

# Militant

12p

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR AND YOUTH ISSUE 421  
1 SEPTEMBER  
1978

## TUC • meets in Brighton • a selection battle hots up LAUNCH SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN

Unemployment, low wages..  
..and now the threat of a  
Tory government.

Working  
people are  
under attack  
from all  
sides!

But this week  
12 million trade  
unionists plus  
their families  
will be looking  
to the Trade  
Union Congress  
to lead them in a  
crusade against  
unemployment  
which hits 1½  
million, wage  
restraint which  
has cut living  
standards, and  
for a Labour  
victory in the  
coming general  
election.



The General Council is trying to remove the TUC's commitment to nationalisation. See page 2.

Only socialist policies can overcome these problems. Only the power of the mass trade union movement can secure the implementation of such policies.

The nightmare of unemployment must be driven out by cutting the working week, sharing out the work among the whole workforce without any loss of pay. The

Transport and General Workers' Union estimates that a 35-hour week would create three quarters of a million jobs—that would halve the dole queues in one swipe.

The Post Office engineers have shown the determination of the rank and file to fight—this week the TUC must launch a national cam-

paign involving all its member unions for a 35-hour week for all workers.

**By Brent Kennedy**

Along with a programme of useful public works—building much-needed houses, schools

and hospitals—and nationalising any firm which threatens redundancies, this would be a real fight to guarantee a job for every worker.

The trade union movement could then insist on the Labour Party election manifesto carrying the demand for 35 hours.

The TUC must also

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## TRADE UNIONS FIGHT TO FREE WILLIE GALLAGHER

Willie Gallagher, a 20 year old Strabane youth, has for six weeks been on hunger strike against his rigged trial and brutal treatment in the Maize prison.

He has now agreed to take liquid foods for a few days—to see what

action will be taken on his behalf by the trade unions. [Prison letter and



A protesting foot on the barrel: later the army tried to ruin the film, as the light [bottom right] shows.

report page 3].

Anger at Willie's treatment and a widespread demand for action to secure his release was reflected in a meeting last week called by Strabane Trades Council and attended by over 200 people.

The whole labour movement, in Britain and Ireland, must respond to the call for a campaign to free Willie Gallagher and to end the widespread and intensive repression that his case reflects.

Last Tuesday evening, Strabane Trades Council decided to call stoppages in workplaces at 11 am on Friday for workers to sign a petition demand-

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### TUC 'Militant' Meeting

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What will new regulations mean? page 11

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No solutions at Camp David pages 8 & 9

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## BRING BACK THE RED

'Militant' expanded to 16 pages in March this year, but we regrettably lost our well-known and distinctive red masthead as a result of the new production process involved. Readers will now be glad to hear that the red should be back by the end of October! But it all depends on you.

The Fighting Fund is at present behind target, and nearly every penny that has come in has already been spent on additional staff and in paying hefty deposits and payments on new equipment.

But to make the next historic step, we are committed to a lump-sum payment of £20,000 at the end of September—otherwise the use of a second colour and numerous other production improvements will be delayed.

This period, moreover, with a general election in the offing is just when we most need to get Marxist ideas and our programme spread throughout the labour movement.

For the capitalist "time is money". For us money is time. There is no time to lose.

£20,000 is exactly the amount that we now need to reach our ¼ year Fighting Fund target—£52,500—by the 7th October—only six week's time. So an all-out effort to get the extra big donations and also to organise special activities this month must start now.

DON'T LET 'MILITANT' GO INTO THE RED TO GET BACK THE RED. The banks won't allow it anyway. So it's "£20,000 IN SEPTEMBER AND THE RED BACK IN OCTOBER". That must be the aim of every reader and supporter.



# WILLIE GALLAGHER WRITES FROM PRISON

## "Why I am on hunger strike"

**"I went on hunger strike today, 11th July, for status... It all started on Sunday when we moved from H1 to H2. I was picked out for special treatment. Before I never really believed I was being victimised. Now I do.**

**Governors, prison officers and special officers have confirmed this for me. They told me I was in for a hard time. The governor says he hopes I starve to death and that I should go on the blanket to get out of his way.**

**I complained about the beatings and he refused to acknowledge this information.**

**Anyway, back to Sunday. After dinner in H2 I was taken out of my cell into the**

**office. Five screws were there. First of all they said they knew all about me and all that. Then he said I was to call him "Sir". Well, I never have called anyone Sir and will still refuse to do so.**

**That's when the punches and kicks started. I don't mean little taps either. Well after about fifteen minutes of this he asked me again. I said nothing. Two of them grabbed my arms, one hit me a big kick between the legs and as I was going down I got a boot just behind the ear.**

**That's when I passed out. I woke up in my cell. Twenty minutes later I was taken down again. The same thing happened for about fifteen to twenty minutes, though I never passed out.**

**About half an hour later**

**they came into my cell. The same again. This time, when they kicked me to the floor the piss-pot which was filled was thrown around me.**

**I was then taken to the prison hospital to recover. I spent two days. Now I'm back, but my face is still swollen and several bruises are about my body.**

**I thought they were going to do me in. It would take too long to mention all the harassment. In other words, I couldn't stick all this and had to go on the strike before I got kicked to death...**

**It seems as if this will be a long one this time. But I'm prepared to go the whole way this time. Better this than the screws doing it for me.**

# FREE WILLIE GALLAGHER

Continued from page 1

ing Willie Gallagher's immediate release. They also repeated their demand for a trade union enquiry into the circumstances of his interrogation and trial.

In the meeting, members of the Labour and Trade Union Co-ordinating Group, who have played a leading part in this campaign, called for mass meetings in factories and joint shop-floor meetings between factories to explain the issues, before workers were asked to sign the petition. The Group will now be distributing several thousand leaflets calling for this action, and for a general trade union campaign to get Gallagher out.

On Wednesday, the Co-ordinating Group also intended to picket the meeting in Belfast of the Northern Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, calling on them to back the call for stoppages on Friday and to give their weight to the campaign.

The government's deep-seated fear of a trade union campaign against repression, which cuts across the sectarian divide and neither shares the aims nor uses the methods of the Provisional IRA, has been shown by the army's response to the campaign.

On Monday night extra troops appeared and sealed off parts of the town. A rumour went round that Gallagher had died. Many people in Strabane believe that this originated from the army who hoped to provoke a riot, providing them with an excuse for an even more intensive security clamp down to prevent a stoppage [which at one stage was considered for Tuesday].

Leading trade unionists in Strabane, and particularly members of the Co-ordinating Group, have been constantly harassed by the army this week.

Already, trade union action has clearly had an effect. It is vital that the case of Willie Gallagher and Northern Ireland repression is taken up by the labour movement in Britain. Messages of support should be sent urgently to Willie's father, Brendan Gallagher [13 Gartan Avenue, Strabane, Co. Tyrone] as well as to Strabane Trades Council.

Stories put out by the BBC that Willie had called off his hunger strike were false. They were undoubtedly intended to undermine the campaign in Strabane and elsewhere.

Willie, who must already be very weak, was simply taking liquid food to allow time—for the trade unions to take effective action. There is little doubt that, if he is not released, Willie will continue to fast. His life is literally in the hands of the labour movement.

## PEOPLE ARE NOW LOOKING TO THE LABOUR MOVEMENT FOR AN INITIATIVE

By Michael Duffy (Strabane Trades Council, personal cap.)

& Dennis Tourish (Labour & TU Co-ordinating Group)

Repression in N. Ireland involves convicting people without a shred of evidence. One such person is Willie Gallagher, a twenty-year-old Strabane youth, whose trial was the source of a recent BBC play.

Willie Gallagher was arrested in April, 1975, and a year later charged with blowing up Strabane Legion Hall in January, 1975. The sole evidence against him was the unsigned transcript of an alleged 'discussion' with an RUC detective. Willie Gallagher supposedly confessed.

This document was riddled with contradictions. The language in it is Belfast slang, which Strabane people could not be familiar with. Police records themselves show that Gallagher was questioned for several hours but this transcript lasts only a few minutes. It does not therefore even pretend to be an accurate account of his interrogation.

So lacking in evidence as the RUC that they waited a whole year before making charges. At the 'trial', the main prosecution witness

positively stated that Willie Gallagher was **not** the bomber at the Legion. The description of this bomber at the time, moreover, bore no resemblance to Gallagher.

Despite all this, he was sentenced to twelve years imprisonment. He was tried by one judge, since juries were abolished in 1973. They sometimes insisted on evidence!

The Labour and Trade Union Co-ordinating Group has been struggling to get the trade unions to take up this issue. On 21st August, Strabane Trades Council held an emergency meeting to discuss the issue. Two days later it convened a public meeting.

The meeting was the largest of this kind in years, attended by 200 people. L&TUCG members argued that only the trade unions could act on this question. We emphasised that only the unions had the power to make the government release Gallagher. It

was also vital that they should be approached in a non-sectarian manner. What happens to Gallagher today could be the fate of any worker or trade unionist tomorrow.

We urged a two-hour stoppage of all work from the public meeting to hammer this point home. These ideas received an enthusiastic welcome and were taken up by shop stewards present. A resolution proposing factory meetings and a stoppage was unanimously accepted.

A tremendous opportunity has now been given for the trade unionists to lead this struggle. There is no doubt that many frustrated young

people are looking for an initiative from the labour movement to express their rage through effective action.

In addition, this case raises questions of broader importance. Between 70% and 90% of all convictions rest on alleged confessions. How many of these are fabricated? How many are tortured out of people, through the sort of treatment that Willie Gallagher describes in his letter?

One of the Co-ordinating Group leaflets produced on the Gallagher affair raises these questions and demands a trade union-based enquiry into repression in Northern Ireland.

The Trades Council has now decided to hold mass meetings in all workplaces to discuss further action.

Steps must also be taken elsewhere. Every CLP, Young Socialist branch, Trades Council and union branch in Britain and Northern Ireland must send letters of support to Strabane Trades Council. They must also deluge the government with demands for Willie Gallagher's release.

**Send messages of support to:**  
F Diver  
Secretary Strabane Trades Council  
Delaney Crescent  
Strabane

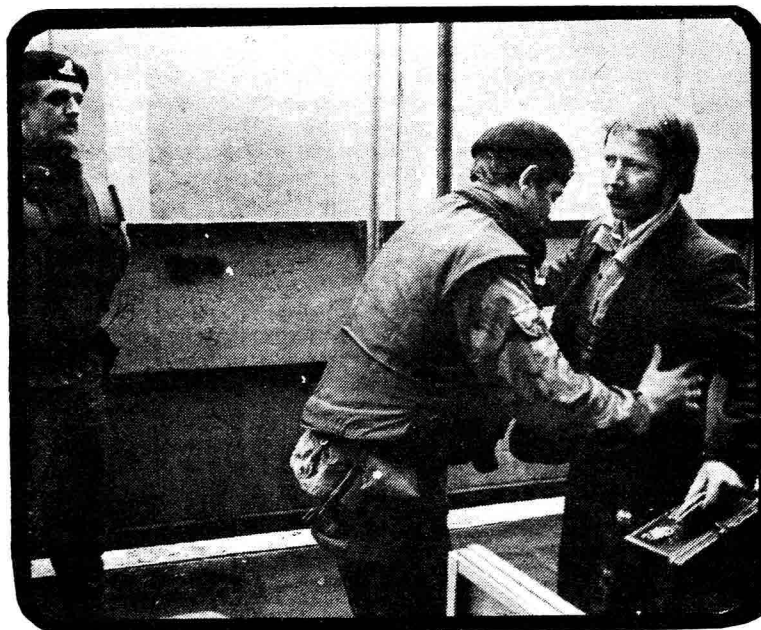


photo: Derek Speirs (IFL)

An everyday Army search at Belfast checkpoint

## SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN

Continued from page 1

demand a change of course by the Labour government on its disastrous policy of wage restraint. While profits have shot up by 40% in the last year wages have been held down by the 10% limit.

Over the last four years the British workers have suffered the biggest single cut in living standards this century. And for

what? While the City speculators and profiteers laugh all the way to the bank, they still refuse to invest to expand industry. Production is lower than in Heath's three-day week! Sacrifices to capitalism are simply met with demands for more sacrifice!

But if the TUC expects the Labour government to scrap its plan of a 5%

maximum for wage rises—as most union conferences already have—then the General Council must play its part in backing up unions, like the Ford workers, sticking out against wage restraint—unlike the way it left the firemen without support. No to the 5% limit! A wage rise for all to restore living standards!

This Trades Union Congress must join together the mighty ranks of the trade unions to defend their members'

living standards and get a better deal for the whole working class with a £70 minimum wage for 35 hours; guaranteed work or full pay; ending the queues for jobs, houses, hospital beds and places in education with a crash building programme and a reversal of public spending cuts.

All this would be possible with the return of a majority Labour government committed to nationalising the banks and 200 biggest monopolies, paying com-

pensation only in genuine cases of need, and under workers' control and management to implement a socialist plan of production.

That's the programme to rouse the enthusiasm of Labour supporters to keep out Thatcher and her reactionary party of big business puppets! And once mobilised with a fighting leadership, there is no force of power and privilege in this country strong enough to stop those 12 million men and women.



# TUC 1978

## ACT ON RANK AND FILE DEMANDS

Brian Ingham, our industrial correspondent, reviews the issues at this year's TUC.



photo: John Sturrock (Report)

### A clear call should go out from the Trade Union Congress to the leaders of the Labour government:

**"The trade union movement supports Labour and will fight for a majority Labour government in the election, but a fundamental change of policies is vital. The desperate unemployment figures, more than anything else, demand a break with the present programme of the government!"**

1,608,316 workers are officially out of work. 200,000 are school leavers who left school this sum-

mer and a further 300,000 are workers who have had no job for well over a year!

**Most trade unionists are looking to Congress to take the battle against unemployment forward and to spearhead the struggle for a 35-hour week. They also hope that the Congress will mark a decisive turning point in the struggle for a living wage and against wage restraint.**

The Tories are cynically raising the issue of unemployment. They have waged a sleek, multi-million pound advertising campaign drawing attention to the long dole queues which stretch throughout Britain. But conveniently, the Tories ignore the fact that their policies would actually lead to the unemployment figures multiplying at an alarming rate.

The TUC should expose the hypocrisy of the Tories and then spell out fighting socialist policies which could eradicate the scourge of unemployment and remove at the same time the sting which unemployment always carries of humiliation, poverty and despair.

The genuine concern of the trade unions on unemployment is reflected in the resolutions on the TUC Agenda specifically on this issue. Most of these resolutions call for the 35-hour week with no loss of pay. POEU members have already been in action around this demand and an indication that steel workers may follow is given in the terse ISTC resolution to Congress:

"This Congress instructs

the General Council to organise a general campaign for a phased reduction, over a three-year period, of the working week to one of 35 hours."

Countless workers in the steel industry and elsewhere would support a general campaign of this character but they would point out that the urgency of the situation demands action now, not over a three-year period!

The General Council recognised this in July when they advised negotiators that: "The time is right for unions to give priority to reducing working hours."

Those who wish to continue the TUC's support for wage restraint in its present thinly disguised form will line up behind the resolution from

the G&MWU which talks of "responsible collective bargaining" and which calls on the TUC itself to "establish bargaining priorities for the coming wage round."

If this resolution is passed then it will act as a shield for further attempts to hold back the trade union members behind the wage norms of the government!

**But the rising tide of strikes in Britain today should show the frustrations of their members on wages will not be long contained within the web of wage restraint. Either the trade union leaders will put themselves at the head of the struggle to recoup what has been lost in the last four years or they will be sidestepped.**

Those who imagine that wage restraint is a popular election winner only repudiated by a narrow minority of unrepresentative left wingers should look again at the range of trade union conferences which have this year thrown out wage restraint. And they should look also at current industrial struggles.

The very skilled workers whom the AUEW leadership is now bent on disciplining were, in the past, without doubt, some of the most loyal supporters of the right wing in the AUEW and their policies of "moderation". But moderation does not pay the bills!

The low paid workers are also drawing this conclusion. The resolution from COHSE calls for a "minimum basic wage of £80 per week." That resolution, together with one from NUPE, prove that a revolt of the low paid is imminent.

The concern of the trade

**It is a scandal that at this Congress, when the situation demands a strengthening of the movement's historic aims, the General Council is actually proposing their removal! Charged with tidying up the rule book, they are proposing a clean out of all references to public ownership and nationalisation.**

union movement on the plight of the pensioners, on the decay of the Health Service and on a whole number of other crucial questions is expressed in the resolutions before Congress. But in order to make an irrevocable break with wage restraint and then implement in full the reforms on the Congress agenda, a

fundamental change of approach is vital on the part of the leaders of the labour and trade union movement.

While they have been in office, the present Labour leaders have gone back on the October 1974 manifesto which promised "...a fundamental and an irreversible shift in the balance of wealth and power in favour of working people and their families." Tragically, that promise has been subordinated to the task of resurrecting the ailing economy of British capitalism.

The Labour government has presided over a period of counter-reforms. That period must be brought abruptly to an end!

**The central task of this year's TUC should really be to urge on the Labour government a thorough-going socialist programme, one that starts with the taking over of the top 200 monopolies with compensation based only on proven need, and which goes on to a democratic socialist plan of production aimed at meeting the needs of ordinary working people.**

Such a programme would mean a massive election victory and it would provide the means for a Labour government to solve the deep-rooted problems of the economy. But there is no mention of any kind of a socialist programme on the agenda of Congress!

The most left wing economic resolution comes from NUPE, but while this resolution calls for "increased public ownership and public enterprise" it envisages a rolling programme that will gradually move towards socialism with the major

monopolies remaining intact for the foreseeable future with "controls" on their investment. The whole experience of post-war Labour governments should surely be evidence enough of the impossibility of planning capitalist production!

Those in the labour movement who held tenaciously to

such illusions should hardly need any further convincing after the recent manoeuvres of the Chrysler Corporation, reneging on the only planning agreement in existence.

There is no way forward ultimately until industry is taken out of the hands of the profiteers.

That was understood by the early pioneers of the labour movement. As a result, many trade union rule books have among their aims a call for the socialist transformation of society. Moreover, the his-

tory aims of the TUC itself also point in a general way in favour of social ownership.

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It is therefore a scandal that at this Congress, when the objective situation facing the working class demands a strengthening of those historic aims, the General Council is actually proposing their removal! Charged with tidying up the rule book, they are proposing a clean out of all references to public ownership and nationalisation, and other aims such as a legal maximum working week of 40 hours which have been a part of the trade union movement for generations. If this move succeeds, only woolly formulations will be left in the aims of the TUC, such as: "Generally to improve the economic and social conditions of workers."

These moves to water down the aims of the TUC must be defeated! It is almost as if the General Council is preparing in advance to bow the knee to a Tory government, and wishes to demonstrate how pliant and unsocialist the leaders of the trade unions are.

It has also been suggested that the General Council is trying to water down these aims in order to appease the so-called "non-political" unions in the TUC. But the TUC should be giving a lead

to those unions. In no way should it be allowing the most politically backward sections of the trade union movement to dictate to the rest. Every major industrial struggle today is immediately political. The idea of non-political trade unions is a reactionary myth which in practice means accepting the politics of capitalism.

The leaders of the TUC have correctly drawn attention to the new record membership of the TUC. 350,000 workers have joined

the ranks of the British trade unions in the last year alone, bringing the total membership to a mammoth 11,865,000. In the last 25 years the trade unions have grown by 50%.

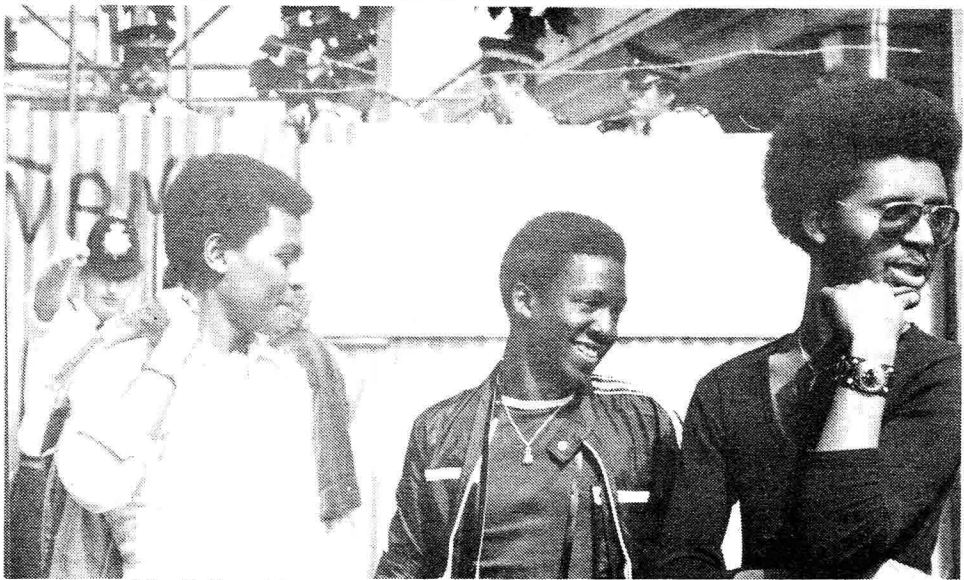
As the TUC has pointed out: "Working people are forever being told that trade unions are unpopular and that their influence is resented. The answer that working people are giving is that in every sort of occupation, they are flocking to the trade unions."

But it is fear of the trade unions which impells the Tories and the owners of industry continually forward in their anti-union tirade. The power of the trade unions in Britain today is second to none: even the Tories and the bosses are forced to recognise this.

But victory for all the separate and individual battles into which working people are forced depends, in the last analysis, on connecting the power of the movement indissolubly with the programme of socialism. That is the way to sustain in office a Labour government. That is the way also to guarantee a future for the working class.



# NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL 1978



Top: Young West Indian girls dancing to a Steel Band.  
Below: An ever-present reminder of the police strength amid the Carnival fun  
photos: Julian McKittrick (Militant).  
See back page for details

# THOUSANDS MARCH AGAINST FASCISM

The National Front, who hope to establish a base in Edinburgh, were given their sternest warning yet of the opposition they will receive after five thousand people marched through the city, as part of the Scottish Carnival Against the Nazis. The carnival itself took place in Craigmillar, a large working class area in which the NF have already spread their racist literature.

The part played by the Labour Party, and in particular by the Labour Party Young Socialists,

**By Lewis Matheson**  
(Edinburgh West LPYS)

could be measured by the fact that we were the largest single section of the march, with over 400 people from as far away as Dundee and Paisley.

However, there were only four speakers from the platform, each one for a couple of minutes between the punk groups, and none of them put forward a positive case for the need for the Labour

movement to fight fascism with a socialist alternative. Patrick Kodikara (Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee) did nothing to raise our political consciousness with his rallying call to attack "police fascism". In short, the potential represented by the presence of so many people was left untapped.

Nevertheless, the LPYS made gains with the possibility of a new branch starting in West Lothian, and Militant supporters sold over 150 copies of the paper.

## Anti Tory Poster

# WHEN DID THE TORIES EVER WORK!



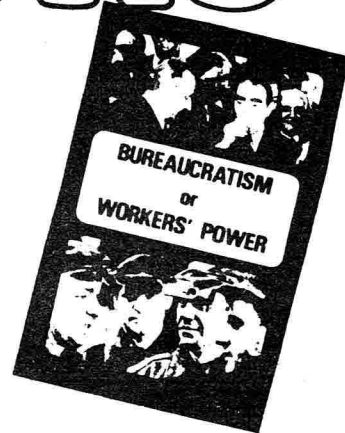
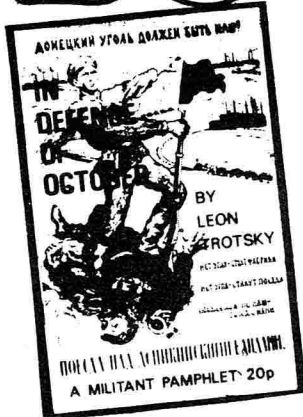
The Tories have launched a £2 million election campaign centred on the slogan 'Labour isn't Working'. This is a blatantly hypocritical appeal from the representatives of big business, who have thrown 1½ million workers on the dole. The poster shown above can help, before and during the election campaign, to combat this millionaires' campaign, and at workers' prices.

This poster has been reproduced from Alan Hardman's hard-hitting cartoon which appeared in 'Militant' 11.8.78. It is in black and white, size 13 ins by 24 ins. Price 10p each plus 9p postage; 5 and over—post free. Orders of 20 and over—5p each, only £5 for a hundred. They are also available in 18 ins by 24 ins with a wide white space, at £5 a hundred.

We are also offering this poster size 18 ins by 24 ins with 'Vote Labour' in 2-inch bold red lettering. These will be at £15 per 100. If you wish to have your candidate's name printed on the poster don't hesitate to contact us to negotiate a price.

Your Labour Party, LPYS or trade union branch can play their part in countering the Tories' vicious campaign now by sending in your order straight away to: 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Cheques and POs made payable to 'Militant'.

# WORLD BOOKS



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# LPYS- RAISE CASH NOW!

**By John Ingham**  
(National Vice Chairman, LPYS)

Every LPYS branch which sends in their £3 donation to the 'Left Funds' will be eligible to win one place at next year's LPYS Summer Camp. The camp will be taking place once again in Coleford near Gloucester from July 28th to August 4th.

The LPYS branch which raises the most money from their sponsored event [their sponsor forms will have to be sent into the National Youth Officer to be checked] will win the prize. Closing date for the £3 donation is November 1st when the winner will be announced.

Labour Party Young Socialist branches all over the country have been growing in size, influence and morale following the national week of action in June. New branches are being set up all over the country and the total number now stands at 401.

Growing LPYS branches, however, need money to grow even bigger and to intervene properly in the Labour movement. This year with a likely General Election in October, in order to make sure the Tories are hammered it is vital that all LPYS branches organise fund raising events.

To have the equipment like a stock of leaflets, red flags, banners, megaphones etc, that every LPYS branch now needs if it is to do the necessary campaigning work, the money has to be raised to pay for them. The Tories have declared war against the youth of Britain. LPYS branches need the cash to fight back.

The National Committee has set the ball rolling by organising a national spon-



LPYS Summer Camp—next year you could go free!

sored event. On September 3rd LPYS branches are organising sponsored walks, swims, dances, runs, in fact any event for which Young Socialists can be sponsored. All the branches have to do is send in £3 to the National Youth Officer and organise the event, working out distances or time to be sponsored, from Labour

Party members, trade unionists, workmates etc and then do it.

If the youth vote is to be won to Labour at the election, its up to the YS branches to show how to do it. To this end the money has to be raised. All LPYS branches at their next meeting must discuss this crucial part of the fight to keep the Tories out.



# LEFT & RIGHT

## The politics of trade

President Carter recently banned the sale of a computer to the Soviet Union for use in the 1980 Olympic Games, because of his 'concern' over human rights. The obvious hypocrisy of this was shown by UN Ambassador Andrew Young's comments that the USA should put its own house in order on political prisoners before criticising the Soviet Union's deplorable record. But the 'Daily Telegraph', never averse to telling only one side of the story, was very pleased at President Carter's action. "The argument that politics must not interfere with trade is doubly false," they say, and go on to urge the British firm ICL also not to sell to the Russians.

Two days after the 'Telegraph's' sanctimonious judgements, it was revealed that ICL sold a computer to Atlas Aircraft, which supplies weapons for the South African airforce to attack guerrilla bases in Namibia and Angola. To show they are not worried about whom they sell their £1 million worth of computers every day to, ICL have said that they are prepared to supply the computer mentioned above to the Soviet Union.

We await the 'Telegraph's' condemnation of ICL's sales to Atlas Aircraft, but we may wait in vain. They will probably be in favour of it, to keep "freedom" [for the whites anyway] in South Africa.

## Tories good for business

Saatchi and Saatchi, the advertising company responsible for the Tory Party's notorious unemployment poster with the employed actors, have been doing very well out of the publicity they received. They are now Britain's fourth-largest advertising agency, and their profits grew in the first half of the year from £570,000 to £755,000. Their shares have also been doing very well, and they are now considering taking over Collett Dickenson Pearce, another major advertising agency.

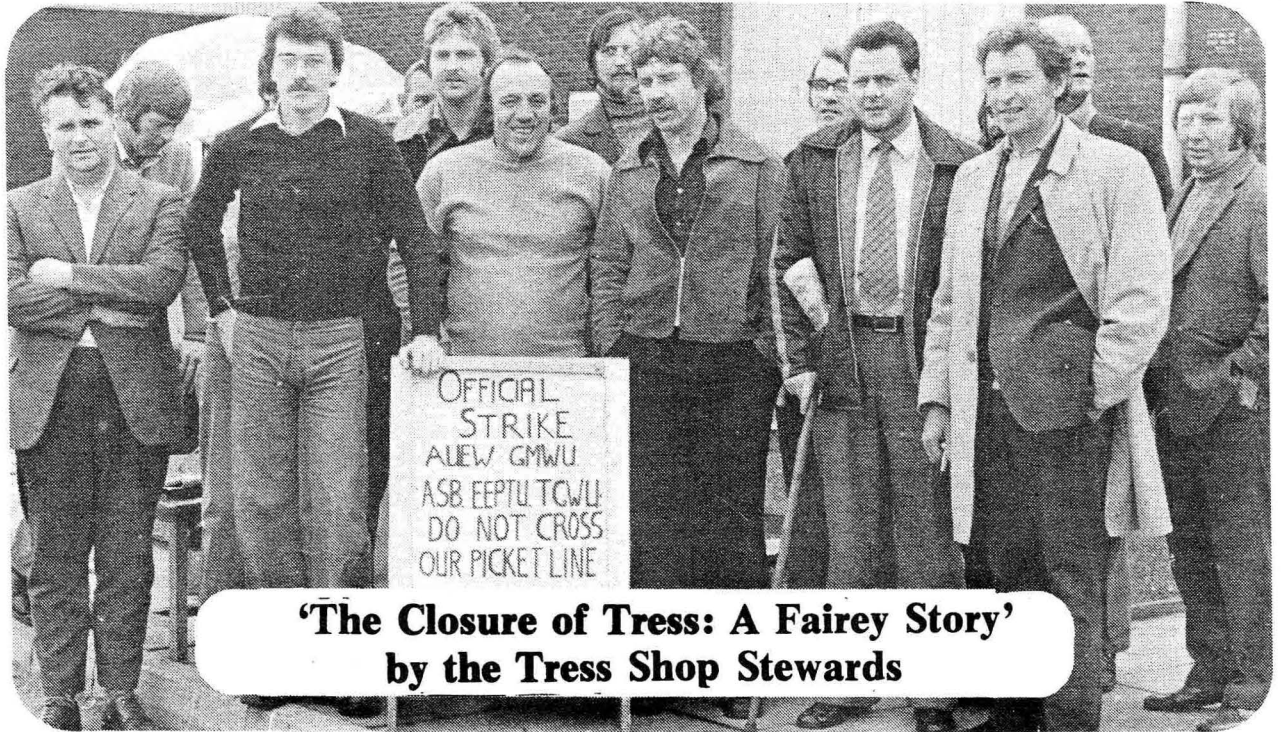
But, unfortunately, much of their profit has been made from government bodies. They deal with advertising both for the Health Education Council and the Manpower Services Commission. No doubt further government contracts could be coming their way if their efforts to get Mrs Thatcher into No 10 are successful! Depending, of course, on how well her acting as a friend of the workers goes down.

## Swelling profits

One of the government's attempts to stop the growth of unemployment has been the 'Temporary Employment Subsidy'. The complete contempt for such measures by the capitalist class was revealed by the 'Daily Mail'. In an article headed: "Adieu, dear Temporary Profits Subsidy!", they commented: "All good things come to an end. Our clothing, textile and shoe makers, among others, are resigning themselves to the loss of the Temporary Employment Subsidy which has done so much to swell their profits."

A leading stockbroker commented: "The progressive rundown of TES this year, and next, could be one of the major factors restricting growth in the UK profits of some textile companies." For example, 20% of Carrington Viyella's profits came from this subsidy, and Ward White, a boot and shoe company, made over a third of their profits from TES.

All of which goes to show that trying to make little adjustments to capitalism, or handing out cash to the bosses, doesn't solve anything. As the chairman of Carrington Viyella said: "...TES buys time and we have used that time profitably... Certain companies...have camouflaged their problems because TES was available. Its loss could sound their death knell." Nationalising any firm which threatens redundancies should be the programme of the government, not continual handouts.



'The Closure of Tress: A Fairey Story'  
by the Tress Shop Stewards

# Sacrificed to Capitalism

## Review by Bill Hopwood [AUEW]

Following the closure of Tress Engineering in June with a loss of 330 jobs, Tress shop stewards have produced a pamphlet which looks at the background and experiences of the closure. The pamphlet is a contribution to discussion in the labour movement on how to fight unemployment.

The case of Tress shows many of the problems faced by workers in fighting for jobs. The Fairey Group, which owned Tress, called in the Receiver in October 1977. The shop stewards within the group campaigned for it to be taken over by the National Enterprise Board rather than by some private firm of asset strippers.

The NEB did in fact take over in January, 1978, and the unions felt that they had won a victory to save jobs because of the role the NEB was supposed to fulfil as laid out in Labour's manifesto. This hope was strengthened by promises given in February and March by the NEB to invest and expand Tress.

But all these hopes were shattered in June when it was announced on the radio that Tress was closing. The shop stewards immediately started

to campaign to save jobs and gained a lot of support in the local labour movement. In the end, however, the membership decided to accept closure.

The pamphlet clearly shows the private management's concern only for short-term profit and its lack of foresight and investment. Even so, in most recent years the firm still made a profit. The NEB didn't alter the management approach and carried on the capitalist attitude to profit and investment. As far as the workforce were concerned, there was no change in approach. The NEB acted more like a merchant bank than a tool of social planning and industry.

The closure highlighted the lack of information, control or accountability of the NEB. The report recommending closure remains secret. The attitude of the three trade unionists on the NEB, Scanlon, Basnett and Harry Irwin, to the closure is secret. The government says the decision is up to the NEB and the NEB says it is up to Fairey.

The attitude of the leadership of the movement is also

examined in the pamphlet. Clearly, those in the government who accepted the closure stand condemned: but what about those who talk about opposing unemployment but don't give a lead? Many union officials and MPs seem to accept closure when it comes to the crunch, and are more concerned about getting severance pay than saving jobs.

The local AUEW organiser evidently saw his role as a 'neutral' one reporting on the situation, neither urging acceptance of severance pay nor fighting for jobs. This lack of lead confused many members at the meetings. In fact one asked: "are we fighting for jobs or money?" This confusion was an important reason for the final acceptance of closure. The 'unbiased' approach contrasts sharply with the shop stewards who were unanimous in wanting to save jobs.

The pamphlet is well written and raises many issues of importance to all workers. The only major criticism is that it doesn't clearly show that unemployment is now a permanent feature of our

economy and the NEB's failure is because it only tries to tinker with the economy.

The central point to any answer to unemployment is understanding that the present system, based on profit for the few, is not concerned about the social costs. The NEB and nationalised industries are dominated by the private sector and forced to run on the same lines.

The introduction quotes from the initiatory address of the AUEW: "May you live to see the day when the unity of the workers becomes so strong that we can end the system which creates unemployment and poverty in the midst of plenty and replace it with a just and equitable one." The pamphlet clearly shows the need for a new system, socialism, but doesn't propose any steps to get there.

The pamphlet will be useful to many in the movement and would provide an excellent basis for discussion at meetings in Labour Parties, trade union branches, and shop stewards' committees.

Copies are available from: Tyneside Socialist Centre, 115 Westgate Road, Newcastle. Price 20p each or £1.50 for 10.

# Another Unemployed Statistic



The grim dole queue

photo: John Sturrock (Report)

Grey drizzle-saturated morning. Nine o'clocking to the dole queue, looking like a faded photo from the 'Thirties. Media's got its economic slump scrap-book out again.

Life on tick—depressing regularity. Hands in overcoat pockets fumble for bus ticket. Screw it into a tight ball. Open it out. Tear it to pieces. Discard it.

Queue crawling to the dole office. Rain trickling down my neck. Shirt's saking. A sneeze for good measure. Prescription charges up, too?

Kick the coke can lying in the gutter at a black cat. Can bounces twice and cat scuttles away. One life down causes a laugh.

Shuffle towards the door, feet sodden. Leather's been stitched with planned obsolescence. Shoulder leans against thin edge of door. . . .

"Got a match, mate?" half shouted in my ear. Silently hand over box o' Swan. "No good mate. Blasted

damp, ain't they?" Half grin and nod acknowledgement.

In the dry now. About time too. Ten minute shuffle forward to the counter.

The clerk's making good use of the bureaucratic pause. Furrowed brow bent over filing cabinet. Finger flicking card index. Crisp card plucked deftly. Sign on another statistic. Must be the biggest petition the state ever receives.

Officious indifference getting right up my nose. Tedium throbbing like a nerve. Feel like planting one on the po-faced bureaucrat. Beginning to feel like a victim in an economic drama.

Turn and go. Leave the bureaucrat's indifference behind. Morning still descending like a grey shroud. Turn right to meet up with me mates. Have a laugh on the street corner void.

By Paul Gardner  
Weston-Super-Mare LPYS



# ANOTHER HOSPITAL UNDER THREAT

Following hard on the heels of the government's final decision to convert Bethnal Green hospital into an exclusively geriatric hospital comes a similar threat to St. Nicholas's, Plumstead. Staff at "St. Nicks" are preparing to save the hospital.

Ian Burge, Secretary of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee, the London Hospital, Whitechapel, reports after a visit to St. Nicks.

St Nicholas Hospital, Plumstead, South East London, was once threatened with closure. Then following a vigorous campaign, David Ennals (Minister of Health) granted a reprieve. He said, however, that five other local hospitals might have to close instead. Now the plans seem to have gone full circle, with a new threat hanging over the hospital.

The new plan seems to be to reduce the 288 bed general hospital to an 85 bed 'community' hospital. The inverted commas are necessary because 'community' seems to have become a euphemism for "stripped-down".

The timetable for the run-down has now been speeded up. The resignation of one



1st August 1978: Bethnal Green hospital workers demonstrate outside DHSS, Elephant and Castle, against closure of their casualty department that day photo: Laurence Sparham (IFI.)

of the two consultants with beds at the hospital is being used as an excuse. There is to be a general reduction in staff by about a third, with 95 to 105 less nurses required.

## Blackmail

There are about 80 nursing jobs vacant in the Area, and nurses at St Nicks are being blackmailed into applying for these before September 30th or else they will be without jobs. The full run-down is expected to be complete by next march.

Like all other areas, this one has long waiting lists. There is no doubt that the beds at St Nicks are urgently needed. Yet management are to close them down.

One reliable source has

revealed a plan to convert the accommodation into offices for Area Officials—at a cost of £3¼ million.

The service which will no doubt be mostly missed is the Accident and Emergency Department. A large number of local workers depend on this at the moment should there be any accidents at work, or travelling to work.

Local industries include a large chemical works and a Ford factory. These are the places where the hospital unions should be seeking massive support. It is these workers who will really miss the services. They are the ones who will suffer when they have to be taken to the next available unit—at Greenwich General, about five miles further away.

The Action Committee at the hospital are now organising a conference for local stoppages to save the hospital. This is along similar lines to the campaign presently being organised by Tower Hamlets shop stewards, with respect to Bethnal Green Hospital and the cuts in Tower Hamlets.

## Campaign

The TU blocking of conversion work at Bethnal Green Hospital has meant POEU members refusing to cut off the phones and the turning away of deliveries of special geriatric beds and cement for building work.

These conferences are for TU delegates, convenors, shop stewards etc. from the localities. They are to discuss

The conferences are for TU delegates, convenors, shop stewards etc. from the localities. They are to discuss arrangements to be made for borough-wide stoppages in the two areas to save the health services.

Conference at St Nicholas Hospital September 16th, 10 am  
Details from Tom Snow, telephone 854 2455

Conference at Bethnal Green Hospital September 14th, 7.30 pm  
Details from Ian Burge, telephone 247 5454/617 or Myrna Shaw, telephone 980 3413/025

# WHAT TORY DEMOCRACY

## REALLY MEANS

A worker in a small factory knows from his own experience

"I work in a small factory where the board of directors consists of one family and a couple of outsiders who are let in only through the 'family's' vote. The issues outlined below show what these Tory bosses think of freedom.

Recently, in the factory there was a vote of the blue collar workers to decide whether we wanted union representation with union credentials or the present system, which I will explain later. The voting was organised by management and was open to non-union members even though it was a union matter.

But a majority voted in favour of a change. The Tory 'family' did not like this and so, ignoring the view of the majority, decided to hold a re-vote.

### Intimidation

At the second vote, the handing out of voting forms was changed. In my department, the foreman called us into his office one at a time to vote, he tried to intimidate some against the union saying it would mean being ruled by the union, and how 'we' [i.e. the management] didn't want that here.

I reported this to our union secretary. The vote has again been invalidated, but on the excuse it was held a day too early and not because of the foreman's action.

This issue shows that Tory freedom does not accept a

majority vote if that vote is against their views, and how they will use intimidation. But the union at no time held a full meeting to see if its members were happy with the voting system or to discuss whether non-union members should be allowed to vote on a union matter.

At one of our union branch meetings—which are held two or three times a year—this issue of what sort of union representation we should have was on the agenda. I wrote out a couple of leaflets putting my ideas and gave them to a couple of brothers to hand round.

Unfortunately, a copy of this got back to the 'family' production manager and the next day I was called to his office. He first told me off for writing the leaflet, which he called 'anti-company'.

During the discussion, he noticed the 'Militant' badge I was wearing. He asked what 'Militant' stood for and I gave him a few details about changing capitalist society for a socialist one. This seemed to upset him even more, and he

I hope this article will show shop stewards' committees in bigger and better organised industries the plight of workers in smaller industries. We need information from them about forming shop stewards' committees and how to run and organise branch meetings.

threatened to show another member of the 'family' my leaflet and tell him my views against capitalism.

This other member of the 'family' is in charge of the tied cottages, in one of which I live. The threat towards me seemed to be that if I didn't give up my 'Militant' views, I would lose my house.

### Resolve

Of course, this to me—and I hope to other comrades—will only strengthen our stand together to root out Tory suppression against the workers.

After I had left the office, I went to see our union branch

secretary to tell him what had happened. He refused to do anything about it, and in effect said I should know better than to hand round "communist" literature!

There are many more examples of how this 'family' works. They have refused to grant a closed shop, even though the board of directors is a closed shop. The white collar workers get a much better sick scheme than the blue collar workers, but when the union asked for equal sick benefits, the 'family' instantly dismissed this.

Finally, I would like to show how union officials do not always work in the interests of their members. I mentioned earlier the vote to

change the system of worker-representation we have at the moment.

This system consists of individual representatives elected by the workers [union or non-union] who go before a management representative.

This system was set up by the 'family' and favours their decision every time. If the workers' representative feels something should be done, he is isolated and there is very little he can do. I and a number of other brothers in the union felt that we should have proper shop stewards and a shop stewards' committee. This was raised at a union branch meeting.

### Afraid

Both the branch secretary and the district official were there, and both of them were against this. They said that the management would not even think of changing their system, and the best we could have was for the present representatives to be given union credentials, although

they must not be called shop stewards. Because the district official has union authority, it was difficult for us to argue against this.

It seems to me that both the management and the union officials are afraid of a proper shop stewards' committee, and while this continues 200 T&GWU members will be without proper union representation.

### Help

I hope this article will show shop stewards' committees in bigger and better organised industries the plight of their fellow workers in smaller industries. We need information from these comrades about forming shop stewards' committees and how to run and organise branch meetings.

If any T&GWU shop steward would like to contact me with any information about this, please write to the 'Militant'.

I cannot risk putting my name and address with this article in case my bosses got hold of it, which would result in my being without a job and a house.

Free speech, freedom of thought and freedom of the individual do not exist under capitalism.

We hope that readers will respond to this appeal by writing to us about their own experiences.



After his defeat by Alan Minter in the European middle-weight championship in Italy in July, Angelo Jacopucci collapsed and - despite surgery- died from brain-damage.

## EXPLOITATION IN THE RING

The savage world of professional boxing was recently spotlighted by the tragic death of Italian boxer Angelo Jacopucci, who died after being knocked out by Britain's Alan Minter.

During the last thirty years, over 300 boxers have died as a result of injuries in the ring. Thousands more have suffered brain damage, and an incalculable number have had their lives shortened, or guaranteed themselves pain and misery in later years from repeated blows to vulnerable parts of the body.

Professional boxers invariably come from the most deprived strata of society. Born in the ghettos and slums of the USA, Latin America and the Far East, they are uneducated—often illiterate—and under capitalism face a future of drudgery and unemployment. The current world champion, Leon Spinks, for example, is a near-illiterate from the slums of St. Louis.

In Britain and Europe there has been a considerable decline in the number of professional boxers since World War Two, a fact undoubtedly attributable to the benefits of the welfare state and generally increased prosperity. But as capitalism moves deeper into crisis and inflicts savage cuts on the living standards of the working class, the number of professional boxers is likely to rise again.

It is a tragic myth fostered by capitalist society, that through boxing deprived young men can earn riches and retire comfortably off: a myth which sets man against man as though they were beasts of the field.

In reality, only a very tiny handful earn a fortune, and whether they manage to keep it is another matter.

The overwhelming majority of aspiring boxers lack the talent to become more than 'preliminary boys' and 'journeymen', polite terms for down-the-bill fighters who slug one another's brains out for a pittance, or act as human punch bags for the sport's elite.

### Scroungers

These not-so-successful boxers generally end their careers broke and back in the gutter, the victims of unscrupulous managers and promoters. Champions are more often than not fleeced by the same parasites, apart from squandering their prize money in high living. A very large slice of Muhammed Ali's gargantuan purses went on maintaining his huge entourage of scroungers and camp-followers.

Without skills or a profession, ex-fighters face the same bleak future which forced them into the professional ring in the first place. They and their families often become part of the tragic

walking wounded who trail dejectedly along in the wake of capitalism's economic problems.

The people who profit from boxing are the promoters. To them, boxers are merely lumps of living flesh to be used, squeezed dry and then cast upon the scrapheap.

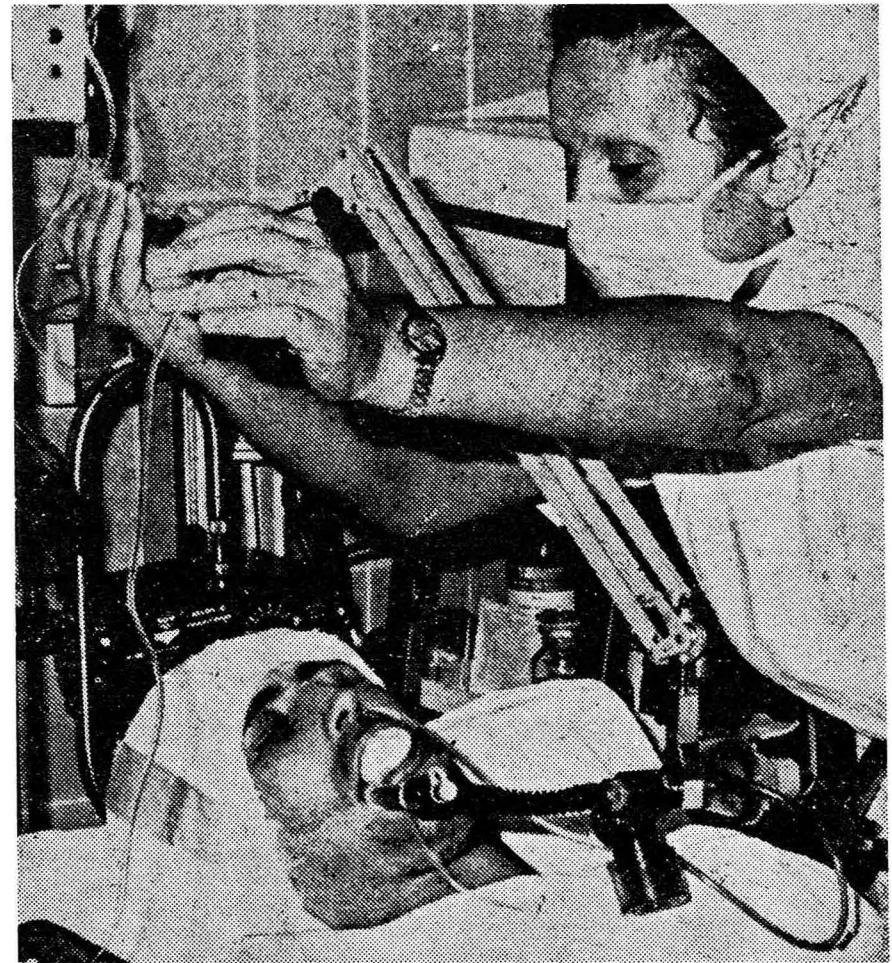
Theoretically, boxing is controlled at all levels by Boards of Control. In reality, all power is in the hands of the promoters. Boxing in this way provides us with a small mirror of the capitalist system.

Like governments, the Boards of Control are merely executive committees with limited powers. While they supposedly exist to safeguard the interests of the boxers, they really safeguard the rule of the promoters.

This can hardly be otherwise for the promoters control boxing's raw material—the fighters themselves—and have total command of the purse strings.

There was recently a naked example of the virtual dictatorship of the profiteers in the world light-heavyweight championship between Parlov and John Conteh.

"Boxing News" reporter Harry Mullan described the behaviour of the promotional corporation, Top Rank TV, as a "sordid spectacle: the nastiest face of capitalism... the concept of fair play being subjected to the all controlling demands of the



Angelo Jacopucci under intensive care in hospital just before he died

dollar...it was disturbing to see the way in which the TV network was able to dictate to the World Boxing Council officials".

### Business tycoons

At the pre-fight conference the promoters completely shunted the WBC and the British and Italian national board's officials into the background. It is the big concerns such as Top Rank TV who are increasingly monopolising boxing promotions in Britain, an axis consisting of promoters Mike Barrett and Harry Levene,

matchmaker Mickey Duff and business tycoon Jarvis Astaire, completely dominate the sport.

Boxing, like all other forms of professional sport, is very much an integral part of the profit system. Not only do the likes of Astaire and Co. and the shareholders of Top Rank reap excellent dividends from the blood and sweat shed within the ropes, but the 'sport', with all the artificial excitement around it, created by publicity, serves as another useful device for distracting workers from the toil and drudgery of their own lives.

Downtrodden young wor-

kers will clearly find no escape through success in the ring. The only 'escape' is through the collective struggle of the workers to achieve our socialist aspirations.

A socialist society would end the exploitation of sport and its participants by profit-motivated 'promoters'. The facilities and opportunity would be created for every kind of recreation and entertainment—for the benefit of all. The sooner this comes, the better.

Bill Alfred

## PROTECT OUR PEOPLE

By Martin Craxton  
(Hayes and Harlington LPYS)

**Local Tories have shown themselves as barefaced defenders of private profit and privilege.**

The "Protect Our People" campaign against cuts made by the Tory-controlled London Borough of Hillingdon is calling a public meeting on housing next week.

This is just one aspect of the campaign's work which includes the fight to save the Hillingdon Law Centre and to defend the social services for old people and children.

Recently announced was the sale of newly-built council houses on the "open market" for £18,000 to £27,000. You need only phone the Uxbridge Civic Centre!

I interviewed John Frost Secretary of the Hillingdon Council Tenants' Federation, which is one of the constituent bodies of the "POP" campaign.

**MC: There are 21 Tenants' Associations affiliated to the federation?**

**JF:** Yes, representing 11,000 council tenants. Tory Housing Chairman, Terence Dicks, however, disputes this and chooses to ignore us. All direct lines of communication between the council and tenants have been broken by the Tories. Hence the need to invite Cllr Dicks to a public meeting to explain what's going on and answer our questions. We have tried to meet with Dicks since our AGM in May when he

withdrew all links of the Federation and Housing: four representatives on the Housing Committee, representatives on the Housing Development and Housing Management Committee. The District Management Committees on which local Tenants' Associations participated have been disbanded.

**MC: And this comes from the Tories who preach "open government"?**

**JF:** Yes...We may try to start our own District Management Committees run by the Tenants' Associations

themselves.

With the sales of new 2-bedroom flats on the open market there is no housing for young couples who would be on the waiting lists for them. This latest attack is the most vicious of all. It also restricts transfers and mobility of present tenants.

However, it's our future generation of tenants that it affects most severely with nothing to move into. We think there's an overall Tory "Plan of Operation" in progress:

★ Remove opposition

- ★ Drive up rents
- ★ Make house-buying more attractive and relatively economical
- ★ Remove houses to rent
- ★ Force tenants into buying houses who at present would never consider it a possible option.

**MC: And this is what Tories mean by freedom of choice!**

**JF:** Most tenants have only one choice—to rent—and this is being taken away.

At a local press conference held by "POP" it was pointed out that for a mortgage for a house in the area you needed to earn between about £400-£500 per month. Which workers can afford that much?

The Tories were willing to give 100% mortgages but those would be to the potential high earners and the best able to pay. All that would be left for those unable to pay would be ghettos of worsening council housing.

Local Tories have shown themselves as barefaced defenders of private profit and privilege. We need a Labour Party just as firmly committed to fighting for the needs of working people.

**'Protect Our People'  
Public Meeting on Housing  
7.30 pm Monday 4 September  
Whitehall School,  
Cowley Road, Uxbridge**



The Middle East peace talks seem to stagger on from one non-event to the next, but the pressure on the governments concerned, especially the USA and Egypt, is such that the 'casual' and haphazard approach cannot go on forever. The Egyptian regime is in a corner and the widespread fear of social revolution that pushed Sadat into going to Jerusalem last year has only increased as the economic problems have mounted.

Sadat's much-vaunted "liberalisation" policy of the last five years has gone completely awry as far as the mass of Egyptians are concerned. There has been only a minimal inflow of capital into industrial projects while millions of dollars have found their way into tourism, hotels, real estate and the importation and sale of luxury goods.

Even the present government itself was publicly embarrassed when it was discovered that a deal had been set up to lease the pyramids area to developers on a 99 year lease, and at the last moment that particular plan for a millionaire's playground was scrapped.

The external debts of Egypt now amount to around \$13 billion; the current account deficit stands at over \$7bn and the next two years will see over \$5bn added to that.

Over the next few years, Egypt will need \$2.5bn a year in loans and aid just in order to repay the old loans. The enormous economic burdens are falling unremittingly upon the labouring masses: the average income stands at about \$300 per annum and the current inflation rate stands at 30-40%, depending upon whose estimate is taken.

Although the government may from time to time raise the legal minimum wage, that does not take into account the miserably low level of that figure in the face of soaring inflation, and neither does it take into account the fact that 25% of the population are under employed or unemployed.

In the cities particularly, the economic situation is storing up huge explosions for the regime. Cairo is jam-packed with 10 million inhabitants, 4 million living in one district alone (making that district more populated than the whole of, say, Libya), in some of the most crowded, insanitary, yet expensive conditions of any city anywhere in the world.

Cairo is notorious for its outdated and run-down services—to get to work in the morning, for example, the workers literally have to hang on by their fingertips to the outsides of buses packed like sardine tins. These conditions are like a tinder box of revolt, and in January 1977, with a decree that suddenly removed food subsidies, the government provided a spark. There were strikes, riots and demonstrations in every major Egyptian town and these quickly took on the proportions of an insurrection: railway lines were torn up, barricades were set up.

### Took fright

The (poorly paid) police showed signs of discontent, and the government was forced to bring in troops, but not before it had rescinded the decrees that started the upheaval. In the face of a massive show of discontent, the government relented, along with the IMF and Egypt's oil-rich creditors who before the riots had demanded "better economic management" and "austerity measures", but who afterwards took fright at the social unrest and fell over themselves to grant new loans and re-schedule the old debts.

The riots were a severe warning to the regime that it could face the same fate as Farouk who was

**By John Pickard**  
(Gateshead Labour Party)

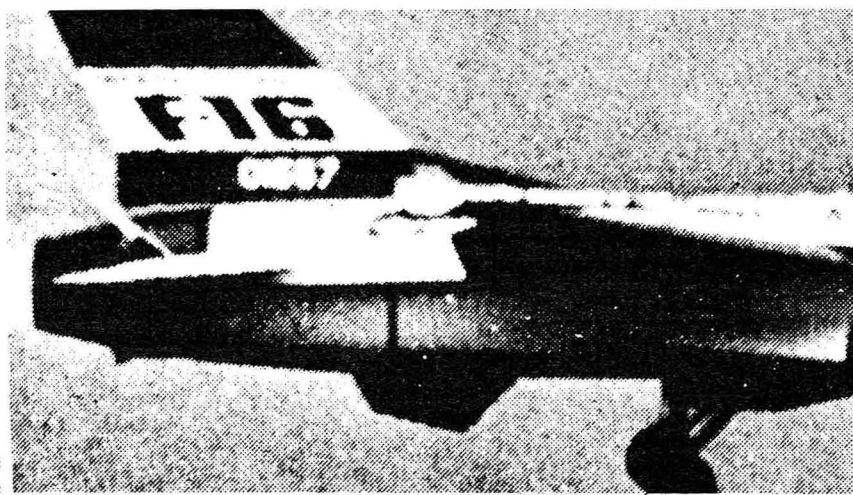
overthrown in 1952, unless some light was to appear at the end of the tunnel. But even despite their fears, the sheer weight of the economic problems have forced the government to re-introduce—although in a piecemeal manner, and without official announcement—many of the cuts in subsidies that had to be withdrawn after the January uprising.

In the minds of the mass of Egyptians, the economic problems are inextricably bound up with the question of peace with Israel, and Sadat's own speeches and actions have only confirmed that view over the last few months. He gambled his prestige in the peace initiative last year while pointing at the same time to some golden age just around the corner after a peace agreement was signed. Now, with the November initiative all but dead, Sadat has lost all face in the diplomatic field while at home his economic difficulties remain and multiply.

Even if there was, hypothetically, a peace agreement signed with Israel overnight, the enormity of Egypt's economic problems would still pose a threat to the regime and to Egyptian capitalism. Both at home and in the diplomatic sphere, Sadat is now moving from one expedient to the next in the hope of maintaining some domestic credibility.

The Assembly set up by Sadat some two years ago as a 'safety

# Middle East t



The F-16, America's newest warplane. The sale of F-16s to Israel was conditional upon the

# RULING DIPLO CANNOT SOCIAL PI

valve' soon set in train a series of events that increased opposition both from the left and the right. Opposition parties began to crystallise around the two "wings" of the Arab Socialist Union, at first the only permitted party, and the government began to take fright at the scale of the opposition that was growing outside the Assembly itself—especially from the left.

The left wing paper 'Al-Ahali' was selling 130,000 copies only months after it was founded and it was widely reported that these were further passed from hand to hand, so its real circulation must have been greater. The official "left" party, the National Progressives, claimed more than 160,000 registered members including Marxists, Ba'athists, Nasserists, intellectuals and trade unionists. Sadat was unable to sit back and watch as the opposition grew in front of his very eyes, and after a rigged referendum in May of this year, the government clamped down on all opposition parties, closing their newspapers, and so on.

### Zig-Zag

The latest 'initiative' announced last month involved the formation of a new government party to replace the Arab Socialist Union and at the same time the possible relaxation of controls on other political parties. This new initiative will no more change the situation than did the last two. The regime of Sadat no longer has the social base to bring down a bloody and complete repression of the opposition—but neither can it reconcile itself to sitting back and watching the opposition grow.

And so the government is zig-zagging from one half-measure to the next, while its support gradually erodes away. The storm clouds are gathering in Egypt. Even in the armed forces, Sadat's



Sadat moves from one expedient to the next to n



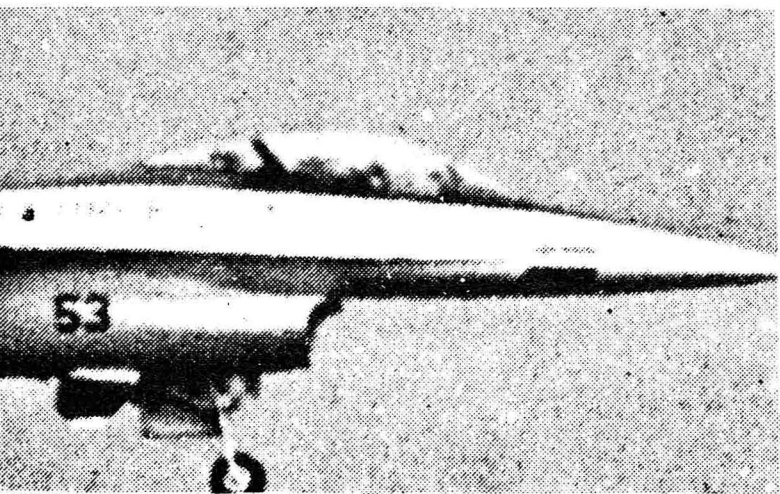
UN troops between Lebanese and Israeli forces

traditional base, there have been indications of discontent.

The soldiers and lower-ranking officers have been hit by the economic storms as much as the workers in the cities and they can no longer be considered reliable to the regime. Even in January 1977, the government was hesitant at first to use the army, and when Egyptian troops were recently sent to Zaire



# talks drag on



sale also to Saudi Arabia

# CLASS DEMOCRACY SOLVE PROBLEMS



tain his tenuous hold on government

There was open opposition expressed by the armed forces. Murmurs of discontent and rumours of secret military opposition groups now abound and these all augur badly for Sadat in the coming period. It may well be that, in the absence of a cohesive and organised workers' movement, opposition against the Sadat regime could break out on a large scale in the armed forces. But

in that event a Pandora's box of revolt would be opened—there would be a 'palace coup' with a few friendly generals putting Sadat out to pasture.

The possibility exists for the hundreds of thousands of soldiers and lower officers to reflect, even if in a bureaucratic and distorted way, the aspirations and the pressure of the masses, to move toward the appropriation of the capitalists and big landowners. The storm clouds are not only threatening the Sadat regime but the whole class of landlordism and capitalism itself.

## Embargo

US Imperialism is well aware of the dangers to Egyptian capitalism. America relies more on the Middle East for its oil requirements with each passing month and has built large scale economic and military ties with Saudi Arabia worth tens of billions of dollars a year.

Any threat to the security of the Egyptian regime would destroy the fragile stability of the whole Middle East, introducing new wars and revolutions that would dwarf the 1973 oil embargo that plunged the capitalist countries into recession. Sadat's precarious hold onto the reins of power provide another source of urgency and irritation in US-Israeli relations.

The US is no longer prepared to prop up Israel militarily to the exclusion of all its other interests in the area and is carefully adjusting its stance by putting pressure on Israel. In Washington, the pro-Israel lobby suffered its first defeat at Carter's hands when the Congress agreed the sale of modern warplanes to Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Israel in the same package. The sale was not decisive from a military point of view but putting all three in the same deal (ie, all or none) served as a public diplomatic gesture, a hint

that Israel must adjust along with the USA.

The Washington Strategic Review, published by the influential Centre for Strategic and International Studies has stated that the US government has already begun to put pressure on Israel by a) persuading third parties to hold up arms purchases to Israel, b) requesting that Iran slow down oil shipments to Israel, and c) by building up a lobby in Congress to counteract the strong pro-Israel lobby. Shipments of American arms and hardware to Israel have suffered many inexplicable "delays" in recent months and the Carter administration must now be seriously considering ways and means of removing Begin in an effort to break the deadlock.

## Israeli inflation

In Israel also, the economic problems are now serious enough to become a major factor in the diplomatic calculations of the capitalist class. For the whole of the last decade, but especially after the 1973 war, the Israeli economy has tottered near the brink of disaster.

According to official treasury figures the GNP in 1976 and the 1977 increased by only 0.9% and 1.7% and unemployment in those years was 3.3% and 3.6%—high figures for Israel where there has traditionally been a labour shortage. For the last five consecutive years, the rate of inflation has been between 30 and 40 per cent.

The result has been a steep decline in living standards for Israeli workers who have struck back with unofficial strikes in almost every sector of the economy over the last few years. The new Likud Party government, elected last May sought to place even greater burdens on the shoulders of workers while trying to stimulate the private sector.

The early warnings were announced last July when the new government reduced food subsidies at a 'stroke', but in November an immediate 44% devaluation of the Israeli pound was announced, further fuelling the raging fires of inflation. Even official estimates for the 1978 inflation rate talk about 35%, while the unofficial estimates put the real figure nearer to 45%. Ironically, those Israelis who will suffer the greatest will be the lower paid, less articulate and less organised workers, including large numbers of Sephardic ('oriental') Jews and it was among these strata that the Likud based much of its support.

For the first time in Israel's history, the governing party is different to the party that controls the trade union federation, the Histraduth—the latter is still controlled by the Labour Party—and inevitably the outrage of the workers against the policies of the government has found expression through their traditional organisation.

One day strikes were held in November after the 'New Economic Policy' was announced—almost every industry and service was affected. The workers demanded cost-of-living increases to cover 100% of the inflation rate instead of the usual 70%. On November 3rd a demonstration of over 30,000 workers took place in Tel-Aviv—some of the speeches were described by Begin later as "semi-Bolshevik"!

Three days later there was another large and militant demonstration outside the Prime Minister's office, in Jerusalem, when some of the youth were reported to be chanting "Down with Begin!". These kinds of demonstrations are unprecedented in Israeli history and, taken with the mushrooming of the "Peace Now" movement indicate that there is a wave of debate, of questioning of traditional ideas, and of radicalisation sweeping through Israeli society, especially among the youth.

The Peace Now movement started

as a petition by 300 officers protesting at the government's stonewalling in the face of definite and clear opportunities for reconciliation and peace. The movement now has at least 100,000 signatories. One Israeli recently took out an advert in a newspaper to declare that in the event of there being another war, he was not prepared to fight—"it will be a war for which I have no responsibility, it will be Begin's war".

Those sympathies are widely echoed around Israel. Workers are asking, "Why should we face unending wars and sacrifice? Why should the chance for peace be thrown away by a few religious fanatics?"

Without a doubt, if there was a choice between peace and settlements in the areas occupied after 1967, the overwhelming majority of Israelis would choose to give up the settlements, which any case hold only about 10,000 people out of a total population of over 3 million.

The changing mood within the working class is now even having its reflection in the Israeli capitalist class and in the Cabinet of Begin himself. A group of industrialists and leading executives announced that they have organised themselves to give financial and moral support to the Peace Now movement.

## Histraduth

Recently, after a Cabinet meeting that proposed a completely negative statement on the future of the occupied West Bank, the Defence Minister Weismann left the meeting saying "I'm going to prepare the army for the next war!", clearly showing impatience with Begin's obduracy. These divisions within the ruling circles will grow wider as long as there seems to be no progress in the economic or diplomatic fields, and the American diplomats will be seeking to exploit the differences to isolate the pro-Begin elements from public support.

In the Histraduth and in the Labour Party, despite the conservatism and Zionism rooted in these organisations, the growing disenchantment will find an echo. Under pressure from the workers, the Histraduth has already moved further and faster than ever before in protecting living standards, and it will become more and more difficult

to separate the economic and diplomatic issues the longer they drag on. In the Knesset, some Labour MPs have even questioned Begin's mental state.

Although increasingly out of step with Imperialism and with increasing sections of the Israeli working class, the Begin government clearly thinks itself more secure than it really is. Begin may perhaps be calculating that the USA will only apply minimal economic pressure and that they can 'muddle along' indefinitely.

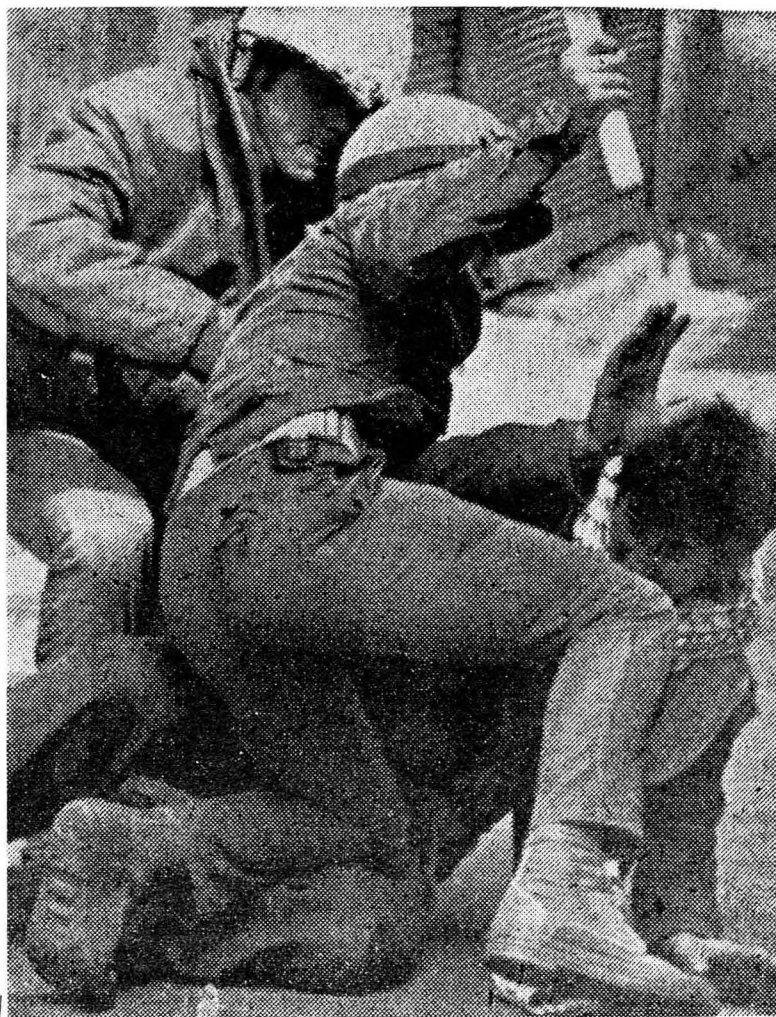
## Socialist Federation

But the obstinacy of the Begin wing of the ruling class is not the only obstacle to a peace agreement. In the political hot-house of Arab politics, the Israeli ruling class can find no answer to the national and social aspirations of the Palestinians that would not threaten the foundations of Israeli capitalism itself.

An independent Palestinian state on the West Bank would become a springboard of upheaval and revolution—something that the Israeli capitalists cannot even consider, and neither, for the same reasons, will the Arab states allow it. But the aspirations of the Palestinians will not disappear; two and a half million people cannot be wished away.

In Israel/Palestine, the interests of Arabs and Jews can never be reconciled on the basis of Zionism and capitalism, but only through social revolution. In Egypt and Israel the class struggles will continue to intensify over the coming period and the 'peace agreement' will remain a dead letter. Capitalism and landlordism will stagger on piling one contradiction upon another.

In the last analysis, it will only be the workers' movement that will cut across the contradictions, a movement based upon internationalism and workers' democracy, setting itself the task of winning the workers of the Middle East to the socialist transformation of society. Wars and revolutions are endemic within capitalism. Peace in the Middle East, as elsewhere, lies only through the perspective of socialism and the establishment of a socialist federation throughout the area.



Israeli troops beat up an Arab youth during a demonstration in Jerusalem



# CASTE WAR IN INDIA

## 'Militant' popular among Bangalore workers

Readers will remember the heroic struggle of the workers in Metal Lamp Caps of Bangalore, Southern India [a subsidiary of Thorn Electricals]. This strike lasted several months and was an inspiration to workers all over Bangalore, India's fastest growing industrial conurbation.

We have now received a letter from an activist within the movement of "harijans" ["untouchables" or outcasts] which has mounted a tremendous struggle against caste oppression since the downfall of the Congress dictatorship, in spite of suffering daily atrocities and murders at the hands of the Janata government.

This letter shows eloquently the effect that can be had of a workers' strike led to a successful conclusion on the morale of every stratum of the oppressed population, even among the harijans living on the edges of the villages. We thank all our readers, in Britain and elsewhere, for giving their support to this strike and thus cementing the bonds of workers' international solidarity.



Dear Sir

I have been receiving your paper regularly. The paper is very educative and it is a guide to the working class. After reading 'Militant' I have realised my responsibilities towards the world working class movement.

Now I am giving you some information about Samudhya and about atrocities on Scheduled Castes in Chinthamani.

Now your paper is very popular in Bangalore. It is because of the play 'Struggle' staged by Samudhya.

Samudhya is a progressive cultural organisation. It has drama, library and cine activities.

The drama "Struggle" is about the struggle which took place in Mysore

Metal Lamp Caps (India) Ltd. The drama is a street play, played in the arena without stage and costumes.

Actors will show anything by personifying (as machines,

cast etc.) through images. The workers of MMLC(I) Ltd. also took part in this drama.

The drama has portrayed real happenings in MMLC(I) Ltd. The womanish character of the owner, Sunder Murthy, his rudeness towards workers, hiring goondas and blacklegs, police...everything is portrayed.

### International support

In the midst of the suffering workers a lady agitator will come into the arena. She speaks as she circles: "Though so many things happened...if you did not know about this struggle it is because the Indian capitalist papers did not carry this news...but to our support

there is international support...A foreign weekly 'MILITANT' has published this. In fact the international editor of the paper, Comrade Roger Silverman, has wrote a letter to us. (She reads out the letter which speaks of the British and Spanish workers' support) and the drama ends with a revolutionary song.

This drama is staged in almost all corners of Bangalore. Samudhya showed the bosses' attitude towards the workers.

Now about an incident come down. It accepted the demands of the workers of the MMLC(I) Ltd. Thus 'Militant' is popular in Bangalore and soon in Karnataka.

Now is about an incident which has happened in Chinthamani, in Karnataka. In drought-hit areas at the

beginning of the monsoons the Ganga Festival is celebrated in order to get good rains. Devotees will carry lights to the temple.

Five years ago in Chinthamani, in Pattalamma temple, Harijans tried to enter when this festival was going on but the upper castes beat them mercilessly. A police case was booked. But the case failed as the upper caste leaders bribed the petty Harijan leaders.

### Press

In Chinthamani the Congress Party is winning since independence. Now the Congress (Indira) has taken hold. The Congress calls itself the Champion of Minorities. But Harijan children are not allowed in schools and temples.

On 27th June in the morning the upper caste carried lights to the temple. That afternoon at about 3.30 pm Harijans entered the temple.

The local Dalit Sangarsha Samiti gave wire to the Superintendent of Police seeking protection. They have also asked the circle inspector of police to give protection. But on the said day, there were only a few policemen, after felicitating Gangamma.

The Harijans were on the way to Plague Amma temple (there is a temple for the "Goddess of Plague"! It is a bit far away from the town. The policemen were following the Harijan devotees. But on the way upper castes attacked the Harijans even in the presence of police.

Harijan women and children were also ruthlessly beaten on the very day local Dhalit Sangarsha Samiti gave a memorandum to the police and again they asked for protection.

On the next day, 28th June, there were heavy rains. As the rains stopped falling about 200 upper caste people attacked the Jagjivan Ram

Colony (which is very near to the Pattalamma temple, inhabited by Harijans) with cycle chains, razors, clubs and stones. They hurled stones on all huts and they smashed several huts. They broke doors and threw out the utensils.

They injured the Harijans whoever they met on the way with razors and clubs. Even women and children were not exempted. 45-year-old Smt Venikatamma, who owns a small shop near the colony, was dragged out from her shop. They broke her legs and they took away the cash from the shop and ornaments she was wearing.

85-year-old Muni-Yellama was also beaten mercilessly. Dozens were hospitalised. When this was going on there was not a single policeman. When the scheduled caste women complained to the police half a dozen police came in the end and they arrested only ten goondas.

On the same day we went to see the superintendent of Police who was residing then in a travellers' bungalow in Chinthamani. He was reluctant to see us. He did not hear us. In fact he, chided us.

We then called to the Kannada daily 'Prajavani' and we asked them to send the reporters. But they asked the Mufusil correspondent to meet us. But the Mufusil correspondents of these dailies are Shetty's (a trading community) are only interested in Rotary Club News.

The newspapers in India did not carry the news about the 'Struggle' drama because it is a working class drama. And they did not publish these atrocities on Harijans because they are serving landlords and capitalists.

This organised attack on Harijans was pre-planned. The landlords and industrialists in Chinthamani are behind this plot.

## Sithole seeks big business money

What do you do if you are a leader of a nationalist movement with no popular support?

In the past you have received money from Lonrho, American and South African big business, but now your former backers are looking amorously elsewhere.



You have done the best you can. During the discussions to form an internal government your party's Secretary-General stated: "There are those who think that nationalisation is proper, we feel not, and we want to ensure the rights of the individual to property if that should happen."

Your leader, Rev Sithole, lives up to this maxim of belief in private property by living quite luxuriously in what your party has described as a "palatial mansion". Somehow though this has not gone down too well with the masses of Zimbabwe, who will keep on raising the question of socialism.

But your party has put them in their place. As your Secretary-General said last December: "There are many situations where the common man may want nationalisation and we want to say, from the start, 'No' to such pressures on the government of the day."

Rejected by the people and faced by a cooling from some big business sections, it was a bit of a dilemma for Sithole and his dwindling band. But a bit of bluster and bribery never did any harm.

So first try and expropriate the name of ZANU for your party, a party from which Rev. Sithole has been expelled. Next, using the authority

of ZANU, you approach a number of multi-national companies pointing out how it would be useful if they funded ZANU.

'Militant' has acquired a copy of such a letter from Sithole's representative in the UK to a leading multi-national corporation.

The letter claims that: "ZANU enjoys immense support both at home and abroad and we are certain of total victory at the polls later in the year, and form the first government by the new year." It would therefore be very helpful for the firm to assist "ZANU" in this 'inevitable' victory. So there is a direct request for funds.

"Ndabingi Sithole has directed me to approach a number of major British firms with a view of opening some serious discussions on the following points:

- (i) Long term investment plans in Zimbabwe.
- (ii) Possible financial assistance towards ZANU's election campaign at home leading to independence by December 31st, 1978.
- (iii) Administrative costs—both internal and external."

Then came the reassurances that Sithole will be quite prepared to act as an agent of capital (as long as he gets his rake-off), but the firm had better start making its contributions soon, because there are competitors around:

"It is my party's policy, built over a number of years of our struggle, that in order to enjoy a stable government, external investments must be encouraged from all over the world. We are also aware that there are many companies in Zimbabwe which have some historical connections with this country. Your company has been a pioneer along this line for a long time. We are therefore, approaching a number of major companies which are likely to take a 'lead' towards investments after December 31st 1978."

It is unlikely that many firms will respond to Sithole's desperate appeal, there are more substantial African movements who have more clearly disguised their pro-capitalist positions from the people of Zimbabwe. But increasingly the struggle in Zimbabwe is polarising on class lines, between those who want 'capitalism with a black face' and those who are struggling for an end to all exploitation, both racial and class.

This is now where the battle for Zimbabwe lies, a battle which with a truly socialist approach would result in the defeat of Sithole and all the other would-be Napoleons of a capitalist Zimbabwe.

Chris James

**MILITANT  
PAMPHLET  
'The Coming  
Revolution in India'  
By Roger Silverman**

Price 10 + 5p postage. Bulk orders over 10, post free



# HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

Ted Mooney, formerly an AUEW shop steward for over ten years, and now lecturing for the WEA and the TUC, examines the implications of the Health and Safety at Work regulations which come into force next month.

On 1st October, the 'Health and Safety at Work Act' introduced in 1974 by the Labour government will gain some teeth. The long awaited and much heralded regulations governing the role of 'Safety Representatives' and 'Safety Committees' will come into operation. What will this mean in practice?

The 'regulations'—as they are commonly known—are quite wide-ranging, and give similar powers to shopfloor trade union safety representatives as are enjoyed by the miners' deputies.

Trade union appointed safety representatives will have the powers in law to carry out regular inspections of the work place, visit the scene of accidents and near misses, and investigate the causes, demand information from the factory inspectors as well as the right to form 'Safety Committees' with bite.

The 'Health and Safety at Work Act' (HASAWA) undoubtedly marks a tremendous step forward, largely the result of pressure exerted by the trade union movement. For the first time, a further 8 million workers will be given some legal protection and it will be the duty of all employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all workers.

The old factory inspectorate has been strengthened and given additional powers and the trade unions have the right to police the legislation.

## Lever

Nevertheless, it should not be believed that this Act alone will radically alter things. At the end of the day, all that this legislation can do is strengthen the bargaining position of workers and form a lever for a struggle to force the employers to carry out their statutory obligations.

To its credit, the TUC education department has recognised this fact and have structured their ten day HASAWA courses accordingly. The courses have been an enormous success, and thousands of trade unionists have undergone day-release training in all aspects of health and safety at work.

Jim Hammer, the chief inspector of factories, has commented that trade unionists will be better informed than management on the provisions of the Act and on their rights. It is ominous that he warned, however, that as a result management will go onto the defensive and blame 'safety reps' for their troubles.

The widespread and serious concern about health and safety at work amongst active trade unionists is beyond dispute. As

a result of the TUC courses, groups of workers, in conjunction with members of the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science, have formed 'Hazards' groups.

Merseyside has its own group and recently held a highly successful one-day conference. In the Midlands there is the Coventry Health and Safety Movement (CHASM); Leeds has its own Leeds Action on Safety and Health (LASH); and others are sprinkled throughout the country.

## Workers must have overall control of the workplace environment.

The campaign among stewards and shopfloor workers on this issue has undoubtedly gained extra push from the energy and effort that might otherwise have been spent fighting on direct economic issues. Blocked by the Labour government's pay policy, and frustrated by the lack of lead from trade union leaders and stewards who see no alter-

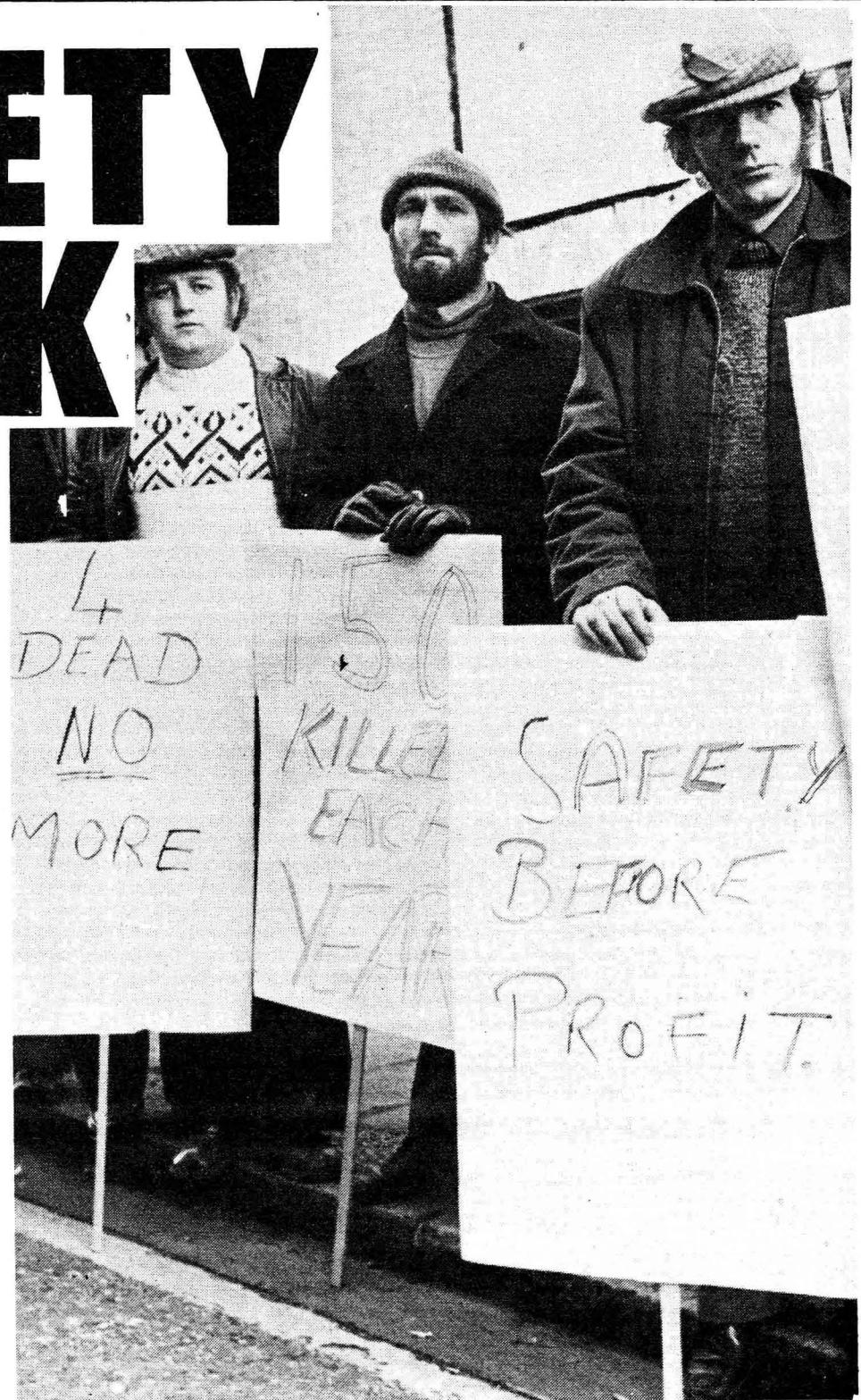
native on the wages front, workers have switched to the offensive on hazardous and dangerous conditions on the job.

## Right to stop

The next year or so, whether under a Labour or a Tory government, will certainly see renewed battles on wages, the 35-hour week, and other economic demands. But with a new awareness of the "hazards of work", the stewards will not be prepared to let health and safety be pushed into the background again.

When—to take one example—one worker in three can expect to suffer some permanent damage to his hearing as a result of noise problems alone, the question must remain important. The struggle for safe conditions and the battle for wages cannot be set against each other. They are part and parcel of the fight to defend the workers' interests against the boss's naked pursuit of profit.

'Acceptable' standards of noise in the work place, in this country, are more than double the level acceptable in other European countries. Professor E.G. Richards from Southampton University, suggests that up to 1.5 million workers may have had their hearing damaged through workplace noise. He then goes on to defend this, in effect, by arguing that it would cost industry £500 million to reduce noise to acceptable levels.



31 Jan 1978: Construction workers protest outside employers' federation about the death of four brothers in Littlebrook site accident. photo: John Sturrock (Report)

In almost every other field of industrial hazard the same arguments are put; the cost would be exorbitant. In other words profits come before safety for workers. The real safeguard for the health and safety of workers can only be assured with the advent of a planned socialist economy on the basis of workers' control and public ownership. In the meantime, however, the

trade unions must raise demands that will act as a bridge towards achieving such a society.

Utilising the provision of the HASAWA for safety representatives, it is possible to demand that only reps elected by trade unionists and subject to trade union discipline are acceptable. This means in essence, the right to recall when necessary, as with shop stewards.

Although the Act allows for inspection by safety reps and puts the onus for health and safety on the employers, nowhere does it provide for the reps to 'stop the job'. The right for reps to stop the job however, is a necessity, for only in this way can workers be assured of not having to work in dangerous conditions.

Again, the Act provides for consultation between employer and safety rep before the introduction of new plant and processes. This is not enough. It is the workers who have to work on the new machines and equipment and it is for them and them only to decide on their acceptability.

The labour movement must mount a serious campaign for overall control of the workplace environment. It is as vital to prevent death, mutilation, and chronic illness, as to fight unemployment and secure a decent living wage. Such a campaign is an essential ingredient of the struggle for a socialist society in which production would be planned to take account of the health and safety of working people, as well as the wider ecological effects on the environment.

## UNIONS MUST PROVIDE BACK-UP

Chemicals are a major health hazard in industry. Thousands of new substances come into use every year, but in most cases little is known about their effect on workers' health.

It is essential that the shop-floor T.U. organisations have the power to vet these substances: and this presupposes back-up research facilities for analysis and testing.

The nearest thing to this at the moment is the "TUC Centenary Institute". Launched in 1968 with a £125,000 TUC grant, the Institute is funded by the TUC to the tune of £25,000.

Despite its name and TUC

funds, however, the Institute is part of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and is not controlled by the trade union movement. Leading trade union safety officers as well as shop stewards feel that it has completely failed to provide the research and advisory service it was intended to.

Referrals to the Institute not only have to go through a lengthy procedure, but the reports given tend to reflect the orthodox, pro-management outlook of establishment advisors. In practice, many safety stewards have preferred to rely on their own local contacts for expert

advice, particularly those made through the Hazards groups which involve sympathetic academics and researchers.

The limitations of the Institute and the inadequacy of the TUC's approach was shown from the start with the appointment of its director Professor Corbett McDonald.

The appointment was made with the TUC's support against the advice of several trade unions who questioned the suitability of an expert noted for his 1972 studies of Quebec chrysotile [white asbestos] miners—work financed by the asbestos mining employers' association. His

reports are widely quoted by the asbestos industry in support of their claim that there is little risk associated with the handling or use of white asbestos.

The trade unions at all levels must demand better than this! There are numerous scientists and other experts who would be more than willing to advise the movement. The unions must ensure that the resources are available and set up research and advice facilities which are readily and quickly available to the shop floor reps, and which are under the democratic control of the trade unions.



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

## LETTERS

300% PAY RISE—  
BUT NOT FOR US

Dear Comrades

Last year my union managed to negotiate a just under 10% pay rise bringing my salary per annum up to a grand £3,171. So can somebody explain to me how Lord Grade, the 71 year old TV and film tycoon [Lew to his friends] managed a 300% pay rise—from £59,000 to £201,428?

Maybe it's for the same reason that the chairman of ICI gets £95,363, the head of BP £96,502 and Sir Arthur Bryant, chairman of Wedgwood, £137,000. Lew's employers, Associated Television Corporation, said that the big increase was "wholly attributable to his greatly increased personal workload in our American companies." Through various productivity deals many workers have had their personal workload increased, but I haven't heard of any of them getting a 300% pay rise!

It seems that the government pay policy has just been another case of one law for the rich and another for the poor. The time has come for the unions to say enough is enough and completely reject any further wage restraint unless, of course, it's a restraint on the wages of people like Lord 'Lew' Grade.

Yours fraternally  
Jane McVeigh  
Paisley Trades Council Delegate

## We foot the bill

Dear Comrade  
YOP, STEP and JOCP: sounds like a deformed idiot trying to waltz, doesn't it? Actually it's the government's attempts to provide full employment—or rather to hide unemployment.

The cover of the booklet explaining one of these schemes, the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP), has a collage of young people with a banner reading "Youth Unemployment up 120%." Underneath it says: "Their Future is Britain's Future. Dare we jeopardise it?"

On reading what's inside, one is forced to conclude that the answer is "yes." The magnificent "future" which the scheme offers could be as little as two weeks, while other "careers" could last as long as 13 whole weeks.

The boss then takes on more young people to exploit. As the booklet says, "We foot the bill" and "the only thing we can't pay for is the outright purchase of land or buildings." The boss is guaranteed to be OK but what guarantees do the young people have? A job afterwards? No. A decent wage for the duration? No. Useable training? No.

A deformed idiot trying to waltz? Perhaps it's not so different from a "socialist"

government trying to detract from the unacceptable consequences of capitalism.

Instead of these absurd gestures the government should provide work or full pay for all workers, nationalise any firm which threatens redundancy, institute a 35-hour week and a guaranteed minimum £70 per week, and nationalise all the major monopolies under workers' control.

It is pointless trying to disguise unemployment, let's defeat it with socialist policies.

Yours fraternally  
Stan Donnelly  
Leyton CLP

Washington  
bus drivers

Dear Comrades

Please send me two papers regularly to Seattle, I will try to sell one and I need one for me.

Perhaps you heard that the Washington bus drivers are on strike since Thursday 20th July. They are fighting for a new contract. The old one is several years old and they need more money because of inflation: 8% this year.

The union says it has nothing to do with it. They got no support from any officials. One inhabitant of Washington says that the city is totally paralysed because of this strike.

Employers and workers had to go to a court and this told the unionists on Sunday 23rd, they had to return to work immediately. Till then they needed no picket line, no one tried to break the strike and the police kept quiet. Although they received this letter from the court they will go on striking, "because we can't do anything else."

This strike is only in Washington and the drivers want 21% more.

That's all for now. Please tell me how I shall pay for the papers.

Best wishes,  
Dieter Affeln

technology  
and jobs

Dear Comrades

The Science Research Council has decided on a collaborative programme of research into computer science and applications, costing £5,000,000. The new applications being considered include image processing, automatic inspection and industrial robotics and if their development is successful it could benefit us all.

But it won't. It will push thousands of workers onto the dole, their jobs being replaced by machines.

This advance in technology is far too dangerous to put into the hands of big business, who will make the inequalities already evident even greater. It can only be put to good use under socialism when the workers are no longer required to put money into their bosses' hands.

Those who work in areas taken over by computers can work for the benefit of all of mankind by making kidney machines or can openers that work for example.

Yours fraternally  
Steve Strophair  
Stafford LPYS

Employers  
black list

Dear Comrades

The Economic League has been in existence since 1919 "to actively oppose all subversive forces in whatever their origin and inspiration, that seek to undermine the security of Britain in general and British industry in particular."

It continues to receive generous support from industry and finance, getting £4,000 plus donations each year from Tate and Lyle, Imperial Group, Shell, National Westminster Bank, Barclays Bank, Midland Bank and Lloyds Bank.

Trade unionists have long suspected that one of the main services which the League had provided for their backers has been keeping records of active trade unionists who very often seem to have difficulty in getting jobs. The Economic League has always denied keeping such blacklists, but occasionally the public gets a glimpse of the League's real activities.

Recent stories in the *Guardian* have confirmed suspicions of the League's operations. The National Union of Funeral Service Operatives came across a confidential memo being circulated in the offices of the Great Southern Cemetery and Crematorium Group. It said:

"Before engaging any staff in future a call should be made to 01 681 7346, code number 555 and they will require the full names, the area of living, date of birth and National Insurance number of the proposed employee. You give the code number and name, you do not give the company's name or mention it. If there is the slightest suggestion of any information held against the proposed employee from this source, you do not engage same."

The *Guardian*, with the assistance of eight active trade unionists, tested this number and procedure. Commenting on two Communists whose names were given, a man who answered the number said: "You don't want to entertain these gentlemen." They were, he said, "a couple of right villains."

The phone number was confirmed by the Post Office to be that of the Economic League, 896 London Road, Croydon. The League's director of research and information, Jack Winder, having first said, "We don't keep files on anybody on behalf of anybody else," later said when pressed: "It is our business to have this information and we will give it to people."

The personell director of Shell, Peter Linklater, said of the League: "They gave us pretty good value. We are interested in identifying overt opponents of the system to which we are committed. The last thing we want to do is to have political subversives on our payroll or on sites in which we have an interest."

Yours fraternally  
Anthony Tynan  
Rhonda LPYS  
and South Wales NUM

Houses  
for all

Dear Comrades

Recently my LPYS branch decided to leaflet all the young voters in the constituency as part of a recruitment drive.

I ended up with the dubious pleasure of leafletting the largest and most affluent ward in the constituency. Everything about the area, particularly the housing, reminded me of what a class-divided society we live in.

Most of the houses are about four times as large as the average council house and many have long driveways (enough for three cars). Some even have swimming pools in the garden.

Compare this with the working class council estates where the houses are crammed together as close as is humanly possible (and most have no garden to speak of, let alone one large enough to fit a swimming pool).

When it is considered that this area covers about three square miles and there are no more people (and in many cases less) living in these houses than an average sized house it represents an incredible waste of land taking into account the housing problem in the town.

The problems of overcrowding and poor housing will only be solved when Labour takes over the big building monopolies, supply firms and the parasitic land-owners and speculators as part of an overall socialist economic plan to release the human and material resources at present lying idle and provide everyone with decent, cheap and comfortable accommodation for the first time in history.

Yours fraternally  
Clive Walder  
Hove LPYS

## Czech '68—a CIA plot?

Dear Comrades

In relation to 'Militant's' article on Czechoslovakia 1968, this is out of the Labour Party's right wing handbook.

When Czechoslovakia became a socialist state in 1948 there was no way of waving a magic wand as there is human error in all things. We know the production and economic problems: this is part of a growing socialist or capitalist state. One of the reasons was that they failed to expand into modern industries.

In the early 1960s Czech and Slovak nationalists formed, in strict secrecy, units intended for an operation by the CIA against the socialist state, leading up to the counter-revolution in 1968 code named 'Prague spring'. Right wing elements had taken control of the Communist Party, which Dubcek did not see, and used him.

There was and is now no such thing as Czech Stalinism. It is a Marxist-Leninist road.

Lenin taught how the counter-revolution always tries to disguise itself in a left form close to the revolution, to appear as urging only a small change, a little im-



provement of the regime (ending of Communist one-party domination) in order thereby to undermine the regime and ultimately over-

throw it.

Yours fraternally  
Vince Smith  
New Communist Party  
West Sussex

## GOING TO THE DOGS

Dear Comrades

Today I had to work overtime again [I need the money as my basic rate is only £50 pw for 40 hours]. I am canning paint in a medium-sized paint factory.

The foreman told me that he had a "special job" for my overtime tonight. Maybe this would be my contribution to help save ailing British industry from going to the...?

"...There's been a small spill of paint from a tank outside, I want you to scrape

it up. We don't want Henry treading in it and getting paint all over Vanessa's Aston Martin.

"This has got to be a really good job—I don't mind if it takes you right up to 7.00 pm" [when we finish overtime].

Henry is a massive hairy dog that looks twice the size of a husky. Vanessa is one of our directors. So I set to work with scraper, shovel, sawdust, stripper, a bucket of thinners, a broom and took from 5.15

to 7.00 to do a good, thorough job.

Henry is a patient, contented dog, has a kennel the size of a garden shed and a long strip of grass verge all to himself for his visits to the premises.

I'm so gratified to know of at least some sections of society well looked after by our faithful capitalists.

Fraternally  
Martin Craxton  
Hayes and Harlington LPYS



£52,500 NEEDED BY OCTOBER 7th

# MAMMOTH EFFORT NEEDED - FROM EVERY READER

## FIGHTING FUND CHART £70,000

Area	Target 39 Wks	Target 52 Wks	Proportion of target received	Received
Eastern	3,300	4,400		1,624.28
Hants & IOW	1,575	2,100		1,685.11
Humber-side	1,650	2,200		1,161.40
Lancashire	1,125	1,500		382.13
London: North	5,775	7,700		3,442.40
London: South	2,850	3,800		1,873.75
Manchester & District	2,175	2,900		1,071.28
Merseyside & District	3,375	4,500		1,518.70
Midlands East	3,300	4,400		1,627.15
Midlands West	5,500	7,400		3,372.47
Northern	3,675	4,900		2,129.03
Scotland East	1,875	2,500		870.78
Scotland West	2,125	2,900		951.64
South East	1,725	2,300		1,438.66
South West	1,725	2,300		1,222.59
Thames Valley	1,275	1,700		911.19
Wales East	1,500	2,000		933.83
Wales West	1,725	2,300		849.24
Yorkshire	3,900	5,200		1,596.63
Others	2,250	3,000		3,733.51
	52,500	70,000		32,396.17

Progress towards year's target ■ Towards October 7th target

The Labour leaders are already appealing for support in the general election ahead. The TGWU officials are being called to a special meeting on how to intervene.

Denis Healey is making promises—3% growth, a fall in unemployment, inflation lower than that of France and America (not too difficult!) and no more emergency budgets.

'Militant', from its very inception, has campaigned for Labour governments to be returned, but always insisted on the need for hard-hitting socialist policies to end the domination of capital and guarantee that the Tories, representing as they do, only the interests of big business, never get another look in.

But to conduct this fight we need more and more resources. Hence 'Militant' appeals for support not only during election campaigns but continually, to help provide the ammunition for the day to day struggles of workers against the bosses and their system. And we get some excellent indications of the support that does exist for our paper.

The following letter came to us via a Bristol seller who was not previously aware of this particular pocket of support:

"Dear Bryan  
I have pleasure in enclosing a cheque for £5, as a donation from the above shop stewards' committee to 'Militant' in

response to your appeal of the 29th ultimo. Wishing you every success,

Yours fraternally,  
J Blackley, Convenor,  
AUEW Shop Stewards  
Production Works,  
Rolls Royce, Bristol."

We also heard from Cllr A Lloyd of Swansea POEU enclosing £2 "for the coverage [of his union's dispute] in the paper." A Peterborough TSSA member also appreciates 'Militant's' campaign on the 35-hour week as his union adopted this demand in 1968 and he thinks it is about time it was put into practice. He sent his £6 union 'honourarium'.

Other trade unionists donating their commission to the 'Militant' this week were a Hull NUPE shop steward (£7.68), a Caerphilly MATSA shop steward (£2.50), T Smith (Coventry British Leyland)—£1.55 and a Newcastle trade unionist £4. A Blaengwrach miner gave £3 and a Leith G&MWU member £5.

Other individual donations from readers included two welcome 'tenners'—one from C Michelson (Ellesmere Port) the other from R Jones (Telford); £6 from F Mcleod (Paignton), a fiver from B Roberts (Llangollen), £4 from M Singleton (Hove), £3 from R Allen (Southgate), £2.55 from D Crack (Thornton Heath), £1.85 from P Hackett (Coventry), £1.50 from D Moss (Brixham), £1.30 from G Lonsson (Sweden), and £2 donations from K Schilling (Lewisham), Mr and Mrs

Wobey (Hackney), D Scott (Lanarkshire) and T Harman (Brixham).

Four Bristol supporters—A Spears, M Humphries, B Shawe and B Bromley—between them gave £9. Many thanks, comrades!

Also to all those who gave £1 including P Lunardi (Cambridge), T Webb (Kings Lynn T&GWU), J Cummins (Stevenage COHSE), G Matthews (Wimbledon), J

# SEND CASH NOW!

Turner (St Pancras), C Gleeson (Manchester), K Halliday (Stafford), A Auld and R Phillips (both from Newcastle), J Powell (Falkirk), J Dobbins (Glasgow), G Towl (Caerphilly) and Cllr C Brown (Ashington).

A special thank you to Stirling, Falkirk and Grange-mouth LPYS who donated £10, setting an example to all

Labour's youth branches who want to see 'Militant' step up the fight on their policies in the coming election. Bridlington LPYS members also gave £6.30 and Stafford £1.55. Students at Newcastle University, who will also be campaigning for Labour, collected £15 for our funds.

From the TUC Conference onwards we should be seeing a spate of successful Militant Readers' Meetings with ener-

grow, to express that support with their cash by giving a straight donation. We appreciate every penny we receive, and fund-raising is an additional and welcome source of cash.

Our thanks to supporters who made the following efforts: in Peterborough to raise £41.92 from a jumble sale and £5 from 'plumbing', in Hackney to raise £20 from typing and £5 'plastering', in Telford £10 from catering, in Stafford and Newcastle, sponsorships for walking plus £5 from a disco, in Lanarkshire £12 from '50 club', Brighton "drinks" £6.09, Portsmouth fresh vegetables and coffee £4.50, in Coventry looking after cats and plants £10 and running "the Stirling Bus" (?) to raise £8.

All these contributions and many more have served to double last week's total for the 'Militant' fighting fund making £653.55. But with the target of £52,500 to reach by October 7th we are launching a special drive for £20,000 in September (see front page). Start now by giving your own donation, then see what you can get everyone else to do.

**MILITANT DOES APPEAL FOR SUPPORT ALL THE TIME BUT THIS MONTH WE WANT A MAMMOTH EFFORT FROM EVERY READER!**

getic appeals for cash. Smaller meetings have already raised the following amounts: Walsall £6.02, Peterborough £3.82, Brighton £21.20 and discussion groups in Stafford £2.90 and Brighton £2.50.

The main appeal of the 'Militant' is political—for activists in the labour movement who support our ideas and want to see the 'Militant'

# YOUR PAPER-A WEAPON IN THE FIGHT

## HOW POEU MEMBERS USE MILITANT

With regular reports sent in from branches all over the country, and with regular full page features or front page articles, Militant has been indispensable in keeping POEU members informed of what's happening nationally and in explaining the case for 35 hours to workers in other industries.

Scores of local leaders of the POEU have understood the need to keep their members fully informed. They have taken bulk orders of the Militant to distribute. And they've sold like hot cakes.

As soon as issue 419 came out the Overseas Telegraph Branch Committee

took 12 copies. London North Central Internal branch took 60 copies.

London City branch went one better and ordered 100 copies! These were distributed to members at a mass meeting where our article explaining the behind-the-scenes negotiations in the McCarthy enquiry and our exclusive quotes from the confidential report were discussed. As a result of the information provided by the article, the several hundred members present voted to reject the McCarthy Report and the settlement and censured the NEC. After being passed from hand to hand the paper must have been

read by over 300 members.

On the same night 60 copies were sold at a POEU meeting in Glasgow, where engineers were thirsting for the truth about the McCarthy Report. At a meeting of Cardiff External branch one member correctly complained about the press coverage of the dispute, saying the press just put the management point of view all the time. "It depends on which paper you read," another member replied and pointed to the Militant. The Chairman agreed that the Militant has always had a good coverage from the workers' side.

In Leeds the secretary and vice chairman of one branch

The following leaflet has been circulated to POEU members by two Officers of the Leeds Internal Branch. The response in Leeds and in every part of the country to Militant sales has been excellent. Sell Militant to your workmates! Send us reports of the campaign in your area now.

"For any section in struggle like ourselves it is important to learn from the experience gained, and pass this onto other sections of our movement. For this reason we would recommend the Militant as a fighting socialist newspaper.

The Militant is based where it counts—in the mass trade unions and the Labour Party. Our struggle for a 35 hour week with no loss of pay is being watched by all trade unionists.

Because of this the union should not hesitate in calling for support to achieve the precedent of 35 hours as a normal working week. The Militant has already taken up this demand explaining its effect throughout industry. That work is of real value to our struggle."

Kevin Pattison (Secretary, Leeds Internal Branch)  
Mick Jones (Vice Chairman, Leeds Internal branch)  
(both in personal capacity)

have even distributed a leaflet in their own name showing how the Militant serves trade unionists in their struggle and urging all members to take a regular copy. Sales are going excellently. In Newcastle one seller heard that a branch meeting had been called,

went along and sold 53 papers in one mad rush.  
Post Office engineers everywhere are thirsting for the facts and socialist argument. Regular Militant sellers must provide them by organising sales at union meetings, at exchanges and depots now!

# ADS

## Militant Meetings and Notices

**NEWCASTLE WEST Militant Readers' Discussion Meetings.** Monday 4th September—"TUC Conference: what perspectives for the movement?" 7.30 pm, Pooley Road Clinic, Denton Burn.

**SUNDERLAND Marxist Discussion Group:** September 1st—"The role of the trade union activist". Fridays at 8 pm. For further details contact Diane English, Sunderland 44365.

**WALLSEND Marxist Discussion Group.** 'The General Strike 1926'. Speaker Jen Pickard. 6th September, 8.00 pm. Stanley Arms, North Shields.

**STOCKTON Trade Union Discussion Group Meetings.** September 4th—"Can Socialism be achieved peacefully?" September 18th—"Is the Soviet Union socialist?" October 2nd—"Fascism: what it is and how to fight it". October 16th—"Liberation Struggles in Africa". The meetings start at 7.30 pm on Monday night, upstairs in the Spread Eagle, Dovecote Street, Stockton.

**MILITANT JUMBLE SALE** Pensioners' Hall, Caerphilly. 2.00 pm, Saturday 30th September.

**BLYTH Marxist Discussion Group.** 'Is Marxism Relevant?' 7.30 pm, Thursday 7th September. 8 Church Street, Cramlington Village.

**HARTLEPOOL Marxist Discussion Meetings.** September 3rd—"Can Socialism be achieved peacefully?" September 17th—"Is the Soviet Union socialist?" October 1st—"Fascism: what it is and how to fight it". October 15th—"Liberation Struggles in Africa". The meetings start at 7.30 pm on Sunday at 18 Catherine's Street, Headlands, Hartlepool.

**ROTHERHAM Militant Public meeting.** 'The coming General Election—which way forward for Labour?' Thursday 7th September, 7.30 pm. WEA rooms, Corporation Street, Rotherham.

## Classified

**HACKNEY LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS DISCO** 2nd September, 7.30 pm, Hackney Labour and TU Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, E.8. 30p entrance. All welcome.

**LITTLEHAMPTON One Day conference** Saturday 9th September Southern Africa CIA involvement in world politics The socialist way forward Meet 10.00 am. Friends Meeting House, Church Street, Littlehampton Contact Jim McEwan, Littlehampton 3812





photo: John Sturrock (Report) II

## Kent Lock-out

Last Wednesday the entire workforce of the Snowdown colliery, Kent, went on a 24 hour strike in support of a section of the workers in dispute with management.

Since the NUM agreed to implement local productivity incentive schemes, Snowdown was one of the last to find a workable formula. Management took their time deciding on two installation agreements on the North Drive, and when the workers involved thought they had a workable formula, management, without consultation, changed their mind.

When the workforce returned from their annual holiday a letter from the management stated that there would be a change of working in the North Drive. The union put the place in dispute, and as a result the men involved were locked out.

On the Tuesday evening Lodge officials phoned the pit manager and were told that no work would be found for the men. An overtime ban and 24 hour strike were recommended by the union and accepted by the men.

Officials will be meeting with management over the weekend, and if no agreement is found, an all out strike seems very likely for the following week.

## VICTORY AT HICKSON AND WELCH

1,000 workers had to take to strike action and the picket lines in a 3-week struggle to win a victory over management, re-establishing the right to negotiate.

During the dispute 500 shopfloor workers turned out in a mass picket, closing all road ways into the plant. Two directors and three members of the management negotiation team were unable to enter. The picket was called off at 10.30 am so trade union representatives could have someone to discuss with at a meeting in the plant fixed for 11am.

All sections of the shopfloor were 100% behind the action, involving the apprentices who (because of indentures) were unable to directly take part in the strike. Instead the 60 apprentices got together and organised a weekly collection. Their action is applauded by the older workers and the stewards.

The membership voted to take strike action, and it was the membership who at mass meetings had the right to vote on a new offer from management. The offer included full negotiation rights over a productivity deal, through a union and senior management committee, along with a raising of the minimum payment from 6% to 8%.

A new attendance bonus of £12 a month, two sickness days, and a training allowance ranging from 4p to 8p an hour. £30 will also be paid in the first week back, to offset earnings lost during the strike.

On the shop stewards' recommendation, mass meetings of the 750 T&GWU and 250 AUEW members voted to return to work. With the last pay award only in April of this year a real victory has been gained, even without at this stage breaking the government wage restraint. In the three weeks of the strike the plant was totally shut down, and the firm suffered a loss of £450,000. Management was forced to give a full commitment for future pay structure taking into account wages in the area (Castleford being a mining area).

The only thing which makes such an agreement more than a scrap of paper, is the strength and solidarity of the shopfloor unions at Hickson and Welch. This victory was not won around the table but on the picket lines.

While the memory is fresh in management's mind real negotiations can take place. The road to successful negotiations is through strength, solidarity and the willingness to use that to defend the members' standards.

**Bob Gillogly**  
(Senior Steward, AUEW) spoke to **Jon Ingham**  
(LPYS National Committee)

## What price a miner's life

By an old miner, Newcastle-on-Tyne

Whoever named her the "Merry Widow" had a grim sense of humour.

She was sexless, heartless, and without a single feature of feminine beauty. No doubt she had killed a couple of youngish and middle-aged men, as the local churchyard would testify, but there was no justification for her being named a Merry Widow.

Still alive, there was Charlie, Isaac, Joe, Jeremiah, Arthur, Levio, Tony and 'old

John' [in his middle fifties]. Also three of my brothers, younger than me, who could bare witness to the "Merry Widow's" depravity. My three brothers have died during the past twenty years.

Perhaps the precautions I took at the time have enabled me to live on while others, less cautious, or less sensible, could not survive.

The wet handkerchief I put over my nose and mouth during my sessions with the

"Merry Widow" trapped the noxious excretions which spewed from her overpowering breath. When each session ended, I took the wet handkerchief from my face and shook off the cement like flakes of congealed spew.

Over fifty years ago the "Merry Widow" was replaced by a rock drilling machine which flushed out the rock dust with water passing through the hollow steel drill, and miners' lives lengthened.

Compensation to the dependents of the dead, or living dead, was not included in the price of lead sold. No compensation was paid.

Perhaps the mine-owners shed a tear when they received their dividend cheques and directors' fees? Or perhaps the tears already shed by the widows and orphans were not sufficient to warrant any recompense to the victims of the Merry Widow.

## working in the union

BY ALEC THRAVES  
[Swansea AUEW]

John Huxtable's support for the continuation of geographical branches in the AUEW (ie. where you join the nearest branch to your home, irrespective of where you work 'Working in the Union', Militant Nos 418 & 419) deserves some comment. Personally, I would support the abolition of geographical branches and the introduction of factory branches for engineering workers.

Branch life in the AUEW has been declining for a number of years, for the very reasons Bro. Huxtable point out in his article. Members, forced to work long hours because of poor basic pay, are reluctant to spend a couple of hours listening to branch business that is very rarely of any direct concern to them or their place of work.

The increasing numbers of members on "check off" (union dues deducted from you wages) has meant that members do not now even have to remember to pay their dues each fortnight let alone participate in the branch. This, coupled with the demoralising effect of TUC-supported wage restraint over the past period has turned the branches into mere skeletons of the fighting bodies that some of our older members remember.

Economic conditions, due to the decline of capitalism, will inevitably force our members into attending their branches during the next few years, as they struggle to regain lost living standards. But it would be wrong for us as Marxists to admit on the one hand that branch life is dying and then turn around and say "never mind, when things go wrong the members will turn up", leaving it at that.

Concrete proposals are vital. In my opinion, to have the maximum amount of member-participation the branch has to be situated at the point of production, the

factory. The AUEW is no longer a small, select union of skilled engineers. It has almost two million members working in the engineering industry (encompassing almost every factory with a machine in it). We have now, therefore, got the material basis for factory branches.

Compared to the one disadvantage that Bro. Huxtable poses: that the bosses may be listening in on union business, the advantages are far greater. (You always get someone running back to tell anyhow). Members are more likely to turn up at a factory branch where the business being discussed directly concerns them, especially if the branch can negotiate for meetings to be held during works time. The District business will have a far greater audience and the election of officials both full time and branch can take place in the factory allowing more democratic discussions, unlike the present unrepresentative postal ballot system.

Obviously, as is the case in other unions, there will be certain factories which because of small membership would not be able to form a factory branch. They would have to belong to a central branch, but this should not detract from the general principle of supporting the introduction of factory branches.

In a perfect world, all AUEW members would regularly attend their geographical branches. But we must look at the situation as it is, and the fact of the matter is that the overwhelming majority of our members play no role whatsoever in the decision making of our union. The introduction of factory branches would be a step in the further democratisation of the AUEW.

## MILITANT Trade Union Pamphlets

- NUM—a programme for action..... 15p
- G&MWU Review 1978..... 15p
- Socialist polices for the UPW..... 10p
- CPSA: The tasks ahead..... 20p
- A fighting programme for printworkers..... 15p
- Militant Teacher..... 15p

Order now from World Books,  
1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN  
Please add 5p postage  
—bulk orders post free

For a democratic, fighting POEU .... 10p  
Order from Roy Farrar,  
74 Bull Lane, Liverpool 9

## DOCKS WALK-OUT PROTEST

Two thousand Southampton dockers are at present out on an indefinite strike.

Last week two dockers employed on the container berth were sent home for refusing to work on unsafe machinery. 150 more dockers on the container berth walked out, and at a mass meeting last Friday the rest of the dockers walked out for the

bank holiday period.

At a further mass meeting on Tuesday it was unanimously agreed to stay out, until management recognise the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act and agreed procedures.

By Nick Brookes  
(Southampton Labour Party)

## SELL MILITANT TO YOUR WORKMATES

For details contact: Circulation Department, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



# NATIONALISE WESTERNS

## -save Merseyside jobs

Seven weeks on the picket line has not dimmed the enthusiasm of the Western Shiprepair workers. The men are determined to save their yard, and save the jobs for the town.

Their fight is for nationalisation—only in this way can the jobs be saved. What can any private employer give? Will he guarantee jobs and security? These are the questions the men are asking.

Last week the Action Committee organised a deputation to London. Throughout the day pickets stood outside the Headquarters of the Laird Group—the company that put the men on the dole. The management refused to see anyone.

Maybe they were not in a fit state to see anyone, judging by some of the 'city gents' that stumbled over the picket line about 3 o'clock as they returned from what must have been liquid lunches.

Generally the response was very favourable. Several people stopped to buy badges. Clearly the pressure on Laird's management must be stepped up. £14 million profit last year and in spite of that 650 men are on the dole.

### TUC

During the day a deputation went to the TUC where a General Council meeting was planned. Every Council member was given a leaflet and asked to support the fight.

The reactions of most members was to say the least unfavourable. Only Alan Sapper stopped to give support.



Workers on the picket line at Westerns Shiprepair yard are angry and determined

photo: Julian McKittrick

Ken Baker, G&MWU National Officer for shipbuilding, came out to talk. Once again it was said that nationalisation would be impossible.

He revealed that a private buyer is in the background offering to buy the yard. The buyer is Rab Butler who is the owner of two shipbuilding yards in the North East.

Naturally the question the men are asking is how many men would be re-employed and what would the wages and conditions be like?

The real need is for the trade union movement to

draw up a national plan for the shipbuilding and ship-repair industries. At the moment private agencies like Solartex are determining where the work should go. It was this agency that starved Westerns of work.

### Share work

If there is a shortage of work the alternative is not to let any yards go to the wall but to share out the work. The question of alternative work must be investigated by the trade union movement. Meanwhile, despite the

scepticism of the trade union officials, the campaign for nationalisation is continuing. The Action Committee are appealing for emergency resolutions to be moved to the Labour Party Conference. A letter has been sent to all shiprepair yards, a mass meeting has been called for August 31st, and a lobby of the TUC Congress is planned.

Send resolutions of support to Westerns Action Committee, 29 Gaywood Close, Birkenhead.

Richard Knights

# AIRLINE ENGINEERS STRIKE

The 24-hour strike of British Airways engineering and maintenance workers at Heathrow and other airports throughout the UK took place on Wednesday 28 August.

They stood almost 100% by their decision to withdraw their labour, despite a frenzied barrage of misleading statements and rumours spread about by management in a vain attempt to undermine the workers' unity.

The engineering workers claim (as reported in Militant on 18/8/78) is for parity of pay with their opposite numbers at British Caledonian Airways.

Just prior to this strike the officers of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee met BA management and asked four

important questions in order to further clarify the position:

Do management agree to redress the anomalies outlined?—Management would look "For ways and means" to implement this on 1/1/79.

Do management agree to consolidate all supplements into the basic rate in 1978?—No, not in 1978.

Do management agree to increase shift pay as per agreement—No—it is BA's intention that all supplements should be consolidated by January 1980.

Do management agree that these payments will be made outside the 1979 pay deal?—Management were not prepared to be committed.

These answers indicated no change in management's attitude. They said nothing had been achieved by the strike action, but nothing will be gained from prolonged further talks until they are prepared to concede our justifiable claim.

This, the first shot in a battle that could be only the beginning at the state airline

By Dave Bayle (AUEW, Heathrow Airport)

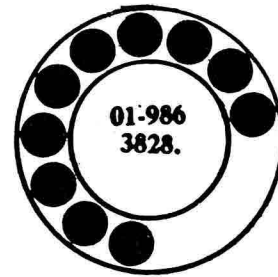
from now until December or even longer, has proved beyond doubt the growing militancy and unity of BA engineering workers, determined to maintain their living standards.

The point has repeatedly been stressed during talks with management over the last eight months, that to delay payment of the claim will involve it in phase four of 5%. On a non-consolidated basic wage this will result in workers of the national airline still lagging behind private airlines.



Disruption to British Airways passengers, due to management intransigence photo: Julian McKittrick

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SPREAD THE NEWS!

## Birmingham

Over 200 members attended the External branch meeting on Monday 21st August. They passed a resolution completely rejecting the 37½ hour deal, telling the NEC to go back and negotiate for 35 hours on a 'no cost loss' basis. They said 'no' to any deal with productivity strings attached and jobs lost.

A second resolution was passed calling for Bryan Stanley's resignation and a delegation sent to lobby the NEC's meeting.

## Widespread reaction

Robble Harper (Branch Sec, B'ham Power) adds "The McCarthy agreement and settlement are no more than a return to the proposals which were thrown out at the special conference and this year's conference.

"From all the soundings taken, my members' reaction is one of 'nothing more, nothing less than 35 hours'—in other words, total opposition to what most of them see as a sell-out by the NEC. That seems to be the general reaction in the Birmingham branches".

## Hillingdon

A special meeting of the Hillingdon branch voted overwhelmingly to totally reject the offer provisionally accepted by the National Executive of the union, of a 37½ hour week with strings attached, in place of the 35 hour week as instructed at conference.

The mood of members was set against any compromise. The two NEC members present were told

that the conditions attached to the proposed settlement were completely unacceptable and would be rejected by a majority of branches throughout the country.

The offer of a 2½ hour reduction totally disregarded conference decisions on a number of important issues.

Other points mentioned were the NEC's failure to present our case to Lord McCarthy in accordance with conference decisions, lack of leadership, appearing on TV to announce the PO offer as a major victory prior to the membership being aware of such an offer, calling off the overtime ban and work to rule whilst members are still being prevented from returning to work in London North Central and other areas, keeping the McCarthy report secret from the members and backing off from the fight just when the action was beginning to bite.

The Hillingdon branch has not been particularly noted for its militancy in the past, but was united on this issue, and prepared to go on and fight until we win.

## Edinburgh

The Internal branch rejected the 37½ hour week by 3 to 1 at a meeting of 300 members. John Faulkner, Assistant Branch Secretary said "This battle is getting tougher. I think the Special Conference will overturn the NEC recommendation. Industrial action would then start and I would expect TUC support in this campaign for a shorter working week."

"The branch are continuing with a 50p levy on members for a special fighting fund. Copies of Militant containing McCarthy's proposals were requested by the branch committee.

## SOCIAL WORKERS FORCED TO ESCALATE ACTION

Social workers in Southwark, Newcastle, Lewisham and Tower Hamlets are currently locked in battle with their local authorities over their claims for higher grading and better training opportunities.

Given their responsibilities, the social workers feel the present rate for the job is nothing more than an insult. In Tower Hamlets the rates begin an £40 basic rising to £80 after 7 years. NALGO, the social workers union, is demanding a minimum of £60 rising to £100.

Predictably the press and the management are describing the strike action as

"deplorable", a "threat to lives" etc. The social workers themselves have pointed out the hypocrisy of these people.

In Tower Hamlets, for example, there has been no emergency night service for "emergency life and death cases" for 5 years. The social services department is around 15-20% understaffed and some offices only open 3-4 days a week.

This is a borough that boasts the highest rates of mental illness, and children in care, and that contains some of the worst housing in Britain. It is not the social workers who are threatening

lives, the conditions in the area itself are doing that.

So far in Tower Hamlets the management have refused to budge, which is a scandal considering it is a Labour controlled council. Only the Liberal opposition have given support to the social workers.

The social workers will be forced to escalate their action, with intensified picketing, blacking etc. An all-out London stoppage has been called for 27th September.

John Bulaitis (LPYS National Committee) spoke to London social workers



# Militant

16 MILITANT 1 September 1978

## LEYLAND TOOLROOM WORKERS

Next Monday the AUEW National Executive will probably be meeting to decide whether to uphold the expulsion of their members in British Leyland SU Carburettors, Birmingham. These toolroom workers have now been on strike for three weeks for immediate parity with Rover, Solihull, toolroom workers, which would mean a £7 a week increase.

Although many other Leyland stewards disagree with the SU men's unilateral action, there is now growing sympathy for them from AUEW members and other car workers because of the AUEW Executive's heavy-handed action against them.

It is deplorable, whatever the disagreements, that their own trade union leadership should threaten them with

expulsion and agree to assist the SU management in finding replacement workers.

**On no account should AUEW members or other**

**trade unionists blackleg on the SU toolroom workers.**

The SU workers' action reflects frustration with the government's pay policy and

with the area differentials within British Leyland. These problems will not be overcome by disciplinary action.

Roy Fraser and the unof-

ficial toolroom committee leaders, who undoubtedly have considerable support among the toolmakers—previously regarded by Duffy and

the right wing as stalwart supporters—are meeting on Saturday to consider a call for national strike action.

But the only real way forward—one that will benefit all BL workers and enhance trade union unity throughout the combine—is to demand from BL management a levelling up of all rates to the highest in the combine, without strings and without delay. Then we must work out a new national claim.

From this point of view, the recent meeting of the newly formed Leyland Cars Committee was an important step forward. It was moved by Rover stewards, and accepted, that the committee's officers draw up a comprehensive shopping list of demands to present to a delegates' meeting in two or three weeks' time.

It is now vital that there is full participation by all sections in the Leyland Cars Committee in order to draw up a claim that will unite Leyland workers in a powerful, united fight to defend and improve our living standards.

By Bob Ashworth

(Senior Steward, T&GWU, Rover, Solihull)

### LEVEL UP RATES NOW



Terry Duffy, the AUEW's new right wing President

## Carnival Spirit

### —Despite the police

The 1978 Notting Hill Carnival, which attracted a quarter of a million people over the Bank holiday, was a tremendous success. This was despite the provocations and inflammatory warnings of mass muggings and widespread pick-pocketing issued by the police in the days leading up to the event.

But the success of the carnival was mainly due to the black youths who demonstrated time and again that they were not going to be intimidated and provoked into a confrontation with the police even when this included such pointless exercises as the cordoning off of half of Portobello Road, the main focal point of the celebrations.

The persistent drone of the police helicopter that hovered above, and the police cine cameras blatantly spying on the crowds from the overhead Westway motorway, heightened the tension. It was partly these tactics of an unnecessary show of strength by the police that were responsible for the outbreaks of violence late on Sunday evening which led to the arrests of 42 people.

In the aftermath of the carnival there will inevitably be the call from conservative sections of the community to ban it from the streets and confine it to enclosures like the White City. But it would be completely wrong to justify the banning of the carnival on the grounds of 42 arrests—which, by coincidence, is exactly the number arrested at the Spurs match last Saturday, which only attracted a fraction of the people present at the carnival.

The Borough council and the government must recognise that the black community, who comprise 10% of the population of this area,

face huge social problems which are the direct result of the capitalist system. Although, ironically, they reside in the wealthiest borough in London they live in the most appalling overcrowded, squalid houses. Next to Lewisham they have the highest proportion of black youth unemployed.

By Ronnie Sookhdeo

### Socialism

Black youth need to get organised in a campaign to end their mass unemployment, to destroy their slums, to end police harassment and to drive out racialism.

At the carnival the local Labour Party Young Socialists and PNP Youth were out leafletting, selling the 'Left' broadsheet against racialism, PNP Youth Bulletins and 'Militant', and recruiting new members. Along with paper selling and a bookstall we had the best political showing over the two days.

**Black youth must fight back against the real criminals in this society—the landlords, bosses and profiteers! Join us in the organised labour movement in the fight for a socialist society where life can be colourful and happy not just at carnival time but all year round.**

### 1978 TRADES UNION CONGRESS 'MILITANT' PUBLIC MEETING

- ★ No 5% Pay Limit! ★ End mass unemployment!
- ★ Keep out the Tories! ★ Socialist policies to restore living standards and ensure a Labour victory!

#### SPEAKERS:

BRIAN INGHAM (Industrial Correspondent, 'Militant')  
KEVIN RODDY (National Executive CPSA)  
STEVE GLENNON (Delegate, National Society of Metal Mechanics)

#### CHAIRMAN:

GARY ARMITAGE (General Secretary, National Woolsorters' Society)

(All above in their personal capacities)

Wagner Hall, Regency Road, West Street, Brighton  
(2 minutes walk from Conference Hall)  
Tuesday September 5th, 7.30 pm

### TRADES UNION CONGRESS LABOUR AGAINST RACIALISM RALLY

Brighton and Hove Committee  
Against Racism and Fascism

Wednesday September 6th, 7.30 pm, Wagner Hall,  
Regency Rd, West St (2 minutes from conference centre)

#### SPEAKERS:

Ray Buckton (General Secretary, ASLEF); John Forrester (Deputy General Secretary, AUEW-TASS); Arthur Scargill (President, Yorkshire NUM); Joan Lester (Chairwoman, Labour Party); Judith Hart MP (Minister for Overseas Development); Phil Frampton (Chairman, Labour Party Young Socialists); Andy Durr (President, Hove Trades Council); ANL speaker invited.

#### CHAIRMAN:

Rod Fitch (Brighton and Hove Campaign Against Racism and Fascism)

Admission 15p at the door

## Schools campaign

By Glenys Ingham

Thanks to the press furore over the Labour Party Young Socialists' leaflet, 'School Students Have Rights Too', our schools work recently hit the headlines. The LPYS is now much better known and politically aware school students see the LPYS as a staunch ally in the fight for their right to organise.

In April, the LPYS National Committee successfully defeated attempts to have our schools leaflet withdrawn after the issue had been fully discussed on the Youth and Organisation Sub-Committee of the Labour Party National Executive Committee (NEC).

The LPYS officers argued not only that our leaflet should go ahead but that the whole question of political education in schools should be fully examined by the Labour Party.

A paper on 'Political Education and Social Studies in Schools' was then drawn up by the National Committee. This paper was well received by the NEC, and at the last National Committee meeting

it was decided to organise a national schools campaign from the 4-8 September.

The LPYS paper puts forward the argument that: "The so-called 'Young National Front'—which is a damp squib...a creation of the sensationalist media—is an example of the kind of political response which a minority of schoolchildren could make unless positive moves are made on the education front."

The NC calls for the expansion of political education and social studies, to include the study of comparative religion, "replacing the compulsory religious education element and religious assembly laid down in the 1944 Education Act, believing as we do in a democratic, secular education and in religious toleration on the basis of the separation of church and state."

It concludes with a call for the right of trade union organisations to have access to schools career days and for the right of schoolstudents to organise democratic political societies within their schools.

# Militant

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