,700	[Progress bar]	850.63
Wales East	1,500	2,000	[Progress bar]	883.47
Wales West	1,725	2,300	[Progress bar]	802.24
Yorkshire	3,900	5,200	[Progress bar]	1,575.43
Others	2,250	3,000	[Progress bar]	3,652.99
Total	52,500	70,000	[Progress bar]	30,533.85

Progress towards year's target Towards October 7th target

at the GMC and on the the bus to Tolpuddle (see below) and Brent Labour Party members contributing £1.94. Two Llanelli T&GWU members who give 50p every week.

School student A Tarran, who spared 30p.

Harlow supporters who sent a total of £91 including £36.50 from a social, South Birmingham Readers for raising £14.50 through a disco and raffle and 'a Hackney Party' £13.27.

Leeds supporters for raising £8 from L Cooke's sponsored walk, £3 from selling philosophy text books, £3 'clothing club', £5 fine on comrade for nearly sabotaging a jumble sale (!) and, an excellent idea, £2.50 from a 'pre-holiday drink and get together'.

A special thanks to Edin-

burgh UPW member, B McCosh who regularly collects amounts like this week's £1.28 from readers on his Labour Party 'round'. An example for all to follow!

So are the following individual contributions this week:

£5s from J Langley (Harlow), J Pollard (Accrington), J Coventry (Sefton POEU), T Mirrons (Birmingham sponsor money) and 'Birthday Present', Sefton.

£5.80 from T Duff (for folk singing). Total of 3.68 from B Brum (Brent LP). £3.50 from J Bull (CPSA Brum), £2.50 from M McCulloch (Sefton) and £2.14 from J Williams (Bristol NALGO).

£2s from Cllr. Rea (Bristol LP), A Tripp and J Hollinshield (Chester), K Neylon (Southall ASLEF), Bridlington reader and Cllr. A Jones and C Bostock (Harlow).

£1.50 from C Mullins (Brum NUPE), J Wareham (Harlow), £1.44 P Dinsdale (Camberley) £1.20.

£1s from S Evered (Bath

AUEW), K Gibbs (Bristol CPSA), F Glancy and M Swanston (Edinburgh LP), J Robertson (Leicester), D Woosley (Old Swan LP), P Docherty and C Robinson (Chester), J Ostrowski (Lambeth NALGO), B Allen (Tooting), R Allen of Southgate, 6 Harlow readers—D Wood, P Sztumpf, C Drennan, S Lamb, F Hartley and H Cowdroy and 3 Fareham LP members—D Rowe, M Brown and D Gray.

Smaller amounts are not often mentioned but they all help—like the 50ps from H Jones (Sutton), S Marquis (Leicester), C Kotz (Hackney) R Bates (Ealing N) and Fareham LP members: S Stone, W Owen, G Lowe, B Cullen and Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, B Townsend.

Many thanks to everyone who has made an effort this week to get us back on target. Much, much more is needed! So fight for a rise of more than 5%!



The marquee was packed out for the Militant meeting at the LPYS summer camp, where the collection raised over £300

AUGUST CAMP

If you missed the successful LPYS Summer Camp, or the earlier South Wales Militant Summer Camp, don't feel too left out—by popular demand, readers in South Wales are organising another Militant camp for August Bank Holiday.

The Camp will again be held at Horton, on the beautiful Gower coast, near Swansea, 25th-28th August. All the expertise of the Swansea comrades will be put to good use in ensuring an

enjoyable holiday weekend, with entertainment laid on. A crèche is available, so bring the kids along.

An excellent course of political discussions on the 'History of Bolshevism' has been worked out, with top Marxist speakers including 'Militant' editor Peter Taaffe. The subjects are: (1) 'The rise of Russian Marxism and the 1905 Revolution'; (2) 'Preparing for power—the February and October Revolutions'; (3) Bolshevism in power 1917-24'; (4) 'Stalinism and the struggle of the Left Opposition'; (5) 'Marxism in Britain: what it is and how to build it'.

The cost of all this is a mere £6.50 (under 5s free, 5-12 year olds £1.50). Just bring your own camping equipment. But book right now to be sure of a place among scores of socialists coming from all over the country for a great camping weekend—it's your last chance!

Bookings etc. to Rob Sewell, 99 Penderry Road, Penlan, Swansea. Telephone Swansea 33542. Cheques payable to 'R Sewell'.

MILITANT NOTICES

Readers Meetings **Discussion Groups**

LEICESTER Militant Public Meeting: 'What is Fascism?' Speakers: Bengali Youth League representative; Jeremy Birch (Birmingham Labour Party). 7.45 pm, Friday 18th August, Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, off Belgrave Road, Leicester.

SALFORD Marxist Discussion Meetings: August 16th—'Where is Britain Going?'; August 30th—'Workers' Control and Management'. Contact Dave Farrar, 061-737 6751.

SOUTHAMPTON Marxist Discussion Group. Wednesday 23rd August—'The Russian Revolution (II): Developments after October 1917'. 7.30 pm, 49 Lewis Silkin Way, Lordshill.

NEWCASTLE WEST Militant Readers' Discussion Meetings. Monday 14th August—'What's happening in Africa?' Monday 4th September—'TUC Conference: what perspectives for the movement?' 7.30 pm, Pooley Road Clinic, Denton Burn.

WALLSEND Marxist Discussion Group 'The Portuguese Revolution'. Speaker: Gavin Dudley. 23rd August, 8.00 pm, Stanley Arms, North Shields.

SUNDERLAND Marxist Discussion Group. August 11th—'America'; August 18th—'Spain'; September 1st—'The role of the trade union activist'. Fridays at 8.00 pm. For further details contact Diane English, Sunderland 44365.

Militant Publications.

OUT NOW!
Militant Pamphlet
'In Defence of October'
By Leon Trotsky
20p + 5p postage
Order from 'Militant',
1 Mentmore Terrace,
London E8 3PN

MILITANT TRADE UNION PAMPHLETS
G&MWU Review 1978.... 15p
Socialist Policies for the UPW..... 10p
CPSA: The tasks ahead.... 20p
A Fighting Programme For Printworkers..... 15p
'Militant' Teacher..... 15p
Order your copies now from World Books,
1 Mentmore Terrace,
London E8 3PN
Please add 5p postage

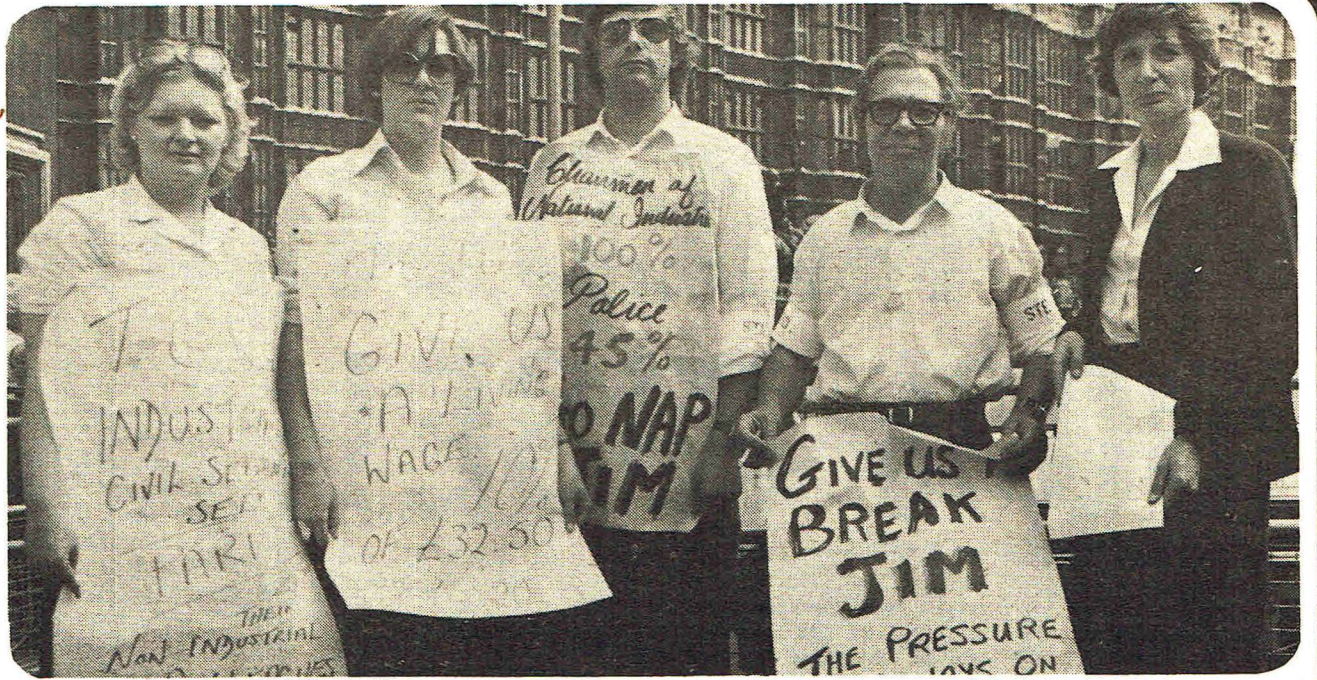
Back-number 'Militants' for sale. Issues 225-415. 12p per copy plus postage. All proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund. Peterborough Militant Supporters, 29 Lime Tree Avenue, Peterborough PE1 2NS

CLASSIFIED

BRISTOL NE 'Reinstate the LPYS'. Campaign Pamphlet—10p. Order from the secretary, 13 Camerton Road, Greenbank, Bristol 5

LONDON LPYS Sports Day. Finsbury Park N4 (next to Finsbury Park tube/overground station). August 13th. Football in morning from 10.30 am and track events in afternoon from 2.30 pm. All welcome. Further details from Steve Jones (01-886 1803).

INDUSTRIAL CIVIL SERVANTS- MOOD HARDENS



Industrial civil servants lobby Parliament as part of their campaign for a living wage photo: Julian McKittrick

Last Monday talks between industrial civil servants shop stewards, and government officials broke down because of the government's refusal to grant substantial improvements in pay.

The government made a paltry offer which would have brought the 23,000 workers in lowest grades up from £32.50 to £44.69 basic. This includes consolidation of previous flat increases. The government stuck to a 9% increase in the present basic.

This is a clear example of how workers in the public sector are being used as cheap

labour, to preserve wage restraint and hold down living standards of the whole working class.

On Tuesday 300 drivers and vehicle maintenance workers employed by the Metropolitan Police staged a one-day strike in support of this claim for substantial improvements of over 10%.

Our correspondent in Portsmouth reports on the action, last week, of the naval dockyard workers in this very important dispute, which could become a wedge for a real campaign for trade union rights in the police and armed forces.

The one-day strike of industrial civil servants on 2nd August received tremendous support from the workers involved in the Portsmouth and Gosport areas.

Portsmouth Naval Dockyard was absolutely solid, as were depots at Fleetlands, Frater, Bedenham, Priddy's Hard and others in the area. Estimates reckon that 15,000 civil servants came out in the area.

Strong picketing was mounted at most of the sites. At the Naval Dockyard, 400 picketed the Unicorn gate in the early morning, with 150 at the Main gate. 100 also picketed HMS Excellent, a naval shore base in Ports-

mouth. Picketing was maintained throughout the day, in spite of intermittent heavy rain.

Nick Brooks

(Southampton Labour Party)

The picketing was almost completely effective, stopping the sub-contractors, postmen, milk deliveries, even vegetables for the commander-in-chief's buffet. Nearly half of the non industrial civil servants refused to cross the lines at the Dockyard.

The only trouble came from some scab taxis, who injured five pickets. In one incident, a

taxi coming out of the Dockyard drove straight at the pickets injuring three. One of them, machinist Ray Collins, had to go to hospital.

Further negotiations are now planned. But the mood is hardening. Steve Marsh (EETPU shop steward in the Dockyard) said: "If we have no success now, there must be an all out strike. There's massive support for this in the area; in fact it should have been done earlier."

These comments were echoed by Bill Stillwell (UCATT regional committee member in the Dockyard), who also stressed the support they have from most people in the area.

Last Wednesday marked a turning point for these work-

ers. Many have been involved in industrial action for the first time and the mood is militant. But the union leadership, both locally and nationally, must now give a lead, or else demoralisation could set in. If the claim is not granted now, the action must be extended and preparations made for all out strike action.

'Militant' supporters in the industry in this area put out a leaflet on the day of the strike which was distributed to most picket lines. It received a tremendous response, with workers queuing up to take them and taking bundles to hand out.

Copies can be obtained from: N Brooks, 77 Atherley Rd, Shirley, Southampton.



working in the union

Following Dick Massey's popular series, "Working in the Union" continues with other contributions from active trade unionists. John Huxtable, AUEW shop steward in Harlow, this week describes some of the problems faced by trade unionists in engineering today and his own experiences in dealing with them

The second part of Bro Huxtable's article will appear next week.

The AUEW have separate branches, mostly outside the factory where members have to make the effort to attend. In my area, branch attendances are very low, in fact some have degenerated into little more than paying-in offices, because the old faithfuls, secretaries, treasurers, etc., have retired, got fed up or literally died and cannot be replaced.

No-one out of the hundreds on the books seems to have the time to fill those positions, thereby keeping the branches alive. I have heard it said that the union branch is like a doctor's surgery, you only go when something is wrong! The day-to-day work of the branch, correspondence, subs, sick money and the like all fall to the same old stalwarts.

Some branches are nearing that dreaded moment when their secretary, for instance, is retiring and they know that nobody is going to stand for the job, the branch will become just another paying in office. Why is this?

In the main it is not for very complicated reasons—that a worker weary from work doesn't want to turn out to go "up the branch" when he can give his card and money to a paid collector, or that the branch may be housed in a depressing old building smelling of stale tobacco and mice.

But for whatever reasons, the union branch will be of greater importance in the

coming period than perhaps the members realise at the moment. There seems to be a move towards factory branches, especially in bigger plants. But I would like to ask the brothers (or "colleagues" as we would like to be called by some) how can you conduct your union business, or actions against management with the bosses ear 'oles a yard wide at every corner? No, brothers and sisters, stick to the branch every time.

With the demise of the 'Broad Left' we are now being steered through these troubles times by leaders who openly state their dislike of strikes. You might say that the BL didn't like them much either, bearing in mind our national claim of 1972, 37-hour week and retirement at 60! The lead by the national leadership went a bit astray to say the least. The same went for the last claim as well, though we must admit we got the basic upped a bit.

Swayed vote

The unemployed haven't benefitted one jot from the claim. Once again we can ask, "What happened to the shorter working week, the early retirement plans?" let alone parity with our brothers in the EEC. We are still among the lowest paid in Europe.

Is it any wonder then that by certain promptings by the press deflected at the uninformed mass of card-carrying membership that we have seen a near complete change of leadership? It's not only the capitalist press that has swayed the vote. The government, in its belief that it is changing the tide of rising unemployment and is checking inflation, has lent its weight to the false picture of better things to come and has misled the members into believing that now is not the time for "boat rocking" or "wave making"!

spit and polish can't hide- MINERS' DISSATISFACTION

The recent visit of the Under Secretary for Energy, Mr Alex Eadie, to Wearmouth Colliery, Durham area, was given the usual VIP spit and polish treatment.

By Stan Pearce (NUM Wearmouth Colliery, Durham Area)

In fact on one particular face, H39, they overdid the stonedusting to such an extent that men walking through it inches thick on the floor, and kicking it up into the mainstream of the ventilation, meant that the men could only see a couple of feet in front and breathing became very difficult.

It was bad enough for non-sufferers of pneumoconiosis, so we can imagine the distress it caused to the men who suffer from this dreaded disease.

The visit also gave the lodge a chance to stage an official protest by boycotting a buffet luncheon and stating the reasons in a letter that reads as follows: "The government recommendations in the white paper on the attack on inflation, which led up to the incentive scheme agreement, has created a great number of problems at this colliery and in the area.

"Experience has shown that since the scheme was introduced there has been conflict between union and

management regarding the cost of the visit were refused. After some argument with the demonstrators, J Callan (Area President), H Mitchell (Area Treasurer), and Fred Willey (Sunderland North Labour MP) decided that "discretion is the better part of valour" and boycotted the luncheon.

When Alex Eadie spoke to the protesters they pointed out it was not a personal attack on him and that the majority of demonstrators were themselves Labour Party members and two were elected Labour councillors. He replied that he had worked in the pits for more than twenty years and that all the spit and polish had not fooled him.

That may be so, but if he had gone to Hylton Colliery, less than a mile away, he would have found a different story: 160 men made redundant and a question mark over the pit. Also Metal Bridge colliery and Adventure colliery are both closed, and with stockpiles of coal around the country men who went through the closure programme of the 1950s and 1960s see history repeating itself.

Closures

A copy of the letter was handed to Alex Eadie by a deputation from the lodge carrying the lodge banner. Copies were also sent to the NUM Area General Secretary, Walter Malt, and to area NCB management. Although the letter portrays a lot of the frustrations and anomalies that exist in the mining industry, it made no specific demands.

Requests from the lodge to

POEU

—LEAD THE FIGHT! SAVE JOBS WITH A 35-HOUR WEEK!

RECALL

CONFERENCE!

Roy Farrar
(Branch Committee,
Liverpool Internal,
in personal capacity)

THE FIGHT! SAVE JOBS WITH A 35-HOUR WEEK!



The Tyburn Branch banner on the London POEU's one day strike demonstration. John Sturrock (Report) ii

MEMBERS' MOOD MILITANT

Last week the NEC of the POEU informed the membership that the national overtime ban, which had been in operation since July 1st, was to be replaced by a national 'work to rule'.

The belief was that the leadership were winding down the campaign in preparation for the result of the McCarthy enquiry. Their despair turned to anger and resulted in resolutions criticising the NEC for their lack of leadership throughout the campaign.

However, more encouragingly, the vast majority of London branches, including the two largest branches in the country—London City and London North Central Internal with more than 5,000 members between them—have translated their anger into positive action. Overwhelmingly they have voted to continue the overtime ban on a local basis and have escalated their action in their respective areas.

We have taken action to remind the NEC that our conference policy is: **That this union should seek the achievement of the claim for a shorter working week in two stages, the first stage, a reduction to a 35-hour week net, and the second stage would be to achieve a 35-hour, four-day week.**

The International Services branch have abandoned all shift work and as a result have suffered 170 further suspensions, with the result that only 17% of international STD calls are effective. In the City area men have withdrawn their labour from some key buildings and installations, with many more in the

pipeline, causing disruption to the most sensitive areas of 'big business' and finance.

But this attitude is not unique to the London area. News is filtering through of a similar reaction from almost every major telecommunications centre.

In Northern Ireland, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Glasgow and Swansea, the strength of feeling mirrors that which is so evident in London. In Leeds and in West and Mid Ulster resolutions have been passed calling for the recall of conference and for a vote of no confidence in the NEC. Kilrae exchange in Northern Ireland has been vacated by Post Office engineers.

Sop

Three branches in the Yorkshire area walked out protesting at the decision to call off the overtime ban. Nationally 165 men have been suspended with hundreds more imminent.

In the wake of the first news of the McCarthy report, which calls for a two stage reduction to a 35-hour week, even those branches which have felt despair at the prospect of winning the struggle with a weak leadership, are hurriedly reconvening their committees to reassess the situation, no doubt spurred on by the encouraging news from other areas.

The message must be made quite clear to the NEC, the Post Office and the government. We will not accept a 37 hour sop!

Colin O'Callaghan
(London POEU)

On Friday 4th August our members received notice of the results of the McCarthy report on the Post Office engineers' claim for a 35-hour week. This was highly recommended by top management. And no wonder, for it talks only of a 37½ hour week—and that in two stages.

Adding insult to injury it further talks of implementation on a "cost free" basis—to the P.O. naturally.

The PO are already boasting of even greater profits than last year. The customers can get back £100 million but for those who produce the productivity and the profits, we are expected to pay for our own improvements in conditions not only once but many times over.

This offer is but a rehash of the pathetic offer already rejected by the POEU Special Conference in January of this year. To force a decent offer from the PO it is now necessary more than ever for the union leadership to fully implement the programmes of industrial action laid down at successive Annual Conferences.

The decision to organise the national work to rule has been welcomed by members growing impatient at a certain sluggishness about the campaign. But at the same time to call off the national overtime ban, at a time when this action was beginning to bite, to leave it up to branches to keep it on or not, is seen as a serious backsliding on behalf of the NEC.

This has had varied reactions from members from expressions of downright disgust, to votes of no confidence in the NEC, to even strike action and mass meetings to denounce this climbdown.

It is recognised that a minority of the NEC were on many questions willing and able to give a lead to carry out policy. Many members will recall the persistent reluctance of the majority of the union leadership to take up in

a vigorous and enthusiastic manner the struggle for not only the 35-hour week, but many other issues as well.

A staged programme of action was agreed at Annual Conference 1977. The first stage of 'blacking' of new equipment from October 1977 was successfully achieved.

Day of action

Then the one day national strike was repeatedly delayed and called off, ostensibly because "meaningful negotiations" were then taking place. These, it turned out, meant 39 hours, and if we sold our souls and were good little boys we would get 37½ at a later date. So the industrial action was called off by the NEC because of a pathetic offer which the January Conference could not even consider and indeed virtually unanimously rejected.

The recall Conference centred entirely on four propositions from the NEC with branches only allowed to send amendments, forcing branches

to react mainly in a negative manner to the inadequacy of that Conference. Despite this handicap branches were able to express by votes the feelings to carry on the campaign.

Months rolled by and only at Annual Conference June 1978 was once again a further programme of action laid down. The NEC gave a commitment to struggle in Standing Orders Committee document no 40. Some members are now asking if all the fine words were just the proverbial figleaf, to deflect criticism of their actions over the year and to ensure their re-election to NEC positions.

There is need for an **Emergency Recall Conference**—not to waste time with rejecting the latest mess of pottage—but to revise the campaign of industrial action in line with the harder line threatened by the PO management. **Those members of the NEC who cannot give a full commitment to this struggle should resign, and give this Recall Conference the opportunity to elect in their place members who can give effective leadership.**

The Industrial Strategy Committee with its attitude of "well if an individual branch feels like doing its own thing, send it up, we'll have a ponder about it, and if we think it's alright we'll let you do it," is not leadership but a sorrowful tail-ending of the struggle.

The NEC must assert national leadership to this campaign, to see that all the members need to feel involved in this struggle. The Recall Conference should look to a **National Day of Action, of walk-outs and demonstrations throughout the country, and an indefinite stoppage of work at all key PO establishments.**

A Recall Conference gives the opportunity to revise union rules on the raising of levies, to increase the levy from 25p a head per week at present to, say £1, to support those called out.

Management have warned that if we do not grovel and accept this paltry offer of a two-stage 37½, then they will take a harder line. It is not too late for the NEC to restore confidence in its ability to lead this struggle. **As a sign of seriousness they must reinstate the national overtime ban and quickly follow through with the full programme of industrial action.**

IRELAND - N.E.C. CENSURED

The Ballymena branch of the POEU originally voted against the 35 hour week, in these hard times the members would rather have had more money. But when the NEC introduced the National overtime ban in support of the action taken against members in Scotland being sent home, the branch backed it out of solidarity.

On Tuesday 1st August one of our own members was suspended for not introducing new equipment and there was an immediate walk-out by all the members. An emergency branch committee meeting was called and a plan of selective stoppages linked to a work to rule introduced.

When the NEC's letter calling off the national overtime ban was delivered the next day, it was received in disbelief. How could we do any overtime when a member was still suspended? And how could a work to rule go hand in hand with overtime?

A branch meeting that night decided to maintain the overtime ban and affirmed that the NEC's action in calling it off could only split the union. To go back to working overtime was to throw away all we had sacrificed so far, for nothing—not even a promise!

A resolution of no confidence in the NEC was passed unanimously and this is to be circulated nationally for support. This resolution was linked to another calling for a **recall conference within two months.**

The branch further decided

LTUCG

The Labour and Trade Union Co-ordinating Group intends to hold meetings in support of the POEU's actions for the 35-hour week throughout Northern Ireland. Their demand must be backed by the TUC and ICTU and linked to the campaign by other unions for a shorter working week.

SCOTLAND - NO COMPROMISE

Dundee post office engineers' action against the Open Golf Championship at St Andrew's in July cost the Post Office at least £1m.

That was the estimate of Norrie Ross, Dundee branch secretary. He also pointed out that the action prevented the BBC from televising all but the last 4 holes of the tournament.

This week saw mass action again with a half day strike

on Monday 31st July in protest against two men being sent home for refusing to join a new BBC studio cable—although only one of the men was qualified to carry out the work.

Guerrilla action

Norrie Ross admitted he was surprised by the depth of feeling aroused by the 35 hour struggle amongst the men. Fear of redundancy in a high

technology industry where productivity has doubled in recent years has given urgency to the this fight.

Only a handful of engineers were not union members in Dundee, and some of them have applied to join since the action began. This enthusiasm means it will be impossible for the union leadership to get the members to agree to any compromise with the Post Office.

Norrie believes that a

national work to rule and national guerilla action directed against key installations such as the Stock Exchange is the only way to ensure success. Already there are 9,000 new telephone subscribers in Scotland unable to be connected because of the blacking of new equipment.

Catherine Rice
(Dundee Labour Party)

—LEAD THE FIGHT! SAVE JOBS WITH A 35-HOUR WEEK! POEU—LEAD THE FIGHT! SAVE JOBS WITH A 35-HOUR WEEK! POEU—LEAD THE FIGHT! SAVE JOBS WITH A 35-HOUR WEEK!

—LEAD THE FIGHT! SAVE JOBS WITH A 35-HOUR WEEK! POEU—LEAD THE FIGHT! SAVE JOBS WITH A 35-HOUR WEEK! POEU—LEAD THE FIGHT! SAVE JOBS WITH A 35-HOUR WEEK!

WESTERNS MUST BE SAVED

By Kevin Bean
(Wallasey LPYS)

"With your support, Western's can be saved."

So said a placard carried by a Western's worker during a march held on Saturday, 5th August. About 300 Western's workers, trade unionists, Labour Party and LPYS members marched through Birkenhead to publicise the Western's Action Committee's demands for the nationalisation of the yard under workers' control.

Over 150 copies of 'Militant' were sold and a Birkenhead LPYS leaflet explaining why Western's workforce were fighting was well received, both by marchers and shoppers in the town centre.

At the end of the march, Barrie Williams, President of Liverpool Trades Council, and Richard Venton, Birkenhead LPYS, spoke in support of the fight for jobs.

Richard Venton took up the Action Committee's call for Western's and other workers to join the Labour Party and fight for the



Photo: John Sturrock (Report)

Workers arrive for work on the Birkenhead side: How many will be on the dole if Westerns jobs are not saved?

nationalisation of the yard. He also called for a conference of trade union bodies and Labour Party branches to broaden the struggle to save the jobs of Western's workers.

The Action Committee has since fixed Saturday 30th September as the date for the conference.

It is vital that Western's workers do not stand alone.

They are one of the 'few workplaces to fight back against the bosses' attack on Merseyside and it is only by the continued action and solidarity of the labour movement that these jobs can be saved.

Readers in ship-building and ship-repair areas are asked to take up the fight of the Western's workers and to 'black' work transferred

from the yard by the privately owned Lairds group. Resolutions of support and demands to make the action official are also needed.

Send resolutions and donations to the Action Committee, c/o Gaywood Close, Ford Estate, Birkenhead, Merseyside.

TORIES

continued from page one

the trade unions.

But when it comes to wages, jobs, union rights, housing and social services, on one side, and the protection of company profits, on the other side, he who pays the piper calls the tune.

Trade union leaders have estimated that the cash flowing into the Tory election fund—estimated at between £2m and £4m—could be responsible for winning over 2½% of voters, guaranteeing the return of a Tory government. Added to that is the millions of pounds worth of free propaganda in the Tory press.

Labour has only one-fifth the amount the Tories are spending on their advertising campaign to counter with their own posters. Yet incredibly, the 'Observer' reports that the whiz-kids of Labour's hired advertising agency are suggesting their campaign slogan to the Labour Party, not the other way round.

How can a party of labour win an election on slogans suggested by a capitalist firm?

Labour must hit back at the Tories where it hurts most, by showing that the unemployed portrayed on the Tory posters were not put out of work by socialism but by

those very banks and big monopolies which are hiding behind the face of Margaret Thatcher.

Firms like Rank, Hovis McDougal, for instance, which while increasing its profits by 18% and its shareholders' dividend by 22% in the last two years, reduced its workforce by no less than 8%. It 'couldn't afford' to keep those workers in jobs, yet it 'could afford' to make a gift of £20,000 to the Tories!

These are the facts Labour hammer out. It must campaign to rouse working class voters with an uncompromising, class appeal and an attack on the power and privileges of the class the Tories represent.

Labour must fight the Tories on its own ground, mobilising the thousands of trade union activists to fire the enthusiasm of Labour's natural supporters with a socialist alternative to Thatcher's capitalist policies.

★ Demand the nationalisation of the banks and monopolies who silently fund the Tory propaganda machine!

★ End unemployment with a socialist plan of production by nationalising the top 200 monopolies under democratic workers' control and management!

Public Meeting called by LSSP [UK Branch]

"THE FIGHT AGAINST REPRESSION IN SRI LANKA"

HEAR
VASUDEVA NANAYAKKARA

Former MP. Former leader of LSSP Youth League, imprisoned after 1971 JVP uprising, now a leader of the LSSP and the newly created United Federation of Labour.

Dr. V. KARUNARATHNE

General Secretary, Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the mass workers' party, since its new Marxist leadership was elected last December.

And speakers from the British labour movement
Conway Hall, near Holborn. 7.15pm on Tuesday 15 August

ALL WELCOME

THORPE CHARGED

The trial of former Liberal leader, Jeremy Thorpe, together with John Le Mesurier, David Holmes, and George Deakin, on charges of conspiracy to murder Norman Scott, looks like being the trial of the century.

Never has such a prominent political leader in Britain in modern times been charged with such a serious offence.

Although innocent until proved guilty, the charge against Thorpe cannot but cast a dark shadow over the Liberal Party during an election period. Thorpe, it seems, is resisting pressure from other Liberal MPs to resign and, if forced, may run as an Independent Liberal.

"The charges [made last Saturday, 5 August]," commented *The Guardian*, "will bring to an end a period of

rumour and speculation unprecedented in British political life." Yet the press as a whole has done very little—to say the least—to probe and reveal the substance behind the series of allegations and denials surrounding this affair.

"The Norman Scott affair first became public knowledge more than two years ago when Mr Scott alleged in court at Barnstaple, where he was appearing on a social security charge in January 1976, that he had an homosexual affair with Mr Jeremy Thorpe, the then Liberal leader.

"Mr Thorpe has consistently denied having such an affair, which Mr Scott alleged took place in the early 1960s.

"Last year an airline pilot, Mr Andrew Gino Newton, who had recently been released from prison after serving a sentence for firearms charges after the shooting of a Great Dane belonging to Mr Scott, claimed that he had been hired to kill Mr Scott.

"He made various allegations to newspapers, and said that his explanation at the trial of the reasons why he had shot the dog was a false one. In March, 1976, Mr Newton told a court that he had shot Mr Scott's dog

because Mr Scott was blackmailing him over a sexual relationship with a woman. Last year Mr Newton claimed that he had been hired for £5,000 to kill Mr Scott." (*The Guardian*, 5 August).

For nearly a year now police have been investigating Newton's allegations. These inquiries, authorised at the highest level, were almost certainly given additional urgency by the publication last year of 'The Pencourt File' by Barrie Penrose and Roger Courtier (published by Secker and Warburg/ £5.90).

Although largely dismissed by the press at the time, these authors' astounding investigations led to questions in parliament which did nothing to clarify the serious and extremely alarming allegations underlying the affair and the way it was being handled by the authorities.

Decisions on the charges now rest with the courts, and public comment on the issues is made impossible by the *sub judice* rules. But members of the labour movement will be waiting not only for verdicts on those charged, but for clarification of the role of a number of ministers and former ministers, the police, and the legal and judicial authorities, in this extraordinary affair.

CARIBBEAN CARNIVAL

Over 500 people of all nationalities took part in the successful carnival organised by the Caribbean Club—the first of its kind to be held in Liverpool.

Prominent among the floats which paraded through the Liverpool 8 area was the Labour Party Young Socialists' double decker bus decorated with a six-foot blow-up of the 'Militant's' anti-racism symbol showing the two arms crushing the swastika.

The response was enthusiastic—people came out of their homes and out of the pubs to watch the parade. Dozens of extra copies of the 'Militant' were very easily sold, along with the PNP Bulletin.

The carnival atmosphere continued throughout the day with bands playing all afternoon, stalls with hand-made goods for sale and pony rides and an 'inflatable' for the children. A social was held in the Caribbean in the evening.

The purpose of the Carnival was to 'promote good relations between black and white'. The carnival is over now but the links built have enthused us all in the fight for a socialist society.

Demonstrate against the racist murderers in London's East End
Assemble 8-9 am
outside the Naz Cinema,
Brick Lane
(nearest tube: Aldgate East)
Sunday 20th August
Day of action
Bring LP, YS and TU
banners

Militant

ORDER A REGULAR COPY

BRITAIN 26 Issues...£4.80
13 Issues...£2.50 52 Issues...£9.60

EUROPE [Airspeeded] REST OF WORLD [Airspeeded]
26 Issues... £5.30 26 Issues... £6.30
52 Issues...£10.60 52 Issues...£12.60

Name.....

Address.....

Make cheques payable to MILITANT and return to the Circulation Department, MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Bulk orders available, sale or return.