

# Militant

12p

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR AND YOUTH

## FORDS

Mass meetings reject offer/14/

How Ford made his millions/9/

## BRITISH LEYLAND

For united, national action/7/

American auto workers support YCAU campaign/8/

ISSUE 431 10 NOVEMBER 1978

## BAKERS... LEYLAND...

## BOC WORKERS... JOIN FORDS IN -

# FIGHT FOR A LIVING WAGE

Every day another nail is driven into the coffin of the 5% limit. Bakery workers and British Oxygen workers have joined the ranks of trade unionists forced to take action to defend their living standards.

Hard on the heels of Ford workers, British Leyland workers are moving into action for a substantial wage increase to make up for declining earnings.

At the conference of the bosses' club, the Confederation of British Industry, Sir Campbell Fraser (Chairman of Dunlop) estimated that there were now 2 million workers pursuing claims over 5%.

He interpreted this, not as justifiable anger after years of pay restraint, but as a sign of the "greed" of British workers.

But who really are the greedy ones? While attacking the workers at the CBI conference, the bosses thrust forward their own gold-plated begging bowl and demanded more—more tax concessions, more hand-outs, more profits.

That is to be expected from the captains of private industry. But the chorus was joined by Michael Edwardes, boss of the state-owned British Leyland.

It was the utter failure of the former private owners to invest in British Leyland that turned it into a "lame duck" and obliged the government

By Roger Shrives

to step in. Yet Edwardes, appointed by the Labour government, tries to put all the blame on the work-force.

"Let profits rip!" was the key-note of his speech. He spoke of "the need to enable business to breathe again.. ." "Let prices go free [and] the market will determine the issue."

This Labour-appointed boss is spouting the policies of Thatcher and

## bosses say 'let profits rip'

Joseph. To hell with unemployment! To hell with workers' living standards! That's their message.

Profits are squeezed from the labour of the working class, so workers must suffer higher prices and lower real wages—to let the bosses' profits rip!

Another theme for the CBI was public spending. Despite the savage cuts of over £8,000 million which they have pressurised the



photo: J McKittrick (Militant)

government into carrying out, they want more. They want to sacrifice the NHS, education, social services, all the social reforms won by Labour in the past, on the altar of profit.

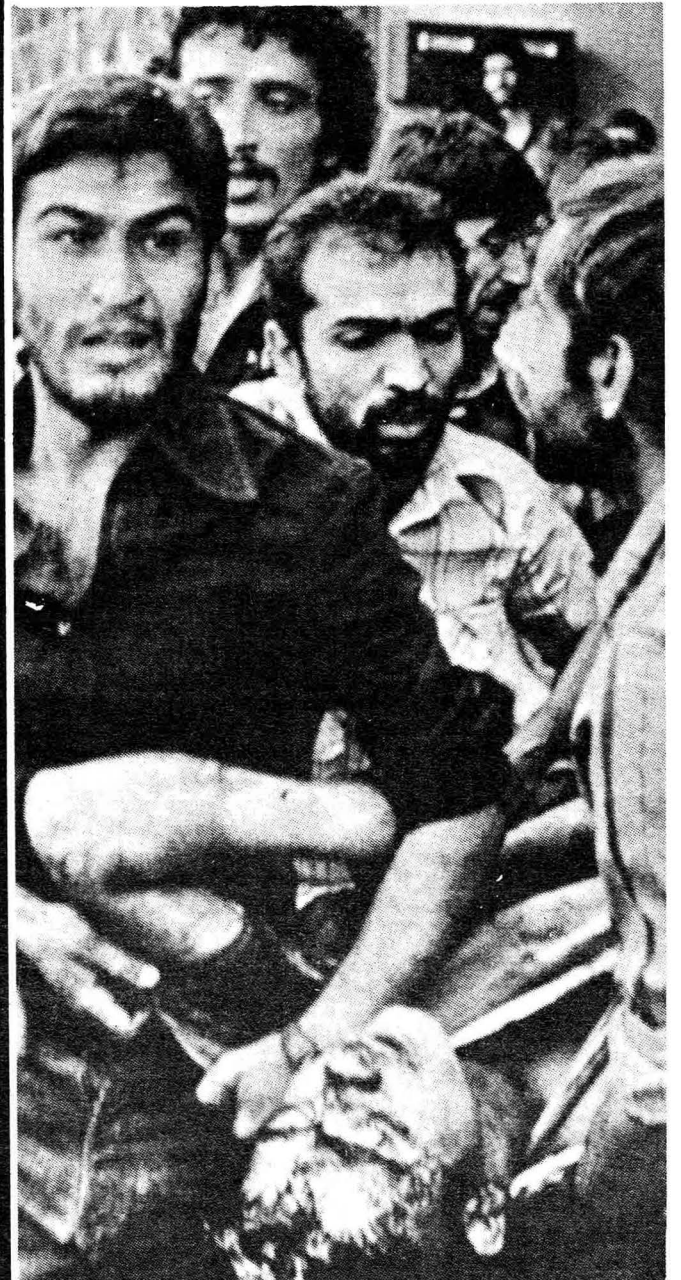
Yet the bosses are plainly terrified of the tremendous power of organised labour which stands in the way of their barbaric plans.

As mass meeting after mass meeting decisively

rejected the Ford management's offer, Mr Edwardes and company were reduced to wailing about "undemocratic" and "intimidatory" behaviour.

Never mind that less than 2% of the people own any shares in the companies these gentlemen run. Never mind that the limited rights of

Continued on back page



# THE END OF THE SHAH?

Pushed to the brink of collapse by the unprecedented wave of strikes throughout Iran, the Shah has made a desperate attempt to cling to power through military rule.

Above all, it has been the powerful effects of the working class taking united action in demand of democratic rights which have rocked the dictatorship.

It was the need to forcibly suppress the mass movement of opposition and the forcing back to work of the strikers which made the Shah turn to the naked use of the gun.

The works at Iranair have been forced back to work under threats from the Air Force, yet the national

By Brent Kennedy

airline is still grounded by their actions for the release of political prisoners, the return of political exiles and no victimisation. According to 'The Times' [8 November], "The wave of public sector strikes continued, and the ministry is reported to have threatened to force

Continued on back page



# EDITORIAL

## QUEEN'S SPEECH...

# NO ECHO OF LABOUR'S PROGRAMME

The Labour government has chosen to ignore the clear call of both the TUC and the Labour Party conference for a radical change of course. This is the message of the "Queen's Speech", the outline of the government's legislative programme for the next session of parliament delivered last Wednesday.

The crucial elements in the Speech, as the capitalist press was quick to note, were the promises designed to secure the government's survival in the Commons.

The firm undertaking that the Scottish and Welsh referendums will be held on March 1st; the promise of more cash for the Scottish and Welsh development agencies [as well as the NEB]; the announcement of new grants for bilingual education in Wales;

and the promise to give more parliamentary seats [probably between 12 and 17] to Northern Ireland—these are the "tactical" measures designed to secure the votes, or at least the abstentions, of the 14 Scottish and Welsh Nationalist MPs and, hopefully, the 10 Ulster Unionists.

These parliamentary concessions, together with the disarray of the Tories which makes any serious attempt by Mrs Thatcher to bring down the government unlikely in the near future, will probably sustain the government for some time.

But for what? If it is to continue the present economic policies, which have been repudiated by two key conferences of the labour movement and unmistakably rejected by the Ford workers and other trade unionists taking action against the 5%,

Labour ministers are only buying time now in order to perish later.

The motley crew of nationalists on the Commons' cross benches may uphold the government until they get what they want. But ultimately it is only working class support in the country which can sustain the Labour government. And the clear lesson of the Lib/Lab Pact is that dubious parliamentary allies will lend their support only at the price of Labour abandoning any measure which would really benefit workers and clash with big business interests. This short-term parliamentary deal is a sure recipe for disaster later.

The Queen's Speech contained the outline of enough legislation to keep parliament occupied for another year. But again, as the capitalist press has noted, it promised no major measures.

The promised bills which are likely to be dealt with in the next few months include a series of minor reforms, desirable in themselves no doubt, but trivial when compared with the burning problems now facing millions of workers.

Council house tenants will be given enhanced, statutory rights: but there are no measures to provide more houses. Children suffering serious vaccine damage will become entitled to compensation: but there are no plans to restore the savage cuts in the NHS.

And instead of boldly introducing legislation to implement the 35-hour week with no loss of pay—as demanded by the TUC and the Labour Party—the government merely proposes a bill to enable firms to put

workers on short-time and pay them 75% of normal wages [from dole money] for each day lost.

This formalisation of the present state subsidies to private so-called "enterprise" which is incapable of providing jobs for all is an insult to the unemployed and to the labour movement.

Is it any wonder that the Tory commentators have described these promised measures as "window-dressing" and "uncontentious"? Clearly none of these bills would be a matter of life and death for the government. They will no doubt serve to keep parliament busy without risking serious defeat. But what will they achieve as far as the labour movement is concerned?

**What the movement requires from the Labour government is not a catalogue of secondary measures and trifling reforms, but a bold promise to introduce an Enabling Act to give the government the power to take real control of the economy.**

A number of other measures, however, are likely to meet with more opposition. Once again, the government is promising to repeal section two of the Official Secrets

Act, though after the "Colonel B" case few will take seriously the intention of Labour ministers to introduce "more open government". In this respect, the welcome decision of Labour's National Executive to start an inquiry into the security services is far more important.

Legislation to inaugurate an Open Broadcasting Authority is promised, but the commercial interests will no doubt be preparing their opposition. There will be some minor reforms of local government: nothing, however, to introduce more democracy or to democratise the monstrously bureaucratic structure of the NHS established by the last Tory government.

There is also the by now ritual promise to introduce a Bill on industrial democracy: But the government has made it clear that this will not even go as far as the Bullock proposals—and there is no real indication that the government will give up dragging its feet on this much postponed issue.

Even if all the outlined legislation were introduced, which is unlikely, it would fall far short of achieving the "social justice" mentioned as one of the government's underlying aims.

The truth is that the proposals included in the Queen's Speech are really secondary to the present government's key economic policies. That is why they have merely been noted with bitter disappointment by the labour movement and have caused hardly a stir among the Tories.

Opening the debate on the Queen's Speech, Jim Calla-

ghan made it clear that he intends to stick to the policy of the 5% wage limit. Yet this has already been breached by Ford workers and is about to be challenged in action by hundreds of thousands of others.

If continued, the present wage policy, together with the cuts in social spending and the lavish handouts and tax concessions for big business, can only mean higher profits for big business and lower living standards for workers. And still the Labour government will not revive the diseased British capitalism. Such a course, however cleverly the votes are juggled in parliament, can only lead to defeat for the Labour government.

What the labour movement and the working class require from the Labour government is not a catalogue of secondary measures and trifling administrative reforms, but a bold promise to introduce an Enabling Act which would give the government all the powers it would need to take real control of the economy—through measures to nationalise, with minimum compensation on the basis of need, the banks, finance houses, and big monopolies which dominate the economy.

Then, and only then, would Labour have the means to give reality to all the social reforms it promised in 1974 [which find no echo in the Queen's Speech]. If big business and its Tory representatives then moved against the Labour government, as they inevitably would, Labour would have the means of mobilising the labour movement and the mass of the people for a decisive socialist change of society.

# GRANTS FOR 16-18s NOW!

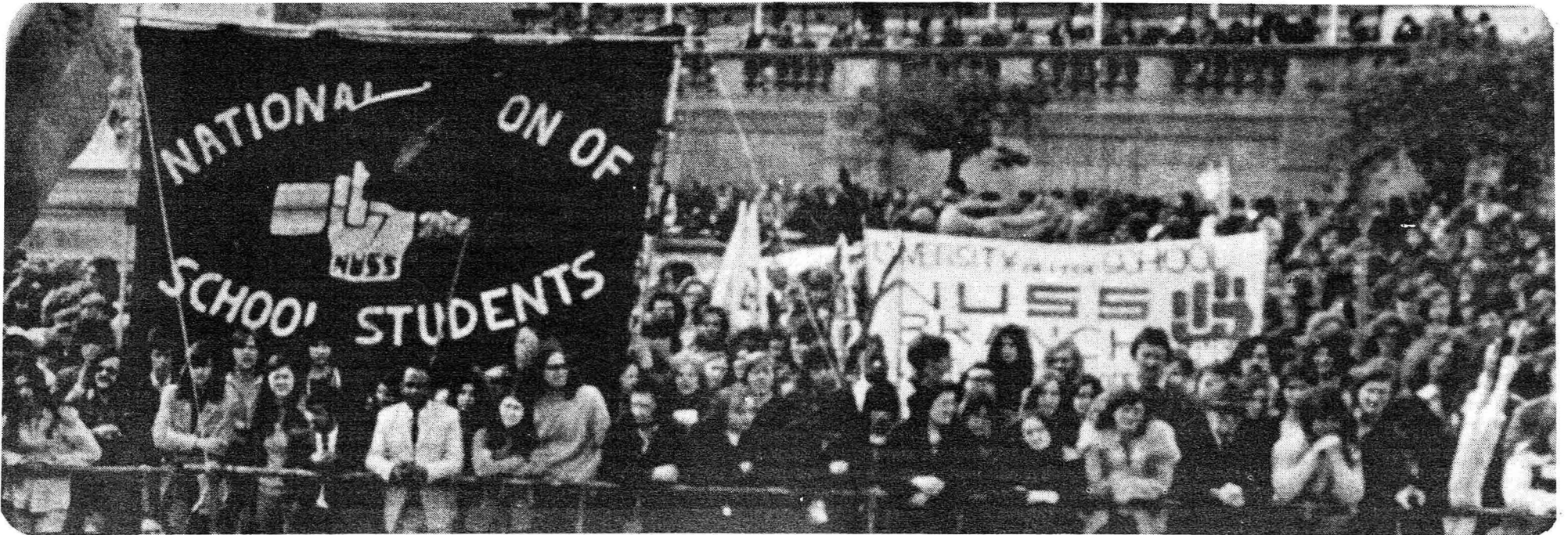


photo: Chris Davis (Report)

**The announcement last week that the government has postponed the introduction of grants for 16- to 18-year-olds in full-time education will cause considerable anger in the labour movement.**

It is above all working-class youth whose parents cannot afford to support them at school or FE college, who will suffer.

**By Mark Morton**

(NOLS National Committee)

Len Murray, TUC General Secretary commented: "The TUC sees these grants as one of the essential means of increasing the numbers of working-class school leavers

in further and higher education. Failure to provide these grants, which would not involve massive new expenditure, would be to deny access to equal educational

opportunities to thousands of young people." Indeed, the cost of these grants would only be £100 million.

Shirley Williams has tried to blame the lack of a definite incomes policy for this postponement. In reality, it shows the inability of the government to introduce even minimal reforms.

The National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS) and the NUS leaders should use this opportunity to raise the question of the conditions and problems of sixth form and FE students in the labour movement.

**A mass campaign by NUS on this question would get a huge response in the FE colleges, the schools and the labour movement.**

The postponement of this

reform illustrates that the interests of student can only be solved by NUS fighting with the labour movement for socialist policies.

- ★ NUS must fight for:
- ★ A living grant for all students!
- ★ For socialist policies!
- ★ For affiliation to the TUC and Labour Party
- ★ For a mass campaign on grants for 16-18 year olds; and a better deal for FE students, with the labour movement!

Every Labour Club, LPYS branch, and Students' Union should pass resolutions opposing the government's action. Local FE college Student Unions should be visited by Labour Clubs and LPYS branches, to initiate local action on this question.

# NUSS LEADER VICTIMISED

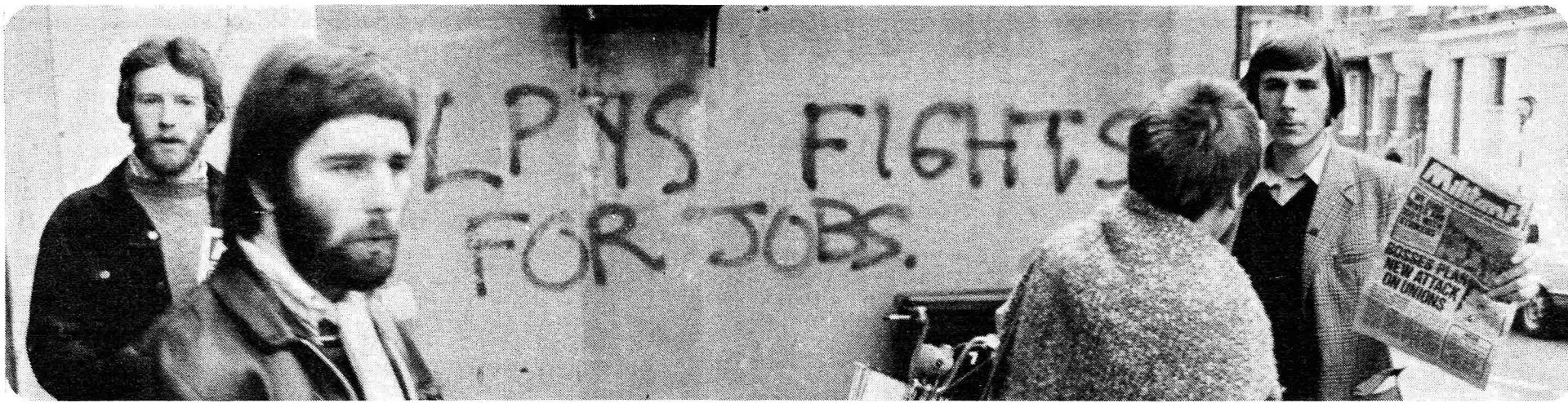
The undemocratic nature of Britain's schools was again shown up this week when school student Neil Gardner was forced to leave his secondary school because of his National Union of School Students activities.

Neil was suspended last May for circulating NUSS literature and suspended again three weeks ago for selling the NUSS national newspaper.

He is now transferring to another school. If his parents appealed against this decision, he could be formally expelled from the school.

This is not the first time that action has been taken against school students in Luton for NUSS activities. The labour movement in the area, with the NUSS, should launch a campaign for the basic right of school students to organise, and to run their own union.





Supporters of the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment selling 'Militant' outside Lisson Grove employment exchange, London.

Photo: Julian McKittrick (Militant)

# NUPE FIGHTS FOR 35hr WEEK

**The National Union of Public Employees [NUPE] are demanding a 35-hour week and a £60 minimum wage. Swansea LPYS members visited the local hospitals to build support for the YCAU area conference. Kevin Ramage [Llanelli LPYS] reports:**

First hospital—Singleton, a nice new one. We ask if we can speak to the Branch Secretary or a shop steward. A couple of minutes later we're talking to the brother, who explained some of the problems in the NHS:

"£36 plus £7.20 for a 40-hour week—a basic rate of 91p an hour. The £7.20 supplement isn't included in overtime or holiday calculations. I enjoy the work. You feel you're doing something useful. But I can only afford it if the wife is working.

"The voluntary helpers—obviously they are well meaning, but how can we fight against low pay and under-

## 'Mount Pleasant Hospital looks more like Colditz'

manning when there's people working here for nothing?"

The brother agrees to raise the conference in his branch and gives us a few names of NUPE activists in other hospitals.

Next visit—Morriston—an old barracks I think. A fitter tells us where to find the union secretary—along a 50 yard corridor that has a 1:8 slope. Difficult enough walking it—let alone pushing a

wheelchair.

Bro. Price says he will raise the campaign in his branch, and he will ask them if they would like a speaker to explain the campaign.

Last call for the afternoon—the workhouse. That's what Mount Pleasant hospital was. Looks more like Colditz.

Sister Price (Swansea Hospital NUPE Branch Secretary) tells us: "Yes, unemployment is a terrible problem, and the Job Creation Programme doesn't do much, it's only temporary. It's terrible for the young people."

She agrees to raise the conference, and a YCAU speaker to address the next branch meeting. She feels sure they will send delegates.

A fair couple of hours' work. A speaker to be arranged for one or two branches. Several addresses to go back on in the future. Where tomorrow?—the council depots, the colleges, there's plenty more to do. We must get more LPYS members, on shifts or unemployed, out to help us.

## CAMPAIGN ROUND-UP

Following the support given by leaders of the South Wales and Yorkshire NUM, Eric Clarke, the Scottish miners' general secretary, is giving his support. The area executive have yet to discuss the campaign but a Labour Party Young Socialist speaker will address the area NUM Youth Conference on November 17th.

The shop stewards' body in Dundee which organised the town's massive unemployment protests are also supporting the campaign.

The London Regional Council of the Labour Party is backing the area conference which is now assured of additional delegates from Harlow Council NUPE branch, Peckham UCATT, Hackney Central CLP, NE London EETPU, Wallend Ward of Newham NE Labour Party, Ford Dagenham EETPU Auto branch (who also made a £20 donation) and Dagenham Trades Council.

In the Northern Region, conference delegations include USDAW F180, CA Parsons, CPSA Longbenton and Howdon Ward LP.

New support for the Plymouth conference has come from the T&GWU District officers in Plymouth and Exeter, and workers' leaders at Exeter Hospital, Homed Turbines, Graham Reeves, Courages and Falmouth Boilermakers.

In the North West, YCAU speakers have been invited to Sefton AUEW Toolmakers, Dunlop T&GWU and Toxteth CLP, and delegates have registered from the Merseyside T&GWU Docks shop stewards' committee. Bradford Trades Council, Leeds AUEW, Hickson & Welch AUEW, are among the delegates going to the Yorkshire conference.

The Midlands region of the T&GWU are circulating all of their one thousand branches with campaign material. And after a visit by West Midlands YCAU supporters, Southalls workers in Birmingham have decided to include the 35-hour week in their claim.



# ASTMS PRESIDENT JOINS CAMPAIGN

Doug Hoyle, President of ASTMS, was the guest speaker at a Political Day School in Durham organised by ASTMS No 9 Division.

Discussing 'New Technology', he referred to the union research department's estimate of 4 to 6 million unemployed by the year 1990, as a direct result of widespread computer developments. This would force all of us to make decisions. Whether we can allow this level of unemployment due to the exploitation of the situation by those developing companies, or seize the initiative and see that the workers get a fair share of

the benefits created.

This would mean our looking at solutions like the shorter working week, longer education [perhaps more suitable to the individual's needs than industry's], early voluntary retirement and sabbaticals during working life.

He stated his support for the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment. In doing so he was echoing the No. 9 Divisional Council, which had passed a resolution in this respect the previous day.

**R McMullen**

(Honorary Secretary, ASTMS NE Insurance branch)

# £70 FOR 35hrs

September unemployment figures showed 6.2% officially unemployed in Britain as a whole. In Cardiff 8.9% are unemployed; 14% in the Ebbw Vale area.

Faced with this situation, the local labour movement has come out with a fighting lead. Cardiff Trade Council's campaign against unemployment has involved mass distribution of an excellent leaflet calling for:

A 35-hour week without loss of pay; £70 minimum wage; a programme of public works; a planned publicly-owned economy under workers' control and manage-

ment. A very good working relationship has been established between the Trades Council and the local YCAU. The Trades Council has agreed to send seven delegates to the YCAU industrial conference in Bridgend on November 25th.

Support has also come from NUPE, EETPU, Bakers' Union, AUEW, POEU, ASLEF branches, Rover shop stewards and numerous Labour Parties and LPYS branches so far. There is still a lot of potential support to be tapped.

The South East Wales

YCAU urges all sections of the local Labour movement to support the Trades Council Conference.

## Andrew Price

(Executive Committee, Cardiff Trades Council)

**CONFERENCE DETAILS**  
Saturday 11th November  
10.30 am. Students' Union, Park Place, Cardiff. Speakers include: Dennis Skinner MP, Jimmy Reid, Bob Wright [AUEW], Chris Burns [YCAU]

## INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCES

The following meetings will be held on Saturday November 25th:

### BRIDGEND

11 am-4.30 pm. Ogmere CLP Rooms, Bridgend. Speakers include: South Wales NUM EC speaker; Muriel Browning [Leyland Shop Steward]; Chris Richards [Cardiff POEU]; Ted Grant [Militant Editorial Board]

### PLYMOUTH

11 am-4.30 pm. Scott Lecture Hall, Plymouth Central Library. Speakers include: Albert Bennett [Sec. Plymouth Trades Council]; Bob Labi [Treasurer YCAU]; Dave Pengelly [Bakers' Union NEC]; Doug Hitchcock [TGWU District Officer]

### GLASGOW

10 am-5 pm, McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. Speakers include: Dennis Canavan MP; Pat Wall [President, Bradford Trades Council]; Jim Brookshaw [AUEW]

### LONDON

11 am-5 pm. Friends Meeting House, Euston Road [opposite Euston Station]. Speakers include: Eric Heffer MP [LP NEC]; Norman Atkinson MP [LP NEC]; Pat Byrne [CPSA NEC]; Phil Frampton [Nat Chairman LPYS]

### BRISTOL

11 am-5 pm. Shepherds Hall, Old Market. Speakers include: Ron Thomas MP; John Sharpe [Sec. TASS Youth Committee, Rolls Royce]; John Blackley [AUEW Convenor, Rolls Royce]; Glenys Ingham [Editor, 'Left']; J Styles [AUEW Convenor, Smiths, Gloucester]; S Kuchannei [Reg. Org. Bakers' Union]

### NEWCASTLE

1 pm-5 pm. Curtis Auditorium, Newcastle University. Speakers include: Joe Mills [Reg. Org. TGWU]; Bill Connors [Nat. Org. USDAW]; Tony Carty [ASOB]; Brian Ingham [Industrial Editor, Militant]

### SHEFFIELD

11 am-5 pm. Graves Cinema, University of Sheffield. Speakers include: Dennis Skinner MP [LP NEC]; Bob Wright [Asst. General Sec. AUEW]; Walter Greendale [TUC General Council]; Peter Taaffe [Editor Militant]

### BIRMINGHAM

1 pm-5 pm. Digbeth Civic Hall, Digbeth. Speakers include: Audrey Wise MP; Ken Cameron [Nat. Org. FBU]; Sid Harraway [TGWU Convenor, Ford, Dagenham]; Tony Saunols [LP NEC]; Emlyn Williams [President, South Wales NUM]

### LEICESTER

11 am-5 pm. AUEW Hall, Vaughan Way. Speakers include: Joan Maynard MP [LP NEC]; Nick Bradley [YCAU Sec]; J Dilkes [USDAW NEC]

The following meeting will be held on Sunday November 26th:

### LIVERPOOL

11 am-5 pm, St Georges Hall. Speakers include: Frank Allaun MP [Nat Chairman LP]; Joe Marino [Bakers' Union EC]; Kevin Roddy [CPSA NEC]; Colin Barnett [NUPE Reg. Sec.]



# WESTERNS RALLY: A FIGHT FOR ALL WORKERS



Western workers picket yards. Vital struggle must be extended.

**Boosted by the Labour Party Conference decision demanding their yard be nationalised, the workers of Western Shiprepairers staged a successful march and rally in Birkenhead on Saturday 28th October.**

The Western workers who have refused to accept closure of the yards for four months, marched with fellow trade

unionists, Labour Party members and Young Socialists through the streets of Birkenhead to hold a rally in the main shopping area.

Over 150 copies of 'Militant' were sold on route and in the shopping centre. Hundreds of copies of the Action Committee's and LPYS leaflets were distributed. Among the speakers at the rally, Barry Williams (President, Liverpool Trades Council) called for an extension of the struggle. Echoing this, Richard Venton (Birkenhead Labour Party) pointed out that nationalisation was not

the full answer and raised the demand for the whole shipbuilding industry to be run under workers' control and management as the only means of generating jobs in the industry.

Arriving with a delegation from Bradford, Pat Wall (President, Bradford Trades Council) pointed out that workers in Bradford saw a clear link between redundancies at one end of the M62 on Hull docks and unemployment on Merseyside. Workers in Britain needed a victory such as the saving of West-

erns alone would not be enough. It was important to draw the correct political conclusions otherwise Westerns would be repeated over and over again.

The final speaker, Andy Dyer, brought fraternal greetings from Clydeside. Andy, a veteran of the UCS work-ins, who is himself faced with redundancy at the Marathon yard, pledged support from Clydeside.

It is clear now that workers are getting massive moral support from the labour movement in Britain. What is also needed is financial assistance. All union bran-

ches in shipbuilding and other sections of industry are requested to give generously to the Action Committee's fighting fund.

The struggle must be continued and extended to ensure victory not only for the Western workers but all shipyards threatened with redundancies.

Send messages and donations to: Western Action Committee, c/o Gaywood Close, Ford Estate, Merseyside.

By  
**Malcolm Lindsay**



Labour Party members lobby Havering Tories. No platform for fascists!

# ROMFORD: TORY BOOST FOR FASCISTS

The Tory council at Havering got a barracking last week when they met to decide to let the NF join the Romford Civic conference. Nearly 200 Labour Party and trade union members picketed the Town Hall and made it clear to the Tory councillors they were not prepared to let the fascists have a platform to spread their racist filth.

The Civics conference in Romford is a publicity exercise for the council where political parties and organisations can ask for information from the local authority.

But now this seemingly democratic function has been smeared by the presence of the NF, with a pat on the back from the Tories.

About 40 anti-fascists were allowed into the actual meet-

ing and heckled the Tories, but applauded Labour councillors when they moved a resolution to ban the NF. And there were howls of laughter when a top Tory said if the NF ever came to power he would probably be on their execution list—the Labour group pointed out that he would more likely be promoted!

But despite the reaction from the labour and trade union movement in Romford, the Tories are going ahead with their plans to let the NF in—in the name of 'democracy' of course. However, the Labour Party and trade unions pledged to keep up their fight against the fascists, and have boycotted the conference.

# IMMIGRATION ACT: ASIAN YOUTH FIGHT BACK

On Saturday 21st October the Asian Youth Movement organised a national demonstration in Bradford to protest against the racist immigration laws. This demonstration was called to highlight the way these laws are used to discriminate against and persecute black people.

The campaign was started several months ago in Bradford when it was discovered that several Asians were detained in Armley Prison as alleged illegal immigrants awaiting deportation.

The struggle was organised around the case of Saeed Rahman, a deputy convenor of the National Union of

Dyers, Bleachers, and Textile Workers employed at Thomas Burnley's of Gomersal. Following the demonstration Mantit Singh, Chairman of the Asian Youth Movement, spoke to Keith Narey.

**Keith Narey: How did the campaign start?**

**Mantit Singh:** We found out about Saeed Rahman being held through the local Community Relations Council. Further investigation established that there were another 22 being held in Armley Jail. The conditions there were really deplorable. There were six in very small cells, who were not allowed to

do any work or recreation of any kind.

They were held in these cells twenty three hours a day, with very limited access to medical facilities, and subjected to constant racial abuse.

We acted very quickly in approaching a number of organisations including the Trades Council and local Labour Parties, who backed this campaign. A public meeting was organised and following from that, the first of two pickets of Armley Jail.

Three days after the first picket, Saeed Rahman was released. This was incredible, as legal experts said he had

very little chance under the terms of the 1971 Immigration Act.

A campaign against deportations and racist immigration laws was formed and began to grow with Asian Youth Movement members speaking at a number of meetings in London and around West Yorkshire and Lancashire.

Today's demonstration was called to initiate a national campaign against these laws.

**KN: Has the demonstration been a success?**

**MS:** A big success, but only a beginning. The fact that we had Bengalis from Brick Lane and Asians from other parts

of the country along with a number of left organisations was an indication that the campaign can be built upon and grow.

We really want to involve organisations like the Labour Party and trade unions in this struggle. I hope that anybody reading this article will now go-out and pass resolutions of support in their various organisations for this campaign. We hope to be organising a national conference on this issue and hope that from this conference a united national campaign will emerge.

**KN: How can the LPYS and 'Militant' supporters help**

**in this campaign?**

**MS:** We would like to see the LPYS orientating its work on racialism more specifically against these laws. We would like to see them organise meetings on this issue and take resolutions to the Labour Party with a view to getting a resolution at the Labour Party Conference.

However, we realise that resolutions on their own are not sufficient unless the rank and file control the leadership to ensure conference decisions are implemented and not ignored as previously.



# Left & Right

## Golf between the classes

The popularity of jogging and the increased number of sports centres opening shows that demand for participatory sport and physical exercise is growing, if only because health service cuts have made keeping fit more essential! Capitalist societies tend though to preserve some sports, like golf, for the wealthy. This is particularly true it seems in Japan.

City dwelling Japanese workers tend to live in very polluted atmospheres. If they want to get the filth out of their lungs by a round of golf they could be disappointed. For only some 700 courses are available, and the usual cost of membership is about £25,000 per annum, and this can reach £70,000. The rest of the estimated ten million golfers in Japan have to make do with crowded multi-storey driving ranges which means they never get a chance to do any putting, or get any real exercise from the sport. So unless you're rich it's back to the gas mask and the jog around the city streets.

## God & Mammon Ltd.

The Church of England used to be referred to as the Tory Party at prayer. A few more radical clergy and layment notwithstanding, this still rings true. After all, the Church Commissioners themselves are very important property-owners and shareholders. Nowadays, though, declining church attendance has hit its income and an estimated £15 million is needed in the next two years to keep the Church running at its present level, due to increased costs. Half the extra needed will have to come from members and the rest from investment income said a recent financial report.

There is thought to be no truth in the rumour that a new 'social contract' is being arranged between big business and the C of E; a handout from the City in exchange for prayers for a more profitable and strike-free British economy. As even the vicars are being forced into trade union activity by the crisis of capitalism, the chances of success would be slim anyway.

## Claret: £500 a glass

"Work is the curse of the drinking classes," goes the old gag. But if the pressures of life cause some workers to over-indulge in alcohol, the upper classes of the world can spend a pretty penny on the demon drink. £73,976 in one go in fact. This was the revenue from one sale at Christie's of rare wines. The top price of £3,300 for a single bottle of Lafite 1806 was disappointingly £5,000 below the world record price for one bottle set last year. Even so the 'Financial Times' worked it out at about £500 per glass.

A snip, obviously, for some buyers had come all the way from the USA by Concorde just for a bottle of claret. So next time you wince at the cost of buying a round in your local, just think of the sacrifice they made for their tipples.

## Too many chiefs...

Absenteeism, unpunctuality, laziness. These are familiar capitalist arguments as to poor industrial performance, pushing the blame on to the workers. Strangely enough, similar excuses are made by top managers in the USSR. A report in Pravda has shown though that the bureaucracy's assumptions were wrong. For a start, workers at a Leningrad factory calculated that three times as much time was spent officially reprimanding workers than was lost through lateness or other "discipline problems".

Further research showed that more trouble was in fact caused by the profusion of bosses. Numerous conflicting hierarchies were giving instructions, and these were often contradictory. Heads of departments and workers on the shop floor all received orders from six to eight people. Although considerable increases in efficiency were obtained by simple changes, the government fear to investigate too deeply in case they discover that workers are not motivated by the officially expected 'selfless devotion to duty'.

The government are discovering the hard way that a society where decisions and rewards are monopolised by a small minority of bureaucrats is not conducive to such idealism.

## DHSS tell unemployed mother...

# COPE ON YOUR OWN

Can anybody tell me where I can get decent accommodation for £1.45 per week?

Bewildered? That's the amount the DHSS have told me I can have towards £12 per week rent.

I am a divorced, unemployed woman with a little boy of four years. I receive unemployment benefit of £22 per week. This is all I can claim. As far as the SS (appropriate) are concerned my son doesn't exist. They do not give me any allowances at all for him.

As well as paying my rent, like many couples I have other bills that need paying: gas bills, electric bills, HP repayments, plus little items such as clothes for a growing boy.

A few weeks ago, I paid a visit to the DHSS, with a form I received from the local post office. The form was about supplementary benefit, who can apply, and an estimation of how much you can receive according to your weekly needs.

I thought I was entitled to apply. I answered all the questions on the form, and the sum of money that I needed to exist amounted to £29. Well you can see for yourself, I naturally presumed I was going to be better off.

So I went up there, explained I was having difficulty in existing, and gave them the form. I sat for an hour, thinking how I would spend the extra £7. My son could have a new coat. I was on cloud nine—I should have known better.

I went in to be interviewed, and after a few polite remarks passed between myself and the interviewer, my balloon burst. I was informed that I would only receive £14.10 on Sup. Ben.

## Humiliated

Shocked, amazed, I quickly pointed out my rent. She went on to say that I would be allowed £1.45 towards it, but this was inclusive of the amount above. I didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

After I questioned her even more, and explained that I didn't like my family having to help me out all the while, she very abruptly said, "You shouldn't get divorced if you can't take responsibility for living and coping on your own."

Needless to say, I got out of that place as quickly as possible. I felt humiliated by just being there asking for help, without having to be subject to remarks like that.

As I left though, it dawned on me: does Princess Margaret have to go through that? Not bloody likely, she has a tax-free income, holidays abroad, posh school for her kids, never any worry about bills or food. She won't have to skimp and scrape to buy her son a bike for

Christmas.

Why? Because of this lousy society. It's unfair, unjust. At least I can have some pride in the fact that the measly amount I

receive now, is what I put in by six years of hard work. I ain't getting something for nothing.

I look forward to the day when I will have no reason

to envy Princess Margaret. That will only happen when this system is dead and buried, and a fair system such as socialism will be implemented.

Photo: John Sturrock (Report)



# COME RAIN OR COME SHINE

Friday, six in the morning. With a groan it's out of bed, dress, wash and stumble downstairs. Groping around the kitchen, on with the kettle. Can't go out in the morning without a cuppa first.

6.30 and the others arrive. Today we've got the luxury of a car but sometimes we have to leg it.

Nearly ten to seven and we arrive at the factory gates. The night shift'll soon be coming out. We bring out our 'Militants' and wait for the rush.

Pretty cold pacing up and down but we don't have time to think about it. Tired faces rush past, looking glad to be going home. One or two stop to buy but most are too anxious to get away. We'll do better when the day shift comes in.

We stamp our feet to keep the circulation going and exchange good-humoured insults with the bloke on the news-stand selling the 'Mirror' and 'Sun', who reckons we're competition.

I suppose we are in a way. Mind you, at the moment he sells thirty of his for each one we sell. One day...

The day shift starts to arrive, slowly, in ones and twos. With several minutes to go nobody's in too much of a hurry to clock on. No point in spending any more time in the Bastille than you have to.

We're selling more now and one or two of the regulars greet us like old mates. Others don't buy but we get a friendly, "No thanks, mate."

Of course we get a few insults as well. One geezer comes past saving, "Why don't you lot get yourselves jobs?" Where the heck does he think we're going after we've finished here?



Photo: Julian McKittrick

"If you're Marxists, why don't you go and live in Russia?" It's difficult to answer that one fully during the thirty seconds he's in earshot but he seems surprised when we explain that anyone selling a real Marxist paper on the streets of Moscow would soon get arrested. He's gone in by now but even what we managed to say in those few seconds may have started him thinking.

Some of the blokes try to take the mickey out of us in a good-natured way. One bloke says he doesn't want a paper because he's not a Marxist. We tell him to buy a 'Militant' and he might become one!

Another comes past and tells us he's a Tory. Perhaps he left his Rolls Royce in the garage today because he walking into the factory.

We tell him we were Tories once till the doctor told us to

give it up because it's bad for our health. He's got no sense of humour. No sale.

Somebody asks, "What does 'Militant' stand for?" There's a poser. How do you get the 'Militant's' programme over in a few seconds?

"Against the Tories and for a Labour government to carry out socialist policies." The response to this is enthusiastic. A paper sale and a few coppers extra for the fighting fund.

Another latecomer we've never seen before looks really pleased when he sees the paper. He wants to know how he can get 'Militant' regularly and when and where we hold our Readers' Meetings. Great!

There's just a few rushing past trying to clock on before they get docked 15 minutes. We try to sell to the security men on the gate. One of them says, "You're not serious." If we weren't we wouldn't be selling papers at the factory gates before doing a day's work.

It takes a bit of gall to sell outside a factory but it's worth it. You get the paper known. Even those who don't yet buy have a certain grudging admiration for the comrades who turn out, rain or shine, to flog 'Militant'. Those we do sell get discussed at tea-breaks and the ideas get around.

Just after 7.20 and time to pack up. So it's back home with the others, a quick cup of tea, a bite of toast, discuss the morning's events, and then, what an anti-climax, it's off to work.

Roll on the weekend!

By David Brandon

(Peterborough CLP)





Photo: Julian McKittrick (Militant)

Joe Beckles and Cecil Campbell at St Mary's Hospital, Harrow Road

Another London hospital is threatened with closure. A planned 'merger' would mean the closure of St Mary's Hospital, Harrow Road, and the loss of hospital places and health workers' jobs in the District. Private beds are one of the few sectors not to be slashed!

The hospital workers have formed a Defence Committee to fight the plans. Cecil Campbell [NUPE branch secretary] and Joe Beckles [T&GWU, Defence Committee chairman] explained the unions' campaign to Dave Reid [Paddington LPYS] for 'Militant'.

**Joe Beckles: The Area Health Authority (AHA) plan to close three hospitals and centralise them in what is called a "redevelopment plan".**

There'll be cuts, they will cut £1.6m a year from running costs. In order to do that they will have to axe Harrow Road Hospital, 330 beds in the district and 600 jobs from the workers.

**Cecil Campbell:** The AHA got a grant of £12m, plus £3m from the medical school to build a phase I extension at St Mary's, Praed Street.

We support building in Praed Street because the catering department and children's unit are in a disgraceful state. But we don't support the running down of Harrow Road to pay for it.

**JB:** The whole package has not really been explained. Management has taken a very low profile and not explained what the package really means.

**CC:** The hospital workers reject the plan 100%. At a mass meeting attended by 200 workers from all categories including doctors a resolution was passed completely rejecting the plan to close the hospital down.

The first move was to set up a defence committee based on the District Joint Shop Stewards' Committee.

Management intend allowing vacancies and the moving out of equipment as part of a plan to run Harrow Road down. There is already a plan to move obstetric units and the instrument stores, with a new automatic switchboard for the district, to Praed Street. Even cleaning material has been moved.

The defence committee is monitoring all movement of facilities. The union representatives at Praed Street have agreed to support us and black anything that has been transferred.

Our intention is to have a mass meeting, see what progress we have made so far, and find out what kind of action they would like to see.

**JB:** We want to localise support from the community,

because the hospital is being closed down in the most working class part of the area.

We are prepared to go as far as is necessary to prevent the hospital closing down. We have a long term plan that if the AHA does not change its course of action we will have no option but to take industrial action in the form of an occupation such as happened at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and Hounslow hospitals.

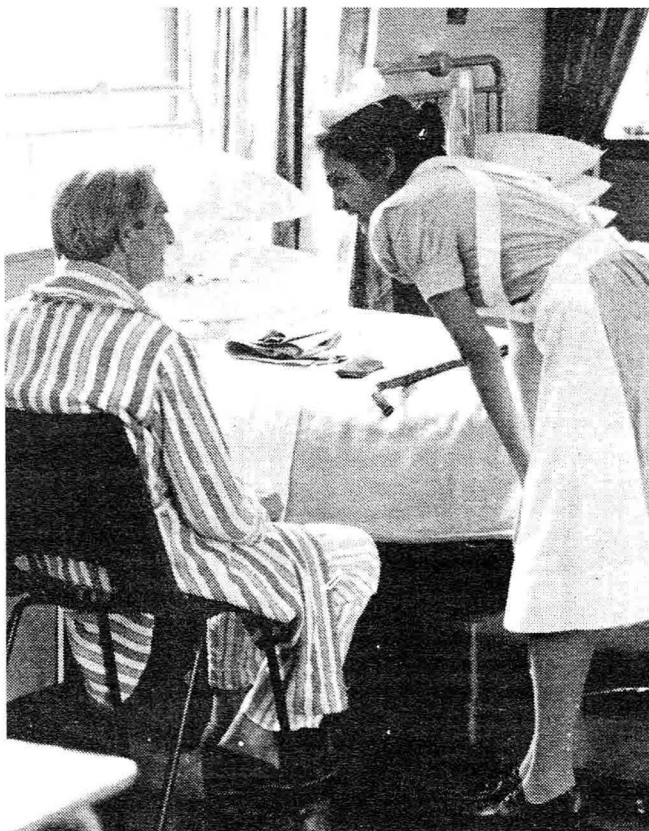
**The Defence Committee is calling on every section of the labour movement, local tenants' associations, community groups and trade union branches to back their campaign. For a speaker from the hospital to discuss the campaign at your meeting, contact Sister K Marshall, Ward 9, tel 01-286 4884. They suggest that the Community Health Council [sec. Ruth Hewlett, tel. 01-221 4018] is invited to hear the opposition.**

We are responsible for the care of patients and we will do all in our power to maintain that care. If necessary we will run the hospital ourselves.

**CC:** We have approached the local Labour Party who have pledged 100% support to keep St Mary's open. Support has been pouring in from local organisations; tenants' associations, ambulance drivers etc. Westminster Trades Council have publicly pledged support for our campaign. Also Labour councillors and Arthur Latham MP for Paddington have supported us.

**JB:** Yes, we are getting quite a good response from the local labour movement, but we are still in the process of organising. The whole Trades Council have pledged their support in doing everything in their power to keep St Mary's Hospital open, and any hospital in the area faced

# Don't let them close your hospital!



On the ward at Bethnal Green Hospital Photo: Julian McKittrick

with closure. Paddington Green and St Martin's are also under the hammer.

We have been pledged support from the Labour Party but nothing tangible has been given yet. Arthur Latham stated at the public meeting that he will do everything in his power to ensure that Harrow Road Hospital is kept open and he has advised us about the petition which he will hand in to Ennals, the Minister of State, on behalf of the defence committee to save St Mary's, Harrow Road. The Young Socialists have also helped us with the campaign.

**CC:** On the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment, we support the NUPE campaign for a 35-hour week, and if there is a youth campaign we obviously support that as well.

The NUPE campaign is for

a £60 minimum wage and for the working week to be reduced. I am pleased to see that this is much the same, to help the low paid workers, which includes youth.

**JB:** I would always pledge support whether to youth or any case of working people trying to maintain a decent standard of living—that support should always be given.

**CC:** We reject and detest the cuts going on in local services. The Health Service is being paid for by the public, then they tell the public they don't have the money to run it.

I think it is sad to see at a time when the Labour government is in power that these cuts are allowed to go on. I think it is time they called for a halt in cuts and tried to improve, put more money into that instead of taking it away.

## BETHNAL GREEN

By Myrna Shaw

(NALGO), Bethnal Green Hospital Joint Shop Stewards' Committee

The shop stewards at Bethnal Green Hospital have emerged as the effective leadership here in the fight against conversion to an all-geriatric unit, the first link in the chain to deprive Tower Hamlets of 360 acute beds—one third of its present total provision.

Previously the shop stewards had functioned as individually enthusiastic members of the public community-based 'Bethnal Green Hospital Campaign'. The determinedly 'non-political' campaign leadership went through a process of deputa-

tions, petitions and public meetings.

But it was the insistent and consistent work done through the District Joint Shop Stewards Committee

to rally trade

union support within the Health Service and the Borough's industry that convinced the shop stewards that only the organised labour movement could effectively fight the cuts and save the hospital. The NUPE and NALGO stewards at Bethnal Green then form a Joint Shop Stewards Committee of seven and became the group to which the staff looked, rather than the Campaigners.

By the end of September the Trades Council, Borough Council and Community Health Council were with us. Local Labour Parties had passed resolutions of support. The South East Region of the TUC had blacked the conversion.

Local residents were occupying the closed Casualty Department, padlocking wards as they were emptied of patients by management, in order to stop equipment going out and scab labour coming in. Shop stewards from all local industry met at the hospital in mid-September at a conference organised by the District JSSC and set up a committee to organise a Day of Action and stoppage in our support. Mass meetings at the London and Mile End hospitals freshly and enthusiastically reiterated their support for BGH and guaranteed action if conversion were attempted.

Management were quicker to appreciate our strength than we were, and went in hard for the old divide and rule.

Consulting the shop stewards for the first time ever, they said they would not proceed with the conversion if the staff really did not want it and would run the hospital with its reduced 100 beds instead of the projected 220 all-Geriatric ones until it was due to be closed in four years

time. The 120 geriatrics at St. Matthew's would after all be able to stay put.

Questioned closely about staffing levels, they said they had not worked out the maths yet and murmured about natural wastage.

This was followed immediately by management meeting the heads of departments. I was the only shop steward entitled to attend both, to management's subsequent embarrassment: in the five minutes between meetings the whole situation had changed!

The conversion could not begin because of TU obstruction! The jobs of all the staff were in immediate danger and the staff must abandon all opposition in order to save their jobs.

Most present (not me!) agreed that as there was no democracy in the trade unions and as workers were a lot of silly sheep anyway, secret ballots should take place in the two unions to avoid undue influence and intimidation by the militants. Still no actual staffing figures were presented.

Next morning the intimidation had started—but by the Administrators. Clumsily and blatantly they attempted to put staff in fear of their jobs in an area of high unemployment, to divide them against each other and their shop stewards and to interfere in the internal affairs of the unions.

The staff rocked under this pressure. Were they going too far, if in preventing conversion they were placing their own jobs and livelihoods at risk? Should they agree to the conversion and save their jobs?

### United

The JSSC swung into action and called an emergency meeting with a full-time NUPE official and NALGO officers present. What the health cuts would mean were again explained and management's blackmailing and divisive tactics were exposed. Staff, although naturally worried about their jobs, voted to continue the fight. Management on their part continued the psychological warfare.

The JSSC, together with NUPE district stewards, have now met management and told them that we will not stand by while workers at BGH are threatened and bullied, that we are still all together in fighting the conversion and cuts. We told them this has been agreed on a district, all-union level and that all future negotiations with management must be on a district JSSC basis.

The role the district JSSC has played in showing the inexperienced BGH shop stewards the way forward cannot be over-emphasised. Anything we achieve will be due as much as anything to the fight of the shop stewards through their Committee.



# Leyland workers reject 5%

## UNITED NATIONAL ACTION NEEDED

Leyland workers are getting used to threats and blackmail, but over the last few weeks management's 'threatening behaviour' has plumbed new depths. Michael Edwardes, the darling of the Tories, their press, and all too often it seems of Labour's Industry Secretary as well, has bared his teeth with a vengeance.

Leyland's chairman threw down the gauntlet to the workers in the Car Division at a recent secret meeting with union officials and convenors in Luton, where he unveiled his latest plans for factory closures and redundancies. Edwardes wants to butcher Leyland Cars. More factories, in Britain and in Belgium, will be chopped out, like Speke a few months ago.

The assembled convenors listened to his diagnosis in stunned silence. **Leyland workers and their representatives must stand firm in the face of this latest onslaught!**

But it's no coincidence that Edwardes should bring forward these plans in the middle of the Leyland wage claim. This year, for the first time, the combine trade union organisation has accepted the need to present one national claim on wages and hours to the management. Edwardes is trying to frighten off the convenors from pursuing this path.

The British Leyland trade union committee has existed to co-ordinate activity throughout the combine for many years but previously has refused to take up the challenge of national negotiations.

The convenors have clung to the old ideas of plant bargaining. In the new situation, however, where management has one national view and is determined to impose it, what else but united joint action could guarantee that Leyland car workers would have the confidence to withstand the pressure from management, the attacks from the mass media, and the financial warnings from the NEB about the company's future?

Last year, the Rover stewards moved within the combine that it should take up nationally the campaign for a £15 across-the-board wage increase. Their proposal was

**By Bill Mullins**  
(T&GWU Rover Solihull)

defeated and the end result was a real setback on wages for Leyland car workers.

Management, with no company-wide stewards' body to contend with, compelled each factory in turn to accept the same deal: 10%, agreement in principle to a productivity deal (the details of which were subsequently rejected in a national ballot), and a phased move towards pay parity throughout the plants.

**The Ford strike has clearly demonstrated the superiority of national action on wages. Under phase 3, and now under phase 4, Ford workers have broken through pay restraint.**

The Ford National Joint Negotiation Council this year for the first time includes convenors from the 23 plants. Ford workers have learnt from past battles what is required for successful national action.

The collective pressure of the united Ford workforce has achieved more than the separate struggles of their divided Leyland counterparts. Jim Callaghan has commented that, compared to the strength of the united Ford combine, the Leyland combine is "genial anarchy".

The Leyland Cars Trade Union Committee (LCTUC) has recognised that Leyland will not allow any separate settlements in any of its plants. Instead, for the last 12 months it has been attempting to use the Leyland cars joint negotiating committee (a body which in the majority has been appointed by the national trade union officials) as a central bargaining unit.

This has led to calls for the combine committee to be officially recognised as the authorised democratic union body for all Leyland car workers. But because this could be used by management



**It is vital that the Leyland Cars Trade Union Committee co-ordinate joint action. To leave one factory in isolated struggle would play straight into Edwardes' hands.**

to delay serious negotiations, it was agreed that each of the separate plant bargaining units—58 in all—would pursue the common claim through their own representatives, then report back to the combine, which would then co-ordinate national action.

Because of the complexity of Leyland wage rates—there are nearly 500, ranging between £52 and £85 for a 40-hour week—the claim was drawn up in the following way:

★ A rise of £15.80 to the highest-paid production workers, i.e. the Canley sheet-metal workers on £84.20 for 40 hours, bringing them up to £100 a week.

★ The full parity payments to be brought forward to 1st November 1978, bringing all track workers into line with Canley sheet-metal workers on £100 a week.

★ A 35-hour week.

★ Full sick pay.

★ Elimination of penalty clauses from the lay-off agreements.

The Tory press, of course, has already greeted this with howls of indignation. But the claim is fully justified. It has been estimated that Leyland car workers' real take-home pay has fallen by 20% in the last four years.

No longer is it true (if it ever was) that car workers are highly paid. Workers taking up issues like differentials and overtime are a reflection of the generally worsening living standards of all car workers, in common with the rest of the working class.

Edwardes' plans of sackings and factory closures not only have to be opposed: the trade unions have to go on the offensive. Enough is enough.

The struggle for a reduction in the working week would mean in effect the sharing out of the available work. Most of Leyland's

plants are under-utilised. Reduction of the working week would mean more jobs created, models that are in demand could be built at more than one plant, thereby stopping the closures of these plants on Edwardes' chopping list.

It is not enough, of course, simply for convenors to agree on this claim. It is vital that the 100,000 Leyland car workers support it in action. To facilitate this, it was also agreed at the same meeting that all would hold mass meetings on the claim.

When they heard the details of the company's offer: rigid adherence to the 5% limit (which would mean about £3.50 plus a "phasing in" of the parity programme over twelve months, Cowley workers gave seven days' notice of planned industrial action. At the Drews Lane transmissions plant in Birmingham, anger erupted in a protest walk-out.

More than 20,000 workers at Longbridge gave Leyland until December 1st to increase the offer. A recall mass meeting will then decide what action to take. This was also the decision of our meeting at Rover, Solihull. If the offer is not substantially improved, on December 1st it will be the responsibility of the Leyland Cars committee to recommend united industrial action throughout the combine.

But the present mood means that it is possible that some areas may take strike action before then. It is therefore even more important that the LCTUC meets quickly to co-ordinate joint action. To leave one factory in isolated struggle would play straight into Edwardes' hands.

If the LCTUC fails to act, we at Rover will be prepared to call for a strike at the Rover factories in conjunction with other plants already taking action, hoping that these examples of action will mobilise other factories into strike action.

**Leyland workers are continually subject to a massive campaign of intimidation by management, press and the government. But if firm leadership is given, then the Leyland workforce will mobilise solidly behind this justified claim.**

See also:

**Fords dispute page 14**

**How Ford made his millions page 9**

## MINERS LEADER FORECASTS "MASSIVE BREAKS IN PAY POLICY"

**GM: You were an NUM delegate at this year's Labour Party Conference. What did you think about the mood of the trade union and Constituency Labour Party delegates?**

**EC: I was happy and encouraged by the determination of the rank and file. There were a lot of disappointments and a lot of manipulations, particularly a very great disappointment at the way the AUEW abstained from voting on the re-selection debate. That was a crucial issue because it was a**

democratic process that was trying to be enacted.

I think that hiding behind the block vote of the trade unions in particular, the government came off very poorly. The rank and file members of the trade union movement are now forcing the big unions to reconsider their attitudes to pay and all the rest of the so-called "social contracts".

**GM: What did you think of Callaghan's passionate plea for 'moderation'?**

**EC: Well it actually worries me a bit. Heath and Callag-**

**Eric Clarke, General Secretary, Scottish NUM spoke to Gordon McKinley [G&MWU].**

han had one thing in common: a determination that bordered on a phobia: that they could not listen to anyone. Both were inflexible in their attitude. Anybody who is as inflexible as that risks becoming a bit of a megalomaniac.

But the thinking workers are now saying no! Differentials have been eroded, the cost of living has gone up; as far as they are concerned they

are in a straight jacket.

**GM: How do you see the industrial front developing in the months ahead?**

**EC: Well, we've started a pithead campaign to tell the workers in the coalfields exactly what's happening, and one of the warnings that we have been giving them has been the collusion and coercion by leaders of the trade union movement to get them to comply with government policy. This continual press-**

ure will go on, and what we want is for the rank and file members of every union to demand that their union sticks to their democratically decided policies. I'm forecasting that there will be massive breaks in the pay policy.

**GM: Finally, will the NUM be pursuing the course laid down by the Labour Party Conference, in their rejection of any form of wage restraint whatsoever?**

**EC: Yes, that is our policy, which has been reiterated by our National President at the Labour Party Conference as**

well as the TUC. We want free collective bargaining and we've got a lot of anomalies and allowances to catch up with, not just on the wages front.

**We're determined to get a 4-day week, we're determined to have retirement at 55 years of age for the underground workers in particular, along with all other ancillary industries, and we're determined to get £110 per week. In other words, we want a realistic situation commensurate with other workers in the mining industry in Western Europe...to start with.**



# AMERICAN AUTO WORKERS SUPPORT YCAU CAMPAIGN

Message from UAW  
President, Douglas  
Fraser.

The American Auto Workers last week sent the following message of support for the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment to Phil Frampton, LPYS National Chairman:

On behalf of the officers and members of the International Union, UAW, in the United States and Canada, I send greetings to your Regional Conferences which are investigating shorter working time.

As you are already aware, this is a subject that the UAW has been examining intensively. Some of the economic problems which face both our countries could be eased by revision of our current attitude toward work time.

I am forwarding separately to you as much material as we have on the subject. You may want to co-ordinate your efforts with the Swedish Metalworkers Union, the ILO, and the International Metalworkers Federation, which are all interested in this subject.

Once again, I wish you greetings and successful Regional Conferences.

Douglas A Fraser

President, International Union, UAW



UAW workers picket Ford's Rouge Plant, Dearborn, Michigan.

**Colin Brown [USDAW] reports on the UAW's successful struggle for a shorter working week.**

The bosses have predictably shown their hostility to the demand for a 35-hour week just as they did in the past to the 48-hour, 44-hour and 40-hour week, or to any improvement for the working class.

The growing support for

the YCAU campaign for a 35-hour week and £70 minimum wage is because workers realise, after three years of broken promises, that the only way to reduce unemployment in the short term is by sharing out the work with a 35-hour or 4-day week.

At least 750,000 jobs could be created in Britain with the introduction of a 35-hour week. In other countries, too, the unions have recently taken up the fight for shorter working hours.

In the United States and Canada, the UAW (United Auto Workers) in particular have won important gains on this front. The UAW's success has important lessons for us.

In an article published in 'Solidarity', the journal of the UAW, Shane McNary, an electrician at an Oldsmobile plant in Michigan is quoted

as saying of their new deal:

"When they first explained this reduced worktime to us, it didn't sound like much. Now that we've actually had the day off, we can see how good it was. Lots of us are screwed up working too fast. We've gotta slow down, or we'll miss the best of life. So you'll find that workers really appreciate what the union did for them when it won these extra days off."

It took a month-long strike in the Autumn of 1976 to win the 'Paid Personal Holiday scheme', as it is known by the car workers.

Every working weekday, Monday through Friday, a different block of workers is scheduled to get a day off with pay, except during summer vacation and the months when the 'Big 3' (Ford, General Motors and Chrysler) change over to production of different models.

The paid personal holidays are scheduled well in advance, and give each worker equal opportunity to have some Mondays and Fridays off for three-day weekends.

The programme affects some 700,000 workers employed by the Big 3, and will give eligible workers 12 additional days off in the first two years, in addition to annual and statutory holidays.

UAW President Douglas Fraser has declared: "we are on the road to the four-day week."

As one UAW official said: "...with successive groups of nearly 20,000 workers taking their individual paid personal holidays every working weekday...it's sure to open up jobs for thousands of additional workers who are now unemployed."

Faced with the same crisis in employment, British workers are increasingly turning to industrial action to force the capitalists to put jobs before profit and release their unemployed brothers and sisters from the poverty and misery of the dole queues.

## When the American workers fought for the 8 hour day

**In 1884 recession hit American industry. Unemployment increased to nearly 10%. Wages were cut on average by 15%—and in the mines by 40%.**

But hours remained long. While 19 states (in 1886) had laws on the maximum hours to be worked, they were largely ineffectual and average hours were nearer 14-18 a day than 8-10. A Minnesota railway was fined \$25 in 1886 for making its workers work more than 18 hours a day.

"Bradstreet's," a government publication, commented: "Among industrial wage earners, reductions in wages were greatest where there have been no industrial organisations or weak ones." This lesson was not lost on the workers.

The period 1850-80 saw the growth of national trade unions in the USA, based predominantly among the skilled workers. Their total membership was small, only 200,000 in 1883, rising to 500,000 by 1887.

But the great union growth

By  
Nic Boulter

during the mid-1880s was amongst the semi/unskilled workers into the 'Noble Orders of the Knights of Labor', a move that took on the characteristics of social war. Founded in 1869 as a secret society, their aim was to recruit all workers, regardless of craft or trade, unified with a strong, centralised leadership.

The leadership was very moderate, stressing education rather than strikes. However, such was the mood amongst the workers that they usually struck as soon as they were organised, or joined when already on strike.

In 1885/6, the Knights won great victories against

great odds for many workers. Particularly the successful strike against the large rail employer, Gould, established the credentials of the Knights amongst the semi/unskilled.

They flooded in. From 989 locals (branches) in July 1885 with 104,066 members, the Knights increased to 5,892 locals, with 702,924 members in July 1886.

The foremost issue among workers was for a shorter working day. This was partly to achieve more leisure for the workers, but also, as Samuel Gompers pointed out, "as long as there is one man who seeks employment and cannot obtain it, the hours of labor are too long." And in the mid 1880s here were millions without employment.

The 1884 Convention of the Federation of Organised Trades raised a resolution that was to act as a beacon to the whole working class: "That 8 hours shall constitute a legal day's labor from and after 1st May 1886."

The Federation only had 100,000 affiliated members, but the scale of activity around the demand over the next two years shows the

power with which a concrete demand can take a grip on workers and how they will fight for it.

Eight Hour Leagues were formed in all major towns, from New York to New Orleans and San Diego, but especially in the North East and around Chicago.

The 'moderate' leadership of the Knights refused to join the campaign but this did not hinder the attitude of the rank and file who threw themselves into organising joint action committees at the local level.

The galvanising effect of the campaign was seen in the doubling of trade union membership in the year up to May 1st 1886.

### May Day

On May 1st 200,000 workers (including packinghouse workers, cigar makers, building workers and tobacco workers) were given the 8-hour day just by threat of strike action and 190,000 workers struck, the largest number being in Chicago (80,000) the New York

(45,000) and Cincinnati (32,000).

Nearly half of the workers who struck (80,000) stayed out until the end of May, supported by contributions from trade unions not on strike.

Of those workers who struck, however, only 42,000 won the decrease in hours (with no loss of wages).

But the 1886 movement was only the start of the campaign. After the industrial 'lull' of 1887, the issue was taken up again at the 1888 Convention of the newly formed American Federation of Labor, with the date set for the implementation of 8 hours being May 1st 1890.

The AFL took on special organisers to prepare for this, producing leaflets and pamphlets and on May 1st 1889 organised strikes and demonstrations in 420 towns and cities. The 1889 Convention modified the 1888 demand for a general strike.

For May 1890, it was agreed that all unions should support a strike by the carpenters and joiners, other unions to strike later. This was successful and after

striking in May 1890 the union won the 8-hour day in 137 cities, 9 hours everywhere else, and by 1891 won an 8-hour day for all building workers in many large towns.

These great moves coincided with the growth of militancy throughout Europe. In Britain, for example, the period saw many great strikes amongst workers formerly unorganised, like the dockers, gasworkers and the match girls. The new 'general' unions were created from this period.

In Europe, the mass Social Democratic parties were growing rapidly. The new mood created by recession after years of industrial expansion, led to the assembling of representatives of labour throughout the world in Paris in 1889 to form what has become known as the Second International.

The key resolution passed was on May Day calling on the workers in every country to hold a world strike and demonstration for the 8-hour day. In its acceptance and the mass response given to the resolution throughout the world can be seen the enthusiasm with which workers of all countries had witnessed the 8-hour movements in the USA since 1886.

More than anything else the resolution made the International into a reality in the minds and actions of millions of workers throughout the world.

On May 1st 1890 workers struck all over Europe for these demands.



# HOW FORDS MADE THEIR MILLIONS

Henry Ford I had a mythical reputation as a "people's capitalist", a man who was smart enough to design a car that ordinary workers could afford, and a boss who paid his workers enough to buy Ford cars.

Nothing could be further from the truth!

The great lesson of labour relations at Ford's from its beginning is that every improvement for the workers was gained through bitter and unremitting struggle.

Henry Ford was one of the first to apply modern mass production techniques to cars. In other words, he introduced the misery of working "on the line" to hundreds of thousands of workers.

By 1913 conditions were so grim at Detroit that his factory had a labour turnover of 400% a year, despite the never-ending flood of naïve European immigrants fresh from the farms and desperate for a job.

So as well as "Model Ts" Henry Ford decided to mass-produce "model working". He doubled wages to \$5 a day, but acted as though he had bought the workforce body and soul for that price.

## Snoopers

Actually the rise, which gained Henry Ford his liberal reputation, was one of the first productivity deals. To get the \$5, which was continually dangled like a carrot in front of the men's noses, you had to be the perfect worker.

**Productivity shot up. But wages lagged behind for thirty years afterwards. Ford boasted over and over again that the \$5 day was "the best investment he'd ever made."**

Every worker, moreover, was plagued by an army of snoopers checking out his private life to see if he was really capable of handling all that \$5 wisely. This put them at the mercy of Ford's own idiosyncratic beliefs.

For instance, workers who wanted the \$5 were ill advised to smoke, even at home, let alone in the factory. "If you study the history of almost any criminal, you will find that he is an inveterate cigarette smoker. The cigarette drags them down," read the thoughts of all-knowing Chairman Henry Ford.

Needless to say, drinking, gambling and pool were also

strictly verboten.

Through the wage rise Ford got all the men he needed to expand production. As ten thousand unemployed stood freezing in the snow outside the gates begging for a job our "friend of the working man" ordered the fire hoses to be used on the destitute starvelings.

Worse was in store, however. By 1927, Ford decided the "Model T" had had its day. He just closed down the Dearborn plant and left 60,000 workers to starve. He reopened a new plant for a new car at River Rouge—with fewer workers of course.

**In 1932, 3,000 unemployed men marched to the new factory demanding work. Henry Ford paid them off in bullets. Police and company goons opened fire with machine guns. Four men were killed and twenty more injured.**

As the depression bit deep, Henry Ford took the opportunity to speed up the line to an unbearable pace. Workers were desperate to keep a job down.

"Forditis" almost became a recognised industrial disease. Men got ulcers and the shakes. They were said to be old men after five years at Ford's. Then they were out on their ears.

On top of the killing pace, Henry Ford publicly let it be known that he ruled by fear. He believed that "a majority of the people in the world are not mentally—even if they are physically—capable of making a good living." He did his best to make sure that his assurances came true.

In his opinion, "labour union organisations are the worst thing that every struck the earth." He employed 3,500 heavies to keep the union out. According to the Mayor of Detroit, "Henry Ford employs some of the worst gangsters in our city."

In 1937 Walter Reuther, future President of the United Auto Workers, got the hiding of his life at River Rouge, for

the "crime" of handing out union leaflets. He had cleared it with City Hall but not with Henry Ford—the real power in Detroit.

Day in, day out, the "Dearborn Independent" thundered out pro-Nazi ravings from Henry Ford's own pen to a captive readership. **In 1938 he got his reward—Hitler presented him with the Nazis' German Eagle.**

Not for nothing did Ford's politics sound like Hitler's. Using the slump, he was able to establish conditions in his factory very similar to those which existed throughout Germany after 1933.

Even errand boys were timed to make sure they hadn't dropped off to get a bar of chocolate. Nobody talked on the line. The way to spot a management spy was to risk your job and ask him a question.

If a look of terror crossed his face he was OK. If he answered back, he must be a stool pigeon. Even in the canteen, workers would sit on their own staring fixedly at their sandwiches.

## Sacked for smiling

Top executives were not immune from the terror, either. One came in one morning to find his desk split in two by an axe! Henry Ford obviously didn't think he was good enough at his job! Men were even sacked for smiling.

Workers got round all this as best they could. They talked like convicts out of the side of their mouths. It could become incurable. One man made himself a laughing stock among his friends by talking this way even to his wife at home!

Finally, with the United States' entry into World War II, Ford's reign of terror was swept away by the return of full employment.

## 'Solidarity Forever'

Wages at Ford's were now a good deal lower than in other car plants and the union still hadn't got a look in. But more and more men began to feel confident enough openly to sport their union badges as they went through the gates.

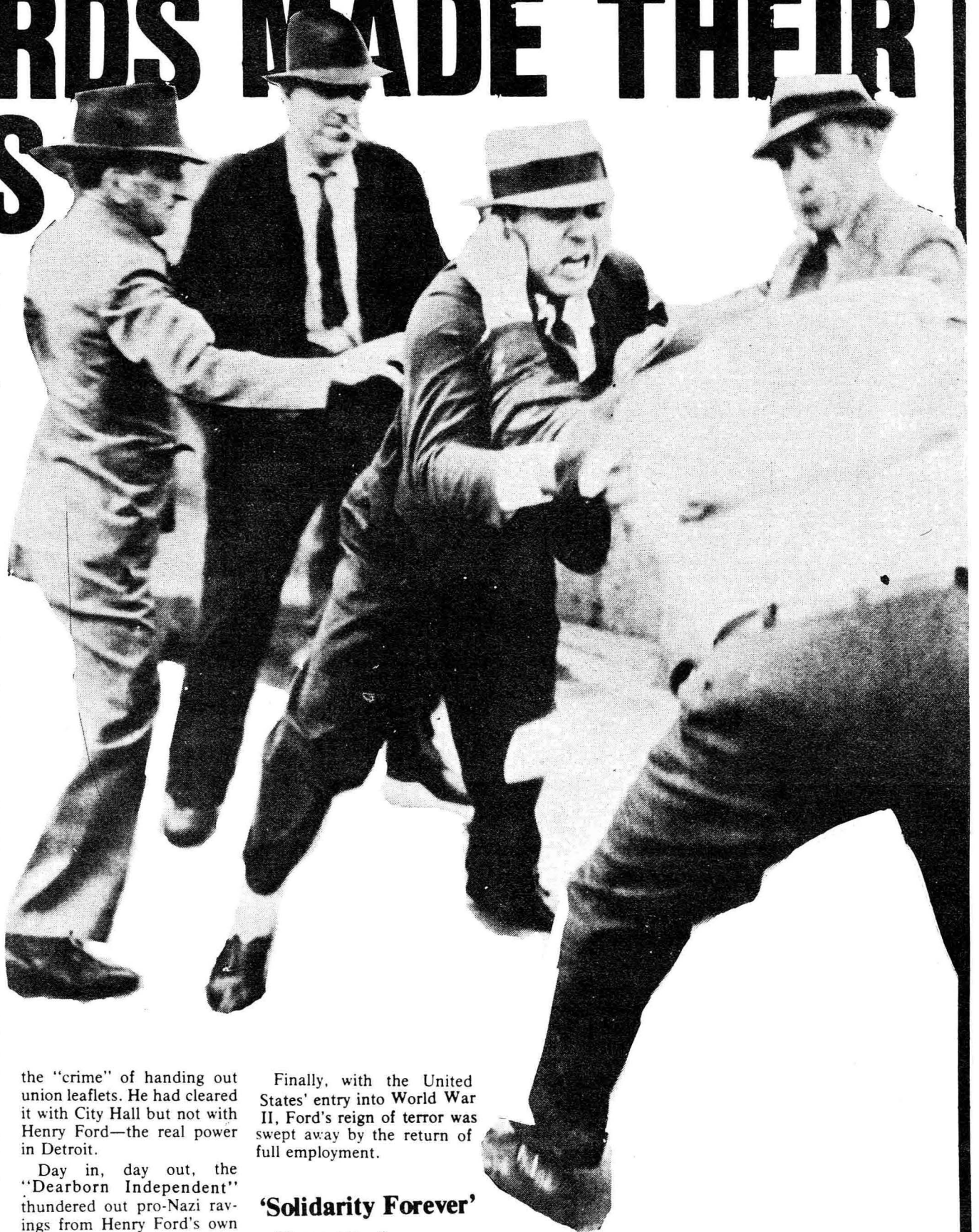
Ford lashed out viciously with the usual beatings and by firing known or suspected activists left, right and centre.

The last straw came, however, in April 1941. Eight workers were sacked in the rolling mill section. This was the real "punishment block" of the entire plant, where the pace was so intense that only the men right next to the water fountains could even get a drink in the stifling heat.

The men marched from department to department, defying the thugs and singing "Solidarity Forever". In one section after another the switches were thrown. The whole factory was paralysed.

How to stop scabs getting in? The workers still had to face the combined might of the cops and Ford's private army. Within a few hours the whole area around River Rouge was choked as far as the eye could see by trade unionists' cars — mainly Fords! Not a soul could get in.

This still left a few scabs inside the factory. But now they had to try and break out. Thirty-six men were injured in the battles of the next few days, but the issue was never



in serious doubt.

The UAW was actually policing the entire area of ten square miles. Ford had to come to terms with the union.

He did more than that. Ford's became the first closed shop in the car industry. Was Henry Ford mellowing in his old age? On the contrary, the concession was turned into another "smart investment".

## Bunk!

Roosevelt was trying to drag the American working class into the war. To get the trade union leaders to act as recruiting sergeants, he agreed to give military contracts to union firms only.

At a stroke, Ford cut himself into contracts worth thousands of millions of dollars. These lucrative deals actually kept the firm afloat for the next four years.

Henry Ford said: "History is bunk." No wonder! History shows Ford never gave the workers anything unless they stuck up for themselves.

**And history shows that almight Ford's can be beaten!**

**Mick Brooks**

## The Lowdown on Ford Available from WORLD BOOKS

Counter Information Services: Ford anti-report ..... 90p + 20p post  
 Beynon: Working for Ford..... £2.50 + 30p post  
 Preis: Labor's Giant Step (all the big American strikes of the 1930s) ..... £3.85 + 55p post  
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## FRANCE



Mass demonstration against unemployment, Marseilles [15 Sept 1978] Photo: Mike Sheridan/IFL

# FRENCH WORKERS FIGHT AUSTERITY MEASURES

By George Williamson

**A huge strike wave in France has thrown the country into widespread chaos and has sparked off the most serious bout of social turmoil since before the last general election.**

Whole groups of workers including steel workers, ship yard workers, railwaymen, dockers, post office workers, television producers, teachers, students and janitors have launched into struggle against the government's austerity measures of wage restrictions and expenditure cuts.

In Marseilles, for instance, 15,000 ship repair workers demonstrated against government plans

French ports are currently at a standstill because of a strike by dockers to improve their low wages and bad conditions. This is having a crippling effect on the economy.

In Paris, the situation is particularly grim with thousands of tons of rubbish piled up in the streets owing to a strike by rubbish truck drivers. A potentially explosive situation is developing because of the authority's threat to bring in troops to clear the rubbish.

Thousands of janitors have struck, demanding improvements in wages. The scandal is that some of these workers at present earn less than £83 per month!

Teachers have taken to the streets, also for more pay. Everywhere workers are moving into action, many previously unorganised, to fight for better living standards.

**The working class, having seen its hopes of progress in living standards dashed at the elections with the right-wing victory, are now turning from the political to the industrial field to further their aspirations.**

Although the right wing did manage to hold on to power in

March, much to the relief of the French ruling class, not one of the problems facing them was solved by the result. The economy continues to deteriorate with unemployment, for instance, currently standing at over 1¼ million, inflation heading towards double figures and a balance of payments deficit.

One of the more glaring examples of the weakness of French industry is the steel industry, where the government has been forced to take a majority shareholding in order to prevent its complete collapse. On the verge of bankruptcy, production is limping along at only 66% capacity, and this gives a rough barometer to the general state of health of French capitalism.

Faced with a worsening economic situation, the government has tried to introduce its austerity pro-

gramme, aimed at making the workers suffer for their bosses' crisis, which has sparked off the present wave of opposition.

On the political front too the government has encountered setbacks, with by-election after by-election showing a large shift to the left.

In Paris a seat held by the Gaullists for twenty years was resoundingly won by the Socialists. In another dramatic by-election in Nancy, caused because of alleged irregularities at the general election, the leader of the pro-government Radical Party sensationally lost his seat to the Socialists, polling only 41% to the Socialist candidate's 58%.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the government has little room for manoeuvre, amid this heightening social turmoil, with a declining economic base on one hand and the working class organised in their trade unions on the other, determined not only to maintain their living standards but to improve them as well. In such a situation, enormous class battles in the future are inevitable as labour and capital head for a confrontation.

**On their present course, the French working class is heading for new explosions, greater than even those experienced in 1968.**

## THANKS FROM LSSP COMRADES

The Lanka Sama Samaja Party [LSSP] UK Branch would like to express its thanks for the messages of support and substantial financial contributions from the solidarity meetings held during the recent visit of comrades Vasu and Bahu and from a number of labour movement meetings.

Our comrades in Sri Lanka have been very much encouraged and heartened by these measures of support at this



Bahu speaking in London

time, when they are undertaking even greater tasks in the face of increasing thug-

gery and blatant repression by the present regime in Sri Lanka.

As readers are no doubt aware, Comrades Vasu and Bahu of the new Marxist leadership of the LSSP addressed a very successful public meeting at Conway Hall in London. At this meeting—as at the other meetings during their visit—there was an excellent response to calls for financial help towards the work in Sri Lanka.

During their visit to Britain, the two comrades addressed numerous meetings of Labour Parties, LPYS branches and trade unions, at which they answered criticisms and explained our perspectives in detail. For the

most part, the response was extremely enthusiastic and we were most encouraged by the number of sympathisers we won and the expressions of support extended.

Within the short duration to which the visit had to be restricted due to the political situation in Sri Lanka, it would be no exaggeration to say that the two comrades were rewarded with the greatest political gains for their untiring work during the visit.

If not for the extensive financial support given by the 'Militant' comrades, in all probability the Sri Lankan comrades would not have been able to accomplish the

significant political work of their visit to Britain and Europe.

Comrades will no doubt be heartened to learn that the funds collected during the visit amounted to several times the expenditure incurred by the two comrades for the visit.

The following are among the organisations which have responded with further contributions and messages of support and solidarity with the working class in Sri Lanka: Bootle CLP; Brighton Labour Party; Blackpool South LPYS, Blackpool Labour Party, Coventry LPYS, Central Hull LPYS, Southgate LPYS. In addition, the LSSP comrades spoke to a number of Militant discussion meetings and to meetings in Ireland and several countries in Europe.



## IRAN

# THE END OF THE SHAH?



Oil workers act



A mass demonstration in Teheran—troops no longer reliable for Shah

About 20,000 oil workers are bringing the almighty despotic Shah to his knees. The workers have crippled the world's second biggest exporter of crude oil by a stroke in which political demands for democratic rights have come to the fore. They have cut the average daily production of crude oil—the backbone of the Iranian economy without which the dictatorship will collapse—from 5.8m barrels to 1.5m barrels and refuse to allow the oil to flow until martial law is ended. The release of political prisoners and the return of exiles are also demanded by the workers. Even the much-vaunted armed forces, upon which the Shah has lavished enormous wealth to arm them with the most up-to-date equipment, are impotent. In the first three days of the army being sent into the oil installations an estimated \$185m worth of oil production was lost. Soldiers cannot do the work of skilled oil workers. That is the enormous social weight of the small industrial working class in Iranian society today! Already the Shah has been forced to bid a humiliating

retreat by announcing the imminent release of "the 600 remaining" political prisoners, and more demonstrators continue to be arrested or shot.

## Iran paralysed by strikes

"Strikes, once almost unheard of, have brought government business to a standstill. Transport, health, postal and communications services have been disrupted. Key sectors of the economy, including oil, copper and steel, are suffering." This was the alarmed voice of big business ('Financial Times' 13 October) confirming the strength of the present opposition to the Shah's regime.

Under tremendous pressure, the Shah has been forced into granting concessions to the working class, including public sector workers who have obtained rises of 7,500 rials (£52) a month, improvements in salary scales, doubling of fringe benefits

and a 20% rise for workers in unhealthy employment.

Concessions to one section, however, have only led to others taking action for their own demands. Teachers, bank workers and the less industrial sections are often leading the opposition.

Reports daily tell of more strikers: 9,500 employees from other bank chains, a car assembly plant and a large iron works yesterday joined workers seeking rises averaging 50%. ('Financial Times' 18th October).

Any attempts by the ruling class to take back concession have provoked renewed action. Recent moves to reimpose censorship met a national press strike, and resulted two days later in a return to work with no censorship.

The Shah is also facing massive repeated political strikes against his regime. The strike on 16th October against the killing of 3,000 demonstrators on 8th September, for example, had such support that "it was observed virtually everywhere in the country". ('The Times' 17th October).

The ruling class is split. Iran's Minister of Health recently resigned in opposition to the awards of pay demanded by the workers. Others realise that further attempts at repression of demonstrations or strikes

could result in even bigger upheavals.

The capitalist class is biding time. If the Iranian working class is unprepared, then they will attempt to snatch back the concessions already won, and more. The reforms already obtained can only be won at the expense of the profits of the ruling class and the Shah's massive spending on arms (aimed at the working class).

The fight for the removal of the Shah is a fight for the right to organise, for democratic rights, and for an end to miserable working conditions. These can only be achieved by the Iranian workers wresting control of the Iranian economy from the hands of the Iranian and multinational monopolies.

The British labour movement must ensure full support for this struggle. Solidarity action must include the blacking by the trade unions of all supplies of British arms and tanks to Iran—and the immediate ending of SAVAK (secret police) activities in the UK.

A socialist Iran would be a beacon to the workers in the Middle East—and throughout the world.

By David Todd

# KKE PERPETUATES UNDEMOCRATIC METHODS

The Greek Communist Party of the 'Exterior' (KKE) claims that unlike the other Communist Parties of Western Europe it still works in the traditions of Marx, Engels and Lenin.

It is well known, however, that the great teachers of Marxism, in the words of Lenin, stressed the importance of 'patiently explaining' the programme of Marxism, of convincing the mass of the working class of need for a struggle to change society. Never once did they condone violence inside the workers' movement. Indeed in 1922 Lenin demanded the expulsion of one Central Committee member (Ordzhonikidze) for striking an opponent in the Russian Communist Party.

But at a recent KKE rally in London, some of their members showed that they want to bring back the use of some of Stalin's methods in order to stifle criticism.

Outside the rally three LPYS members were selling 'Militant' with some success when one of the stewards told us that we were "disrupting" the rally and should move 150 yards away to the end of the road.

## 'Persuasion'

We pointed out that we had received no complaints from the KKE members who were buying the paper and that we defended the right to free discussions inside the labour movement. We were told that might be true in Socialist or 'Euro-Communist' parties but not with the KKE; they were not going to discuss it further and would get some other KKE members to move us if we didn't go away.

We refused to move and so they reappeared with 10 or so ' heavies' to 'persuade' us to go. When we reminded them of Lenin's attitude to democ-

racy inside the workers' movement, their answer was: "We don't want a theoretical debate". The stewards only other argument against us was shouts of "MI6"!

Eventually, we did move away in order to avoid a fight and to be able to continue selling 'Militant'—which we did successfully, despite being 'warned' that this would 'enrage' the ordinary KKE members.

These strongarm tactics only go to show the political bankruptcy of the KKE leaders: so unsure are they of their members' support, they must try physically to stop them seeing any alternative.

But this attitude does not only extend to 'Militant': the KKE leaders have to hide their own history. On sale at this rally was an edition of 'Greek News' with an article on the 60-year history of the KKE.

## Scapegoat

The article had pictures of the old KKE leaders, except that of Zachariades, the party's general secretary for nearly 20 years until he was suddenly made the scapegoat for the Civil War defeat and expelled in 1957.

Likewise, while one article praised the revisionist forces" in Greece, another praised Theodorakis, the KKE-supported mayoral candidate in the centre of Athens last month, who up until last year was being denounced as a leader of the 'revisionists'!

The KKE leaders have no hope of being able to stifle criticism within their ranks either by physical force or deceit. Increasingly its members will want to fing the answers for the party's defeats in the past and its limitation of today's struggle to one of trying to make inroads into 'monopoly power'.

By Dave Reid

(Paddington LPYS)



**MILITANT INTERNATIONAL REVIEW**

**WINTER 1978**

Articles on: Spain;  
Communist Party; Sri Lanka

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

## LETTERS

Services—  
or white  
elephants?

Dear Editors

A luxurious new civic centre has just been opened in Wolverhampton to house all the council departments.

The building cost £11 million to build and even has carpets going half way up the walls! Is it only a status symbol for the council, or has it improved the services to the workers of Wolverhampton?

A new office building should have all the facilities that could allow the council staff to work most efficiently.

It has air conditioning—but it only works when the lights are on! It has hundreds of telephones—but internal calls cannot be transferred so that a telephonist cannot get a number for another worker and transfer the call! It has an entrance hall with hundreds of steps but no provision of ramps for handicapped visitors in wheelchairs!

It is next to a multi-storey car park but workers who need their cars for council business have to park at least half a mile away! The luncheon voucher scheme has ended, with the provision of a canteen, but the food prices are high as the subsidy has been cut from £20,000 to £5,000!

It seems the councillors, guided by unelected senior officers, have made the usual mistakes by thinking they know better than the workers who work in the building every day.

If only these workers were given the opportunity to manage the day-to-day running of the council departments, then not only would the council be run far more efficiently in the interests of the local residents, but Wolverhampton would not have such a prestigious white elephant in the first place.

Yours fraternally  
Anthony Mirams  
Handsworth CLP and  
West Midlands  
County Council NALGO

Netball  
picket

To Militant

I am writing to tell you about something that happened at my school a couple of weeks ago.

In the playground there is a netball pitch and an area for playing. Normally the boys would play there to practice football and the girls would have to play in the small end where no ball games are allowed.

So we (the girls) wanted some of it to play netball. We went to the Headmaster. He did nothing. So I said, "We will picket." Our class teacher said: "We will go into class and discuss it with everyone."

We got a third of the netball pitch for one play equivalent to half an hour. The boys have two plays equivalent to half an hour for the whole pitch. So we got something in the end.

Marianne MacKay  
(aged 10)  
Ipswich

The  
unusable  
motorway

Dear Comrades

When is an 'A' Road not an 'A' Road? When it's financially beneficial to recategorise it as a 'B' road, and an almost unusable motorway is built along part of its route.

This is the fate of part of the old A11, running from the heart of London past Newmarket in the Eastern region. The Loughton/Epping/Harlow/Bishop Stortford section has just been renumbered B1493. For the Essex County Council, the standard of maintenance can be lowered, with less resurfacing, road signs and clear road markings.

Readers might claim that there is a splendid new motorway, M11 from London to Bishop Stortford, so less traffic will be using the old A11. Not on your life!

Any rush hour will demonstrate enormous queues of cars on the old road. It gives access to the still-beautiful Epping forest and parts of the East coast.

But why don't they use the motorway, you might ask? Between the North Circular (London) entrance and access roads at Harlow, the only entry or exit roads are at Loughton, and that is only for journeys into London or out. For journeys into outer Essex you have a 15-mile journey up to Harlow along the old A11 to gain access.

Wonderful capitalist planning: they used the underused new M11 as an excuse to cut down the maintenance costs of the still over-used A11. And traffic chaos continues!

Fraternally  
Bob Edwards  
Harlow Labour Party

BUS SERVICES BREAK DOWN  
—THE SOCIALIST ANSWER

Dear Comrades

A recent article in the 'Hackney Gazette' reported that on a local bus route, the 106, only a quarter of the buses actually ran, due to "break-downs, a lack of spare parts and a shortage of buses."

If you asked any local traveller, however, you would be told that this appears to be the case on all routes. It is not unusual to wait half an hour for a service advertised as running every eight to twelve minutes, then see two buses turn up, both full or just running into the garage, instead of to the end of the route.

The lone Tory on Hackney council commented: "It is absolutely outrageous...If they are not able to provide the service then they must allow private companies to step in. It should not be

possible to set up a monopoly and then say you are going to slash the service."

However, it is his big business paymasters who are demanding such cuts, and his colleagues in County Hall who are implementing them. We are told this is to 'improve services'. But the service has got noticeably worse since the Tories took over the GLC!

The only way to stop the long waiting time and the ever-increasing fares is to nationalise the whole transport and manufacturing industry under workers' control and management, to put an end to the excuses about shortage of parts and breakdowns, and to provide a regular, free public service.

Yours fraternally  
Lorna Oliver  
Hackney Central LPYS

Striking for  
minimum  
wage

Dear Comrades

Fifty workers, mostly women, who work at Gainsborough Flowers Ltd, Rhondda, came out on strike—the first time that this has happened in the firm's 35-year history.

The workers, who make artificial flowers, came out on strike because the management offered them £5.30 a week rise plus two extra holidays—but wait a minute, it's not as rosy as it sounds.

Mrs Maudie Gazzi, a Transport and General Workers shop steward, said they wanted an extra £11 a week to bring them to the National Minimum Wage of £44.50, as laid down in the government's White Paper on low pay. The workers are paid £33 for a 41-hour week.

Mrs Gazzi said: "We are determined to get more money. If we don't do it now, we never will. We have always been £11 to £12 below other factories...There is no set pattern to the industrial action we are taking: we may decide to strike tomorrow as well."

When negotiations began, it appeared that should they go suddenly for the £44, the company would have been priced out of the market. So the union put forward a counter-proposal for £40 a week in return for a condition that in six months' time they would negotiate for the rest. The company turned the offer down.

I visited the factory on my way to work on Friday and the workers are working normally. Mrs Gazzi told me that management had agreed to pay everyone for the time they had been on strike and new negotiations will start on Monday. I'll let you know the outcome.

I have also heard that there may be 90 made redundant from another factory in Porth. I'll let you know more when I get further information.

Yours fraternally  
Anthony Tynan  
Rhondda LPYS and NUM

IMPORT CONTROLS  
—PROVED TO BE  
A BLIND ALLEY

Dear Comrades

Recent figures released for the textile trade illustrate the futility of import controls as a saviour of "British" industry.

British textiles recorded a trade deficit of £44m for the first six months of 1978 as opposed to a surplus of £97m for a similar period last year. This is despite the introduction of much stricter controls, under the GATT (MFA) agreement, which are directed at the developing countries; i.e. a form of selective import control.

Senile British industry proved incapable of reacting to this "opportunity"; in fact European manufactur-

ers, impelled through stagnating world markets, moved in to take that sector of the market formerly occupied by the low wage manufacturers. Total sector trade balance (textiles plus clothing) for this six month period moved from a deficit of £35.43m (1977) to £168.75m (1978)!

The many varied economic factors, including general worldwide manufacturing overcapacity, ensure that selective import controls will remain a blind alley, and provide no solution to the international crisis of capitalism.

Yours fraternally  
Steve Walker

RESEARCH PRIORITIES—  
PROFIT DECIDES

Dear Comrades

'Militant' has always pointed out the class nature of the education system; how, for instance, twice as much money is spent on the fifty or so universities than on the whole of the rest of the higher education sector, covering the polytechnics, techs, teacher training and Further Education colleges.

Big business is usually involved in the governing bodies of schools, colleges and universities. One of the most important members of our university council is Sir Arthur Bryant, chairman of the Wedgewood pottery chain.

These people aren't there out of some philanthropic desire to do good. Firms like Wedgewood rely on the universities and polytechnics to provide a source of skilled

people for research and clerical jobs.

However, big business is even more blatant than this in its use of educational institutes to do research that would otherwise be unprofitable.

Recently, I had to choose a final year electronics project. I went along to collect the list of thirty suggested projects, expecting things along the lines of "Devise a simple torch circuit" experiment.

The list, however, included the design of a "pacemaker monitor unit" for use by heart patients of "low intelligence" and other medical items for use.

These are obviously very worthwhile, if unprofitable, projects, but I wonder why they are left to inexperienced undergraduates? Whole labs are built to devise ways of

Hotel  
workers

Dear Comrades

In reply to Bill Chards' article on 'A Life of Luxury?', I too have a story to tell.

Brought up by self-employed Tory hoteliers, I was told to vote Conservative as it was the correct thing to do. Out of respect for my parents and ignorance of the facts I did as advised.

For 12 years I have worked in hotels for poor wages and in bad living conditions. Why do it, you ask? I love my work. I know no other way of life.

Our union negotiated a closed shop agreement with the company I work for. I was invited to attend branch meetings. My reports were met with understanding, sympathy and advice.

Colleagues I met at branch meetings, who work for other industries, were shocked and horrified at the tales I had to tell.

I became a staff representative. Again my new colleagues at the branch encouraged me to attend weekend schools and conference. My role as staff representative began to mean more to me.

Finally I was sent to Ruskin Hall in Oxford to attend a course in trade union studies along with many other members of my union, TSSA, but from other industries. There we met members of NUM who also have their many problems. This did not deter them in any way from listening to mine.

Now, at the ripe old age of 29, I too have become a socialist and am actively working to improve the lot of the catering worker.

The many people I have met on my union educational trips, from various unions, still keep in touch with me and give me help and advice. Colleagues everywhere — I thank you. I wish I had met you all years ago.

Yours fraternally  
Jacky Mitchell  
TSSA Edinburgh  
No 1 branch

PS Please find enclosed £17 for the fighting fund.

Yours fraternally  
Dave Campbell  
Chairman, Keele  
Labour Club



# Dont wait till Christmas... SEND YOUR MONEY NOW!

This week's total of £582.94 is the lowest for ten weeks. The sales of the paper are going up all the time and the amount sent in for the Fighting Fund should reflect the support we have.

Obviously, with Christmas only six weeks away everyone is desperately trying to save some money to 'enjoy' the festivities. But no one should allow the Fighting Fund to become neglected because of this. After an enormous effort to get back on target in September, our supporters appear to have eased off the pressure and in doing so we've slumped again. What can be done to get back on target?

Well, we have to raise an average of £1,935 a week to reach the total by the end of the year: this means every area sending in money every week. Don't become complacent, comrades. We have never done so well before but must still do better.

The £52,576.42 raised to date is more than the total raised last year and shows the way we have gone forward. The quality of the

paper has improved tremendously, all due to the support of our readers, so don't put the next step in jeopardy.

Individual donations this week include: £50 from 'Anon' in Finsbury Park, £11 from Newcastle University students, and £10 each from N Waterfield (W London) and T Warby (Derby).

£5s were sent in from M Wedderburn (London CPSA), K Bower (Moss Side CLP), K Rogers (Banbury), M Henderson (Chester-le-Street), a student in Canterbury and R Hodds (Hull EETPU).

£4.50 was donated by R Hargreaves (Birmingham), £4 from D Scott (Lanarkshire) and £3 from I Armitage (Plymouth). £2s were received from the Wobseys of Hackney, J Turner (St. Pancras), a Manchester student and B Fleetwood (Hull MATSA). H Grant (Irvine) donated £1.70, B McCosh (Edinburgh) sent in £1.28 and T Baker (Medway) donated £3. Other £1s donated included D Moss (Brixham) D Mayhew (Hull T&GWU), M Walton (also Hull), I Clark (Hull UCATT), A Magery (Birmingham), J Frost (Hayes CLP), J Kehoe (Coventry), A Jones (Stafford Poly), R Thomas (Llanelli) and T Willocks (Islington

LPYS). From UPW workers in North West London we received £5, from NGA/SO GAT supporters in Merseyside £12.50 and from a Trade Union Discussion Group in Stockton £1.50.

A Militant Readers' Meeting in Oxford raised £30 (before expenses), one in Egremont, Cumbria raised £10 and one in Leeds raised £4.

Pollock LPYS sent in £1.25, West Notts LPYS £1 and Gosport LPYS £1.14.

On the fund raising side, a lot of money has been sent in this week. A party in Leeds raised £10, a social in Canterbury raised £3.69, "Quatermass" in Paisley raised £14, and 'Dave's last disco' in Coventry raised a total of £20.92 although not all of it was sent through this week. Sale of sandwiches in London made £9.30, a jumble sale in Sheffield raised £23.25, sale of Lenin badges and posters raised £5, sale of pon-toon tickets in Lanarkshire made £8, and a local raffle in Hull raised £1.50. Coppers in a jar in South East Dorset amounted to £2.50, a 'taxi' fare in South London £1, and a sponsored walk in Hull raised £4 with more to come.

Many thanks to all those comrades who donated money this week!

## FIGHTING FUND - TARGET £70,000

Area	Target	Proportion of target received	Received
Eastern	4,400		2,621.15
Hants & IOW	2,100		2,321.81
Humberside	2,200		1,658.80
Lancashire	1,500		646.70
London: North	7,700		5,851.98
London: South	3,800		3,064.77
Manchester & Dist	2,900		1,827.13
Merseyside & Dist	4,500		2,635.69
Midlands East	4,400		2,727.88
Midlands West	7,400		5,379.52
Northern	4,900		3,164.46
Scotland East	2,500		1,593.59
Scotland West	2,900		1,685.32
South East	2,300		2,195.26
South West	2,300		1,979.26
Thames Valley	1,700		1,344.44
Wales East	2,000		1,530.61
Wales West	2,300		2,016.13
Yorkshire	5,200		2,898.74
Others	3,000		5,433.18
<b>Total</b>	<b>70,000</b>		<b>52,576.42</b>

With Christmas not far away, the 'Militant' Bazaars should already be organised nationally. If organised properly they provide cheap but good presents and can also make money. Is one being organised in your area? Find out now!

If you have saved money there are also many items

being produced at the 'Militant' office to tempt you to spend it. The New Year raffle will be out within the next week (see advert below). As well as that, there will be: a 'Militant' Calendar, a 'Militant' Cartoon book and New Year cards. All of these are coming soon. So don't spend all your money. Save some to

spend on the 'Militant' and get something in return for helping us to go forward.

**THIS WEEK.  
£582.94**

## ADS

### RATES

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

### MILITANT MEETINGS

STEVENAGE Militant Readers' Meeting. 'The Gathering Crisis in Southern Africa'. Speaker: Jim Chrystie (former LP adviser of S Africa). Stevenage Leisure Centre, Thursday 16th November 7.45 pm.

DAVENTRY Readers' Meeting 'Wage Restraint—A Socialist Answer'. Wednesday November 15th, 7.30 pm. Speakers: Eric Knight (Convenor, Ford Daventry); Tom Smith (Convenor Self-changing Gears). The Lounge, Daventry Working Men's Club

### DISCUSSION GROUPS

SUNDERLAND Marxist Discussion Group. Wednesday November 15th, 8.00 pm. Subject: Northern Ireland. For further details contact Diane English, Sunderland 44365

RHONDDA Trade Union Discussion Group. Every Tuesday, Star Pub, Ystrad, Rhondda (Back bar), 7.30 pm

### CLASSIFIED

HACKNEY LPYS Public Meeting 'Forward to a 35-hour Week'. Tuesday 14th November Room 1, Hackney Labour & Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, E.8. 7.30 pm. Speakers: Glenys Ingham (Editor, 'Left'); Steve Waterfield (POEU)

# WHY DID LABOUR LOSE?

ask  
Hillingdon  
socialists

Fifty young people, plus some older socialists, packed into a meeting organised recently by Ruislip-Northwood LPYS.

John Bartlett, the former leader of the Labour Council in Hillingdon borough outlined the situation prior to the election of the Labour council in 1971, their achievements over seven years, and the dangers now posed by the Tories.

As Bro Bartlett pointed out, Hillingdon Borough under the previous Tory council had the worst health services in the country, the lowest house building rate, with 3,000 homeless people on the housing list, and no proper planning of education or the social services.

In comparison, the Labour council while in office carried out a massive programme of reforms in all services. At the time of the May elections 2,400 homes under construction, with a further 4,000 already built; an expanded social services, with old people's dining centres, home helps, meals on wheels; new leisure facilities, seven new sports centres and a theatre all bore witness to their reforming spirit.

The Tories of course are not interested in what the working class need, but only what is profitable. Already since May, rates have been increased, charges for meals or wheels quadrupled from 15p per meal, while many more services are in jeopardy.

During the discussion from the floor speakers tried to

analyse why Labour had lost in May. After all, the meeting showed the support for the achievements of the 1971-78 Labour council. Quite possibly the vicious attacks by the Tory press, locally and nationally, attempting to discredit the Labour council may have misled some people.

However, Hillingdon borough vindicates the programme of the Labour Party Young Socialists. Undoubtedly the reforms carried out in Hillingdon had the overwhelming support of workers in the area. But the bad record of the Labour government nationally, wage restraint etc. undoubtedly meant that many workers stayed at home for the local elections.

The meeting resolved to fight the Tory cuts, and for a return of Labour in Hilling-

don. But this must be linked to a fight in the Labour Party, to force the government to change course, and carry through socialist policies. This would give all Labour councils the money and

resources to carry through the massive improvements needed, and rally the workers in their support.

**Martin Elvin**  
(Ruislip Northwood LPYS)



Martin Elvin

## Sellers' Conference

The National 'Militant' Sellers' Conference next weekend looks like being another huge success if the response for places reflects the enthusiasm of sellers to exchange ideas on how to improve the sales and spread Marxist ideas.

The Conference agenda will include items on the situation in Britain and future developments, sales, fund raising and future publication plans.

Any sellers who wish to make late applications for places are welcome to do so but they are only likely to be accommodated if cancellation occurs.

## IT'S TIME FOR THE NEW YEAR RAFFLE

WIN: A 12-day holiday for two in Times Square, New York.

OTHER PRIZES: ★ Alarm clock radio; ★ Carriage clock; ★ Picture clock; ★ Digital clock; ★ Travel alarm clock; ★ Kitchen clock; ★ Wrist watch; ★ Pendant/pocket watch; ★ Kitchen timer; ★ Egg timer

To be drawn Saturday, 6th January, 1979

Get your tickets (books of 20) from: 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or from local supporters. 10p per ticket.

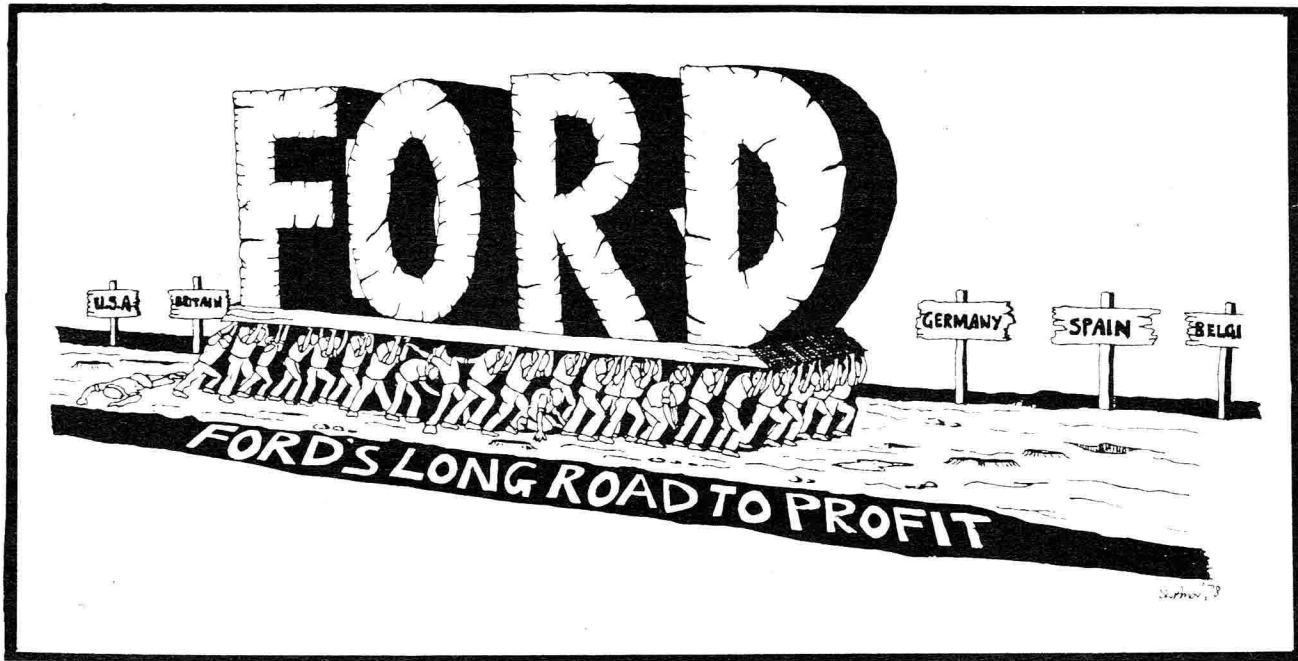
## Send New Year greetings through 'Militant'

'Militant' will be featuring New Year greetings in the issue of January 5th. YOUR union branch, shop stewards' committee, Labour Party or LPYS branch should send its greetings to the rest of the labour movement.

Rates for semi-display are: £2 for 3 column centimetres [maximum 15 words]; £7 for one-sixteenth of a page; £14 for one-eighth of a page.

Greetings should arrive by Monday December 18th. Don't forget. Post early to avoid the Christmas rush!





# MASS MEETINGS REJECT THE OFFER



John Aitken [NJNC] and Denis O'Flynn [AUEW Dagenham] at a Dagenham LPYS public meeting in support of the Ford workers

## DAGENHAM

On Friday 3rd, 16,000 Ford workers packed into the Leys baths, Dagenham, to hear a report from their trade union leaders on the Company's 'final' offer.

The offer had been circulated to all Ford's hourly-paid employees by Paul Rootes, the Industrial Relations Director. Contained in this document was the 'final' cash offer on the basic rates, between £5.92-£8 for different grades, improvement to the holiday pay and an employee attendance allowance [£3.20-£4 a week], with numerous conditions attached.

The company rejected the shorter working week, the claim on pensions, lay-off pay, line workers' allowance and payment for shiftwork. They demanded a 12-month agreement, including an economic standstill with no grading agreements.

Mick Murphy, the T&G-WU district official, chaired the mass meeting. Ron Todd, chairman of the Ford National Joint Negotiating Council (FNJNC) and Len Choulerton the AUEW official, were the only speakers.

Ron Todd explained how the company had tried to ignore the trade union negotiators on the FNJNC, appealing to the workers individually through the press and TV to consider the company's offer. In one letter they had appealed to workers to put pressure on the trade union leaders to resolve the dispute. The mass media, the press and TV, are no friends of the of the Ford workers, he said.

In 1976 Ford profits were £121 million and had increased in 1977 to £246 million. The projected profit increase for 1978 would be more than £300 million. It was quite clear that they could easily meet the claim in full.

Initially, however, the company had been adamant about conforming to the government's 5% pay policy. The workers responded by going on strike.

Ron Todd stressed that throughout the negotiations, the company had failed to respond to our claim. They introduced the so-called 'attendance allowance'. Although this was rejected in detail, the trade unions had put forward alternatives. But the Company was adamant that the attendance allowance plan was central to their offer.

This was in fact a disciplinary procedure by which workers who had not worked 'normally' would be penalised, either individually or in groups, by the Company, he stated. This statement was well-received by the meeting.

Len Choulerton, the AUEW official, also supported the FNJNC's rejection, and contained his remarks to the penalty clauses and the fact that the Company could afford to pay because of its massive profits.

Finally, Mick Murphy called for the vote. It was obvious from the platform that there was overwhelming support for the FNJNC's rejection of the offer. This was greeted by a mass cheer.

By John Aitken, FNJNC member, EETPU

## EETPU MEETING

The Dagenham Auto branch of the EETPU and EETPU shop stewards from Dagenham, Dunton, Basildon and Langley, met at Dagenham on 7th November to consider the letter sent by the EETPU Executive to individual union members.

This gave official backing to the Ford strike, dating not from when the Company issued their 'ultimatum' on the 5% limit, on 21st

September, but from the expiry of the last wage agreement on 21st October.

The meeting called on all EETPU members at Ford to attend a mass meeting at the Labour Hall, Tenderton Rd, off Green Lane, Dagenham 1.00 pm Friday, 10th, to consider the attitude of EETPU members to the letter.

## DAVENTRY "The carrot that bites back"

Eric Knight, Convenor, spoke to Brian Debus

11.59. A dozen stewards crowd round the radio in the caravan at Daventry.

12.00. The news reader announces "Ford workers at Dagenham have rejected the management's...". Half a dozen blokes explode out of the caravan with a roar of cheers that drown out the rest of the bulletin.

Ninety minutes earlier, Daventry's mass meeting had rejected the offer by nine to one.

Eric Knight, convenor, referring to the weekly supplement, without hiding the irony from his voice said "if you are absent without permission, you lose £3.48. With permission, you lose £3.48. If you visit the doctor or dentist, you lose £3.48".

Pulling out a daily paper, he makes the point that Ford can afford £50,000 to put adverts in the national press putting their views. This raises derisory comments from one worker listening.

The 11.00 news on radio 2 was awaited eagerly after the meeting. It caused some consternation when the announcer just stated "the plant at Dunton has voted to accept the deal", without any reference to Daventry.

This seems a quite blatant bit of censorship by the BBC. The vote at Daventry would obviously have an influence at the Dagenham and Southampton mass meetings, due to start at 11.00. No doubt if Daventry had accepted, it

would have been headlines. The stewards had mass leafletted the previous day. The leaflet had urged rejection, with reference to the Attendance Payment Plan as "the carrot that bites back."

The bit is now between their teeth, and management can expect the dispute to harden. This plant, which previously had a reputation as 'moderate', had one of the largest contingents at the lobby of negotiations earlier in the week.

Although the lads are prepared for a long strike, they are confident of a better offer with the European plants shut.

## UNION SUPPORT

"This conference congratulates the Ford workers in their stand against the 5% limit. Conference notes that opposition to wage restraint is the policy of both the TUC and the Labour Party. Therefore conference calls upon the government to abandon the 5% wage policy and accept free collective bargaining."

"We call upon the union to continue its support for NGA members involved."

This resolution, moved by Peter Jarvis, a 'Militant' supporter, was passed with acclaim by the London Regional Conference of the National Graphical Association last week.

## Nationalise Fords

The Ford workers' claim is in itself an argument for workers' control and management.

The Ford unions and union researchers from Ruskin College employed by them, have analysed the company in great detail. Their previous claim forecast company profits, output, sales and so on, to a very high degree of accuracy.

But the claim also gives some interesting figures that show the way the bosses are running industry in Britain today.

'Militant' has pointed out that British bosses get bigger handouts and pay lower wages than bosses in other major capitalist countries. Ford's profits were massive, as is now well-known. But that didn't stop them taking over £152m in government grants.

Last year Ford workers compared their pay with Ford workers in Germany and, taking into account differences in the cost of living, found that they were substantially worse paid than their German brothers. Ford "cannot continue to treat its British workforce as cheap labour," they say. Of course

this is the aim of all British bosses and they are making it clear that they want our labour to be a lot cheaper yet.

Will a wage rise for Ford workers cause inflation? The company didn't need wage rises to make them put prices up. Average pay per vehicle went up about 5% while profit per vehicle went up 84%.

We are hearing a lot about how British bosses are over-taxed and so suffer the terrible disease of "investment shyness". Ford were liable for £129.8m tax, but, the Ford workers say, they only paid £19.6m and most of the rest is permanently deferred—that is, never to be paid.

Have all these "savings" been reinvested? Only £75m worth altogether. The company has failed to keep the plant and machinery it already had at the same value.

If Ford and the other big monopolies won't invest with these "bargain" level wages and handouts, the only alternative workers can afford is to take them over and do the job themselves.

Tony Cross  
(East Nottingham LPYS)

## SOUTHAMPTON

### No going back to '69

At a mass meeting last Friday, the Southampton plant clearly rejected the Ford Motor Company's latest offer.

They said it was their "final offer". Its not unusual for them to make more than one "final offer" in one year.

Their offer of an increase of £6.52 on basic pay for 'B' grade workers does not even match the £7.16 which we settled for last year, despite the Company doubling its profits this year.

They have at last conceded time and one third for all holidays, but they have taken away the holiday bonus to help pay for it. They agreed to increase the Service Related Holidays by one extra day after ten years service, making three extra days' holiday; for employees with twenty five years service they offered an increase of an extra two days.

On the other major points of the claim:

**Lay-off** "the Company rejects the claim for lay-off pay for employees laid off by internal disputes."

**Line workers' allowance** "The Company explained that it was not prepared..."

**Working hours** "The Company is not prepared to reduce..."

**Payment for shift work** "The Company is not prepared to improve..."

The sting in the tail was the 'Attendance Payments Plan'.

There are nine different ways in each week that employees can lose the payment. Holiday which has not been qualified for, late on more than one occasion or on one occasion in excess of five minutes, unpaid lay-off. You also lose the money if you're absent without permission although I don't know why they put that in because in the next sentence they say you lose it for being absent with permission. You also lose the money if you're suspended for disciplinary purposes: that

means you will be punished twice for one offence.

However the real purpose of the so-called attendance bonus is revealed in the two clauses which disqualify employees if they are "involved in a strike or stoppage of work whether official or unofficial" or "taken off pay either individually or as a member of a group." With these two clauses the company would be able to discourage almost all forms of disagreement with management decisions.

At the slightest hint of trouble the foremen will be running around reminding every one that they could lose their bonus. Thus keeping the production lines running and not getting the problem sorted out.

That is the Company's idea. But if the 'penalty clauses' had been accepted the company would have faced one long running battle in plant after plant.

At the mass meeting on Friday the Convenor reminded us that in 1969 there was a three-week strike over penalty clauses and he was sure that similar action would result if the Company insisted on introducing these proposals. He called on the meeting to endorse the NJNC rejection of the offer and this proposal was clearly carried.

The media, however, were not satisfied. They are trying to say that all was not as it should have been. They have quoted one or two members saying that there should have been a ballot instead of a show of hands.

As Alec Wilson, one of the shop stewards, said "even if there was a ballot, if it still went against these people they would claim it was rigged".

Report by John Kelly  
(Southampton  
Ford worker)



# SAVE SHIPYARD JOBS - says Cammell Laird convenor

Cammell Laird shipyard, Merseyside, have declared 800 redundancies. The bulk of them, 621, are amongst the steel workers, members of the Amalgamated Society of Boilermakers.

## Another blow to Merseyside!

Terry Harrison talked to Jimmy McCarty, General and Municipal Workers' Union.

At yard level, you see that the bulk of the people going are the steel trades, mainly the ASOB. The Boilermakers' problem today will be our problem in the next two or three months. People who can't see that can't see the forest for the trees.

What they are attempting to do is split us at yard level. I think they are also trying to split us at national level.

What we've got to say is that there are not 621 boilermakers going and approximately 100 outfitter trades; there are 800 trade unionists going out of Cammell Laird. It's an area where unemployment is running at 15% at the moment. We have got to say no.

It is wrong that the chairman of the Shipbuilding Negotiating Committee, Brother Chalmers, should be a part-time member of the Shipbuilding Board. You can't have your feet in two camps. We feel that Chalmers should come off the National Board and do the job that he's

been elected to do, look after the CSEU.

We believe there should be a strong national shop stewards' committee. We don't believe that any yard can now stand idly by and not be a member of the National Shop Stewards' Committee.

On 15th November, the National lay-delegates' Conference should be convened. I believe the demand should go to Brother Chalmers to stand by the policy of the CSEU: 'there will be no redundancies'!

The voluntary redundancy scheme is partly a 'self-financing' scheme. You receive half of your redundancy pay now, the rest in weekly support payments.

Possibly 70% of the skilled workers will be made redundant; they are only skilled within the shipyard. When they come out they are unskilled. After 6-12 months, when their dole runs out and they are required to go to the DHSS, any money they get from the weekly support

payments will be offset against that.

The lads, the senior members of 55 and over, not being part of that redundancy scheme, are being sent out on the stones with a mere pittance of £450 and no pension. The rest of their days going to the DHSS: their reward after, in some cases, 40 years in the industry.

Nobody over 55 should be forced to go out on the stones unless he is able to retire with dignity, with a decent pension.

The CSEU stewards in Lairds have met and discussed the proposed 800 redundancies, and come up with a motion that we should put to the workers. The motion calls for the sub-committee of every yard to hold a joint meeting to define a policy. They are calling for Brother Chalmers to stand by his decision to fight redundancies and to ask the workers to support the policy.

We are also going to try and persuade our members not to accept voluntary redundancy, pointing out the pitfalls in the face of mass unemployment on Merseyside.

The policy must be a fight for jobs. The basic right of every human being is the right to work.



Booths workers and shop stewards on the picket line

photo: Julian McKittrick

## BOOTH'S STRIKE IN 4th WEEK Black Distillers

By Merry Kidby

(LPYS London Regional Committee)

undermanned as the work to rule proved.

"There is cardboard and straw in the factory, which is unguarded. The only rest room for the men is a toilet, measuring 8ft by 8ft! The young lad who was victimised—which led to the strike, was working only a few yards away from cyanide!

"The company were refusing to recognise the work to rule, and only recognised the union on paper. This kind of struggle was being fought fifty years ago."

Booth's Gin is part of the massive Distillers Company Limited. Support from other workers is vital. Through the initiative of the shop stewards and strikers, requests for blacking of DCL goods by the transport workers, on the

airlines, road and rail have received an excellent response.

The stewards see very clearly that their fight is not just for trade union rights, but part of a more general fight for alternative policies in the labour movement. As Steve Fisher (senior steward) stated: "the Labour Party was built by the trade unions, and the leadership should abide by conference decisions or get out."

Paul Hayes added, "we are out for more than the London Weighting, we are out for self-respect of our union, and will ensure that after we win and go back, the union will be organised properly."

All support is vital. Donations, help and information for blacking DCL products should go to: Branch Secretary, 31 Wesley Road, Hounslow, Middlesex.

## RAIL PAY : UNITY NEEDED

After months of expectant waiting and hoping for railway workers, the Railway Staff National Tribunal (RSNT) have made an offer worth nothing. It's like asking for gold and getting brass.

As recompense for increased productivity, stress and strain, we wanted an increase in the basic rates of pay of all locomotives.

To maintain present differentials, an increase for all railway workers would have been necessary, and quite rightly so.

ASLE&F also made it clear that the British Rail Board's proposal to introduce a "Business Performance" scheme of payment was totally unacceptable. Both

parts of our case have been disregarded by the Tribunal.

Drivers working the High Speed Train (HST) have been offered a bonus payment of 25% on their day's pay, provided they have actually been working a train at over 100 mph. Such a scheme totally ignores our demand for an increase in basic pay.

We have consistently opposed "classification" of locomotives. Such a scheme would lead to arguments about seniority and entitlement to work HST trains.

All other railwaymen have been offered nothing. It is totally divisive and must be rejected.

Payment is calculated by adding together ton miles and passenger miles and dividing

that by the manning level figures to assess railway performance and payment accordingly.

The scheme is a charter for redundancy. How could trade union representatives, nationally or locally, argue for increased manning levels, when this could lead to a drop in pay?

Already ASLE&F members on the Southern Region are planning weekly industrial action until the original claim is met. The union executive will be meeting shortly to discuss the offer, and are sure to reject.

Unfortunately the leadership of NUR and TSSA seem to favour the offer, but this does not reflect the feelings of the vast majority of their members. If one section of railwaymen is being offered 25%, the men must ensure that it is paid on the basic rate of pay, and applies to all railway workers. A 25% pay rise will only begin to make up for what has been lost due to wage restraint.

Railway workers must demand now that the leadership of the rail unions reject the proposal, and use the industrial muscle of the railway unions to force a decent pay rise now.

★ No to RSNT offer!  
★ No to Business Performance scheme!  
★ For a 25% increase in basic pay of all railway workers now!

By Martin Elvin

(Stratford ASLEF Branch Committee, personal capacity)

## ELIOTS, LEICESTER

Members of ASTMS at JC Elliot Processing Ltd in Leicester are on strike in support of their claim for a 37½-hour week with no loss of pay.

They work 40 hours a week at present, and want parity with the 90% of other staff at the factory. This is the first official dispute here and already the strikers are learning the importance of solidarity.

The Transport and General Workers' Union have asked their members not to cross the picket line and so far not one lorry has done so. The UPW are not delivering mail.

The strike involves supervisors, inspectors, production controllers, works engineers and stores supervision. Al-

though the other divisions of ASTMS on the site and the production workers in the AUEW are going in to work, very little is being done because of the key role of the strikers' jobs.

The strike is 100%, apart from three girls who work on the telephones. All other unions in the factory have now blacked the phones, so all orders are having to be sent by mail. As no post is being delivered, things are expected to come to a halt very soon.

All messages of support and donations should be sent to: JA Marvin, 3 Dane Hill, Ratby, Leicestershire.

Heather Rawlings

## GRUNDFOS WORKERS CHALLENGE BOSSES

Sue Starkey, shop steward for the workers on strike (AUEW members) spoke to John Pickard about the strike and its background.

"The firm is Danish-owned and has been in Washington now for five years; they will have received the normal grants for development areas as well as two years' rent-free accommodation. Then last year, management announced that they were preparing to leave Washington and move to Sunderland, two miles away.

The workers have only a half-hour meal break; and the work is very hard and dirty. People here are secondary to production.

There have been quite a few complaints about dermatitis and a large number of accidents, involving, for example, women getting fingers badly cut on the machines.

The hallmark of management at Grundfos has been overzealous supervision and harassment of the workers.

The dispute was initially over bonuses (our average

wages are about £42 take home) but all the other issues have become mixed in.

The production workers (about 60 of them) rejected a productivity deal. Management refused to accept the vote and issued their own ballot. Union officials were called in.

Management stated that they would get the productivity "by finding other means" and then announced unilaterally that production of rotary pumps would go up from 264 to 320 an hour. The workers found the pressures unbearable: pushing around, moving from one machine to another were increased and yet there was no increase in wages.

We informed management that we would return to the status quo and eventually, on 25th September we were locked out—sacked. On union instructions we went to ACAS, but the firm refused to co-operate. Since then we have been picketing regularly.

The dispute has been made official. We have been offered help from a number of local factories, including Leslies

Yard in Hebburn, and Vickers in Newcastle.

Even before the strike the firm was six months behind in their orders—most of which go to nationalised industries, and in a very competitive market, they must be under some pressure now."

Grundfos Pumps has shown an over 300 per cent increase in profit in the last recorded year—£358,000 in 1977. As a percentage return on capital employed, the two years show a total return of over 90 per cent.

How is it that such Victorian-minded management can be featherbedded with public funds without any accountability whatsoever? The implications for trade unionists and Labour Party members in the development areas are considerable. The Grundfos workers are determined to make a start by at least making management accountable to them.

Messages of support and donations to: Strike Committee Secretary, S Starkey, 37 Donvale Road, Donwell Village, Washington, Tyne and Wear.



## ANGRY BAKERY WORKERS STRIKE

**From last Tuesday, Bakery workers throughout the country responded to their union's call for strike action following the Bakers' Federation rejection of their claim and a counter-offer with unacceptable penal clauses.**

In response to the union's claim management have offered 11%—but with iniquitous conditions attached. The bosses' terms are, as Sam Maddox, Bakers' Union general secretary, explained in a letter to members:

"A return to customary holiday working; increased mobility of labour, whereby any worker can be moved to any department and groups; permanent night work; elimination of excessive meal-breaks; an assurance that plants start up irrespective of whether they are short-handed or fully staffed."

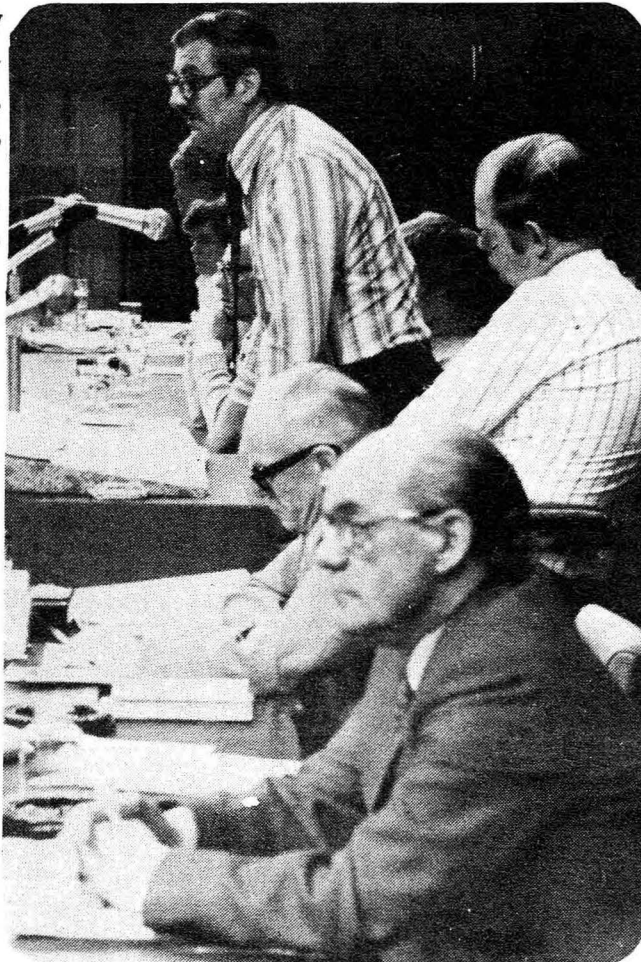
The union immediately rejected this 'offer' and the Executive called for immediate strike action.

Sam Maddox denounced the employers' "shabby deal" which would "see males and females on permanent night work." It would mean "the end of the freedom of our

member to take off his customary holiday, which they fought so hard to obtain. "It will see a strengthening of the mobility of labour clause, whereby a worker will not know one day from another where they are working. Breaks will be cut to one half-hour per shift. Plants will run short-handed most of the time. After all, if the management can run a plant short-staffed, why should they employ a full shift?"

In calling for strike action from 7th November, the general secretary emphasised:

"We are not going to accept such antiquated conditions in return for a wage increase that we feel our members are justifiably entitled to. We have given so much for so little in return in the past, and your Executive Council are now saying 'enough is enough'."



Sam Maddox speaking at Bakers Union Conference earlier this year

### THE BAKERS CLAIM

Workers at the bakeries of the two major monopolies [Rank Hovis MacDougall and Associated British Foods] and at a number of smaller 'federated' plants are striking for the national claim submitted in June. The claim is for:  
★ £4 per week on basic rates.  
★ £5 per week as a productivity payment calculated on

the reduction of the workforce by 2,580 in the last year.  
★ £3.85 as consolidation of existing supplementary payments into the basic wage.  
The total claim would lift the production workers' basic wage for 40 hours to over £50. In reply the employers have offered 5% [about £2] and a 6% productivity deal.

**Andy Rosser, Bakers' Union, Wilkins Bakery [ABF] Bournemouth, reports:**

In a desperate attempt to break the strike at Wilkins' bakery, Bournemouth, management have attempted two-fold intimidation to destroy the union.

As soon as the strike call went out, management posted up a notice which stated that all national agreements were to be rescinded (ie. closed-shop agreement was ended, management would find work for any members reporting for work, and job-security assurances given at the time of the Spillers closure will no longer apply).

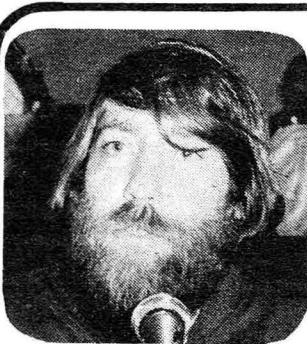
On Tuesday morning a picket was mounted and only

a handful of the 500 workers crossed the line. Two lorry-loads of flour from Ipswich were turned away.

However, at about 10.00 am management started production. When supervisors attempted to take bread out, pickets, reinforced by workers from Mother's Pride in Poole, attempted to block the main gates and prevent the van from leaving the bakery.

Despite one picket being injured and damage done to the van, management eventually moved the bread under supervision.

Management have said they will attempt to continue bread production and will go to any lengths to transport it. United action by Rank Hovis McDougal and Associated British Foods workers with Transport and General roundsmen could isolate the management and render these tactics ineffective.



**Joe Marino, Executive member of the Bakers' Food and Allied Workers' Union, told 'Militant':**

"The strike is already solid.

"For the bakery bosses

who are organised in their Federation, this is not just a question of a wage claim: they are out to smash our union.

"We on the Executive understand this is a make or break situation for our union. There will be no behind-the-scenes deals. There will be no agreement without a full democratic discussion among the members and then a ballot.

"If the employers want a fight then they are going to have one. We believe that the members will fight, if necessary, to the bitter end."

### LIVING WAGE

Continued from front page

even shareholders are a mockery of democracy.

Where would the Ford strike be if it required a secret ballot, asked Edwardes. These arrogant moguls are demanding the right to interfere in the trade unions. They want to be able to influence and manipulate trade unions through their kept press.

The bosses have stated their case: decent wages are a 'luxury' they aren't willing to afford. But they have had their answer. Workers are not willing to go on tightening

their belts.

Organised workers are moving into action for a wage increase that restores what has been lost (average wages are only just getting back to the levels of 1971!). They want a 35-hour week to improve the quality of life and create more jobs.

Workers are saying no to another year of sacrifices in the cause of company profits.

Now the Labour government must act. They must implement the demands for a 35-hour week and a living wage, with socialist policies to plan industry and the economy in the interests of working people.

## THE END OF THE SHAH?

Continued from front page

strikers back to work at gunpoint if necessary."

Mass murder in the streets of political demonstrators; the arrest of five newspaper editors and the censoring of the press; the banning of meetings of more than two people; strike breaking at gunpoint—this is the method of military rule in Iran to which the United States government, the CIA and the British Tories give their fulsome support.

For big business, 'democratic rights' means the right of the rich few to exploit the minority. Apparently they do not include the right to join a trade union, to strike, to write and speak freely, to form free political parties and to elect a government.

But the workers in the British labour movement will be galled to see their right-wing leaders breaking the most basic socialist principle of solidarity with workers on strike by adding their support.

Any concessions or promises the great 'liberaliser' has made in recent weeks have been forced on him by the pressure of the workers to stave off his revolutionary overthrow. The continued protests of the workers give the lie to the claim that the Shah rules in their best interest. It is a disgrace that ministers of a Labour government should side with such a dictator against the working class!

The new military government has made a gesture of arresting former government ministers as scapegoats in an attempt to focus on them all the blame for what the Shah admitted were "past mistakes of unlawfulness, cruelty and corruption" by his governments.

But where do those in Britain, who staunchly defended these governments from criticism, stand now that the Shah has publicly admitted what they denied for so long—that the chief of the SAVAK secret police used torture, illegal detention, murder and corruption and that the tops of the state were riddled with corruption and graft?

Anglo-American imperialism set up the Shah's regime in the first place as a stable bastion of their influence. But now the tyranny necessary to suppress the aspirations of the Iranian workers and peasants threatens to blow up in their faces.

They fear that a revolutionary upheaval could bring to power a regime that would be forced, under pressure from the masses, to carry through a sweeping social transformation. And the collapse of capitalism in Iran would surely spread to the rest of the Middle East and Pakistan.

Solidarity with the Iranian workers!

For democratic rights!

End SAVAK operations in Britain!

Down with the Shah—for a socialist Iran!

[see page 11]

## DON'T FORGET

Had you forgotten the 'Liberal' rebate? It's due next pay day! When you get yours... ..don't forget the 'Militant's Fighting Fund! It needs every penny! See Fighting Fund column page 13.

# Militant

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