

# Militant

12p

## 35hr WEEK NOW!

### THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR AND YOUTH

ISSUE 432 17 NOVEMBER 1978

INSIDE



**World Shipbuilding Crisis**

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**Would reflation solve our problems?**

**A reply to 'Tribune'**

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# BAKERY WORKERS NEED YOUR SUPPORT

The whole labour movement must support the fight of the bakery workers.

These scandalously low-paid workers are claiming £4 a week extra plus a £6 productivity payment.

If this adds 26% to the wage bill, as the press keep saying, it simply shows the poverty pay the employers have got away with for far too long!

The bakery owners claim that paying a decent wage to their employees would hit shoppers' pockets through price rises. Yet, while paying starvation wages, bread prices increased 23% last year alone, and have gone up



Strikers asking drivers not to cross the picket line

18-fold since 1939!

The market is dominated by two giant monopolies who can fix prices without fear of competition.

tion.

The bakery bosses blame the flour millers for price increases.

But who owns the

Photo: Report

This year Associated British Foods paid out only £2,251 (under £45 a week) to each of their workers, yet the bosses took £1,104 off every worker for their own profits. A total of £8 million was dished out to rich shareholders in dividends.

If ABF cannot pay those whose sweat creates their fat profits, how come they can afford to pay their Chief Executive £35,000? Or Rank Hovis McDougal, whose counterpart takes a cool £40,000?

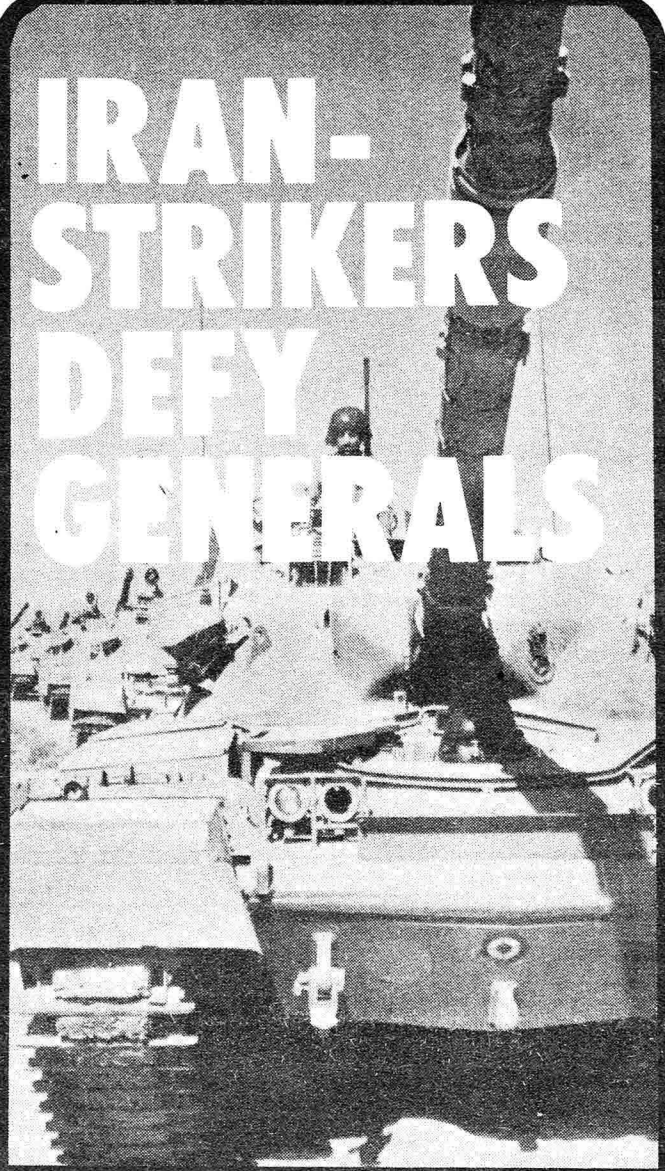
mills? They do! By a clever juggling of the figures they keep profits on the bakery side low, and make a killing on flour milling operations.

These trade unionists are being subjected to a vicious coordinated campaign by the bosses' Tory press and police to smash the strike and destroy the Bakers' Union.

The employers are using every trick in the

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# IRAN-STRIKERS DEFY GENERALS



The generals have not succeeded in crushing the workers. Despite official claims that the oil strike is over, Iran's major oil-fields are still semi-paralysed.

In Ahwaz, the main oilfield centre, the new military governor has been forced to grant a pay rise of over 20%. But until demands for an end to martial law and the release of all political prisoners are met, the struggle will go on.

By brutal repression, Iran's generals may restore "law and order" for a time. But the cauldron of mass discontent would soon boil over again.

The generals may not even have the power to hold down the lid. Soldiers have been firing into the air and fraternising with strikers and demonstrators. Given a bold lead, the army could go over to the people.

## Absolute monarch

Years of ruthless exploitation produced a great tide of anger. The generals had to promise measures against those responsible for corruption, profiteering, intimidation and torture.

But in an absolute monarchy, the absolute monarch is responsible. The Shah's pathetic claims that he was misled by his friends and advisers fools nobody.

If the generals are to make the changes necessary to save capitalism, how far can they carry their discredited monarch?

The truth is, the western

capitalists are getting ready to dump the stooge they previously relied on. The Peacock Throne is now a liability.

## Owen's shameful defence

David Owen's shameful defence of the Shah is not only a disgrace for the labour movement, it is behind the times as far as the capitalists are concerned!

But what to put in the place of the Shah? That is the real problem for the western powers.

The Shah may be cast aside, but all the burning problems produced by archaic landlordism, rapacious capitalism, and foreign exploitation remain.

The young, vigorous, and increasingly organised working class produced by the Shah's rapid industrialisation has emerged as a decisive political force.

Mass action has brought a political awakening. The workers and poor peasants will not be satisfied with cosmetic changes at the top.

They want democratic rights and civilised conditions of life.

The advance guard of young workers know they will not get these while capitalist exploitation of their impoverished society continues. They will be turning to the ideas of socialism for the fundamental transformation they need.

# Interest rates rocket - TAKE OVER THE BANKS!

By sharply raising the minimum lending rate by 2½%—from 10% to 12½%—the Labour government has pushed up interest rates to the highest level, in real terms, for forty years.

By Lynn Walsh

Once again, by attempting to run the rotten big business system, the Labour leaders have been dictated to by the all-powerful financial interests. By declining to buy government stock needed to finance government borrowings they made it clear they were not prepared to accept a

less profitable, lower rate any more.

Neil Kinnock MP rightly described the move as "bloody market chaos". Even the eminently respectable

business editor of the 'Sunday Times' described the new rates as "demoralising for ordinary people, dispiriting for business," and warned they threatened "to push the economy into another depressed phase."

Workers buying houses on mortgages will be hard hit. The Building Societies immediately took the opportunity to raise mortgage rates to 11¾%—a steep jump which surprised even the City financiers. How will young couples be able to afford to buy a house now?

Higher interest rates will also mean that government

and local authorities will be paying even more crippling interest on the loans they need to build houses, schools, hospitals and other vital amenities.

Who gains? The main beneficiaries of a 12½% interest rate will be the banks and finance companies. After the rise, the private financiers, attracted by the smell of fabulous profits, rapidly snapped up £500 million gilt edged stock (issued by the government as a means of borrowing money on the open

[Continued on back page]



# EDITORIAL

## WHAT HAPPENED TO OPEN GOVERNMENT?

Labour's 1974 Programme included the promise of more "open government". The recent Queen's Speech also mentioned "more open government" as one of the Labour government's underlying aims.

However, the sacking of Brian Sedgemore is hardly consistent with this commitment, and has provoked anger and alarm among Labour Party members.

Sedgemore, left-wing MP for Luton West, has been sacked by Callaghan from his honorary job as parliamentary private secretary to Tony Benn for—in essence—doing his job as a member of the Commons' select committee on expenditure.

On 3 November, Sedgemore was questioning Denis Healey on the implications of joining the European monetary system [EMS]. In doing so, much to Healey's annoyance, he quoted from a confidential paper prepared by Treasury officials. This document suggested that output, prices and job prospects would be adversely affected if Britain joined EMS.

On 7 November, clearly against Tony Benn's wishes, Sedgemore was sacked as PPS for behaving, according to the prime minister, indiscreetly and irresponsibly.

We would say that Brian Sedgemore was behaving very responsibly as a representative of the labour movement. Even from the point of view of his responsibilities as a member of a select committee, how can his actions be described as "irresponsible"?

Last year, in a White Paper on official secrecy, the Labour government argued against the idea of an Official Information Act to give more public access to government documents [on the lines of existing American legislation, for instance].

In Britain, the White Paper argued, "the policies and decisions of the executive are under constant and vigilant scrutiny by parliament." But how on earth can parliamentary committees scrutinise government decisions if they are denied the relevant information? How can MPs effectively question ministers if they are forbidden to see the background papers prepared by civil servants?

The Sedgemore case, moreover, is clearly not an isolated incident. Last week the 'New Statesman' [10 November] published a confidential minute from Jim Callaghan to his ministers. It noted that "there is...now some evidence that Select Committees would like to interest themselves in the Committee system"—that is, the evidently powerful cabinet sub-committees and their corresponding civil service committees—"and may be seeking to erode the present convention"—that is,

the rule that they are cloaked in secrecy even as far as parliamentary select committees are concerned.

The prime minister's conclusion was that not even the existence of these committees should be publicly acknowledged: "having gone as far as this I do not believe it would be possible for me to hold the line and refuse to answer any further questions about the composition and activities of the Committees"!!!

What a scandalous position to be taken by a Labour prime minister, one moreover who claims to stand for more "open" government!

These secret committees, and particularly their official shadows made up of top civil service bureaucrats, daily take decisions about jobs, education, welfare, and so on which affect the lives of millions of workers. And yet officially not even parliament is permitted to know they exist.

The capitalist press, of course, can find out everything it wants through selected official "leaks" to favoured journalists. But the public at large finds out only what the government or the civil service tops decide.

We know from the Diaries of Richard Crossman and the recollections of other former Labour ministers just how much the civil service heads dictate to Labour ministers. The preservation of secrecy plays right into the hands of the Whitehall dictators.

The sacking of Brian Sedgemore really underlines the need for the labour movement to have full democratic control over its parliamentary representatives. Only if MPs are fighting for Party policies and have the backing of the movement will they be able to stand up to the pressure of the government bureaucracy.

Only democratic accountability, with the right of recall and the limitation of MPs' and ministers' salaries to those of the average skilled worker [plus legitimate expenses], will ensure that the Labour government carries out the Party's programme when in office.

The fundamental lesson, however, is that just as a Labour government which tries to work within the diseased framework of capitalism is forced to implement policies of capitalist crisis, so such a government becomes a helpless passenger of the state machine which the ruling class has fashioned over many decades to run its system.

If we really want "open government", it is clear that the only way lies through the labour movement mobilising to take over the monopolies which not only dominate the economy but dictate to government and attempt—aided, unfortunately, by the present government—to maintain a monopoly of information.

# TORIES CREATE RACIALIST SMOKESCREEN

By bringing immigrants into the housing issue, the Hillingdon Tories are trying to create a smokescreen to hide their cuts in house-building and the consequences of their sales of brand new council homes which should be going to those on the waiting list.

By Martin Craxton

(Hayes and Harlington LPYS)



Not welcomed by Tories—Asian boy

campaign were later removed from the committee room when the subject came up for discussion.

In the five minutes given to clear the public gallery a local teacher spoke, explaining why the NF should be banned from council premises.

The committee's decision now goes to the full council meeting next Thursday for ratification.

This provocative move is the latest in a series of reactionary decisions taken by the Tories since they gained a majority in Hillingdon.

The Tory housing chairman, Terry Dicks, recently prompted a new wave of protest from the Protect Our People campaign over his blunt refusal to provide statutory temporary accommodation to a homeless Asian family. The councillor, who has publicly aired his prejudiced views, seems to be operating the housing department at his own whim.

Two weeks ago, in blatant contrast to his later decision, he housed a homeless family arriving at Heathrow Airport. They were white Rhodesians.

Then last week he sent the Asian family to the Foreign Office with nothing more

than their taxi fare!

Friday night (10 November) saw a large picket of Terry Dicks' house by members of the Labour Party and other organisations organised overnight by the Protect Our People campaign, who handed in a letter of protest.

By bringing immigrants into the housing issue, the Hillingdon Tories are trying to create a smokescreen to hide their cuts in house-building and the consequences of their sales of brand new council homes which should be going to those on the waiting list.

The Tories must not be allowed to get away with these scandalous moves! Leafletting and a motorcade in the Borough's shopping centre on Saturday should attract even more support for a mass picket of the full council meeting on Thursday, 23 November at 7 pm outside the Civic Centre.

No platform for fascists! No discrimination in housing! Don't blame the immigrants for the 8,000 on the waiting list! Provide homes for all now!



Welcomed by Tories—White Rhodesian Immigrant

The policy committee of Hillingdon's Tory council last Monday decided to allow the fascist National Front to use council premises, over-turning the

previous Labour council's policy. The Tory councillors voted en bloc despite local feeling. A 50-strong picket organised by the Protect Our People

# Labour must prepare to win young voters

Support from young voters will be vital for Labour in the next general election. The Labour Party Young Socialists, however, are alarmed at Transport House's plans for the National Youth Officer, Andy Bevan. Phil Frampton, LPYS National Chairman, appeals to the Party to make sure there will be an effective youth campaign when the time comes.

Within the next 12 months the Party will be facing a general election in which almost three million young people will be voting for the first time. As the youth section of the Party, the LPYS can clearly play an important part in winning the youth for Labour.

The MORI survey of 1974 indicated that over 60% of the youth were inclined to Labour, a force crucial to any election campaign. Many constituency Labour Parties, recognising the role the LPYS could play, encouraged the YS to produce special leaflets, hold youth rallies and have speakers on the platform at all the 1974 party rallies.

If there had been an election this October, the involvement of the youth wing would have been even greater due to the increased size of the YS and the increased response from the CLPs.

The Party also correctly detailed the National Student Organiser for work out in the colleges and universities to

Below—Andy Bevan



catch the student vote.

However, in the youth department itself, we find a stark contrast when we learn that Andy Bevan, the National Youth Officer, was due to be withdrawn from all youth work and the department virtually closed down. Had such a programme been put into operation it would have met with angry and incredulous response from the Party's youth and many older

members.

If such a suggestion is made for the coming election, it will be greeted with uproar from the whole of the National Committee and throughout the Young Socialists.

Andy was to be put on the phones, working on the meeting section, and arranging engagements for the Party leaders. Clearly this is an important job, but one which could have been done by others without jeopardising the drive for the youth vote.

It is our belief that Andy could have an important role to play in co-ordinating this drive. At the same time, there will be much work to be done out in the areas, especially in those key marginals where the mobilisation of the youth vote will be decisive.

Andy could play a vital role in using the experience gained in 1974 in areas like Bristol South East, Garston and Keighley, speaking at youth rallies and encouraging young socialists, which as the NYO he is in the best position to do.

I am raising this matter now so that the Party can consider how the youth vote can be won for a Labour victory, and to request that every Party branch urgently takes up this matter.



# CUT THE HOURS, YCAU



Photo: Romano Cagnoni (Report)

Unemployed school leavers search job ads in the local press

**“Unemployment total falls to 1,365,000”, was the headline in ‘The Times’ in October. This horrific figure of those left on the dole queue with little or no chance of a job, is what the fight for a 35-hour week is about.**

Reducing the number of hours worked to give both more leisure time to workers and get work for the 5.6% of the workforce now registering as unemployed.

Yet the spectacle of this year's Tory Party conference has given a warning of what will happen if the Tories are allowed to win the next election. Unemployment will rise to a level not experienced since the 1930s, to 3 million and even 5 million.

The YCAU must be in the forefront of the campaign to keep the Tories out. But the labour movement can't accept the present levels of unemployment either.

Albert Booth, Secretary of State for Employment, has said that the government's success in combating inflation was beginning to be reflected in the lower unemployment figures. While unemployment may have slightly fallen an even greater nightmare is hidden behind the official figures.

Long term unemployment has continued rising and the unemployed are being driven

into greater and greater degrees of poverty.

★ In April 1978 a staggering 44.4% of the unemployed are being driven into greater and greater degrees of poverty.

★ While 1,365,000 registered as unemployed, only two in every five were actually getting unemployment benefit.

★ Nearly 50% were forced to claim supplementary benefit and one in five were getting no benefit at all!

★ Whereas in 1948 70% of the unemployed got unemployment benefit and 16% claimed national assistance, by December 1976 170,000 people were living below the supplementary benefit level where the head of the household was unemployed for over three months. This was twice as many as in 1974.

These are the humiliating conditions that the increasing army of the long term unemployed have to face. Scraping for every penny, worry about paying the rent, buying food, paying gas and electric bills, few if any 'luxury' items like a night out at the pictures or a few drinks at the pub.

If you're unemployed and married with two kids then you get a flat rate of £35.20 for a year only, plus an

## CUT THE DOLE QUEUE

Tony Saunoks

(Labour Party National Executive Committee)

earnings related supplement between the 3rd and 26th week. Yet as an example of the discrimination against the long term unemployed, if you're put on the sick and are married with two kids, after six months an invalidity payment of £49.90 is paid, plus an allowance of between £1.30 and £4.15 if you fall sick more than five years before retirement is due.

Why should the long term unemployed be discriminated against like this? While the ranks of the labour movement are told 'the money is not available to help the unemployed', millions of pounds are wasted in subsidies to big business with no questions

asked. £25 million is given every day in tax concessions to big business.

The battle for a 35-hour week is part of a campaign to end the plight and misery of the unemployed. To end for 1½ million people the despair, demoralisation and poverty that unemployment brings with it.

In 1924 the TUC issued a joint leaflet with the National Unemployed Workers' Movement calling for a 35-hour week. In 1978 the TUC has 11½ million members. 5.6% of the workforce are on the dole. Now surely is the time to fight for this crucial demand of working people.

## CAMPAIGN ROUND-UP

The work of the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment has already had a tremendous impact on the labour movement even just in preparation for next week's regional conferences for the 35-hour week.

With the decision last week of the Scottish miners to add their weight to our work, the three most powerful left wing regions of the NUM are now taking an active part in the YCAU.

The Birmingham Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions has circulated information on the YCAU to every factory convenor in its area, and the T&GWU No 5 Region has circulated all its 1,000 branches in the Midlands urging support. The London North Central Internal branch of the POEU, the biggest in the country and which played a leading role nationally in that union's recent industrial struggle for a 35-hour week, has distributed 100 YCAU broadsheets to its members. The branch is now calling for a 32-hour week in the next round to protect jobs from new technology.

We have been flooded with encouraging reports from every part of Britain of more sections of the trade union movement taking action to back the campaign. Here are just two of the latest reports: SHEFFIELD

Delegations at the Yorkshire conference include the shop stewards committees at Devy Lowy, GKN Laycocks, Snobs Engineering, James Neill's, AUEW Woodsents, GEC Traction, the Bakers Union at Gunstones and ASTMS branches. SOUTH LONDON

The latest pledges of support came in last week from London South Central External branch of the POEU, Wandsworth Council manual workers' JSSC, AUEW South East branch 35, Division 21 of

AUEW TASS, Wandsworth GMWU and the Croydon Central and Lambeth Central Constituency Labour Parties. Delegates' credentials for the London conference (50p) are obtainable from LPYS National Committee member John Bulaitis, 10 Wynbourne Court, 143 Croydon Road, London S.E.20.

These are typical results of the excellent work being done by our supporters in visiting workplaces, speaking at shop stewards' meetings and union branches as well as giving hope to those standing on the dole queues each week. But the enormous fund of goodwill and encouragement we have met with in the factories must now be turned into a concrete commitment in the next seven days up to our regional industrial conferences.

Every workers' representative we have met, every unemployed worker we have given leaflets to, and every Labour Party and Young Socialist branch must immediately write for delegates' or visitors' credentials to ensure a maximum, representative turnout at these conferences. Supporters who have visited workplaces etc should urgently re-visit or contact stewards and branch secretaries to make sure their delegates are elected and have credentials. It would be a terrible shame if, after all the good work, these brothers missed attending these vital conferences!

The TUC, the trade unions and the Labour Party are all committed to a shorter working week and a fight against unemployment. But only by mobilising a mass campaign by the rank and file of the labour movement will the pressure be mounted to carry out these policies. Add your weight and that of your members to the campaign!

Correction  
In last week's 'round up', it was incorrectly stated that Dagenham Auto EETPU had made a £20 donation to the campaign. This should have read Wallsend Branch Labour Party.

## INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCES

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

### BRIDGEND

11 am-4.30 pm. Ogmore 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]

### 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]

### GLASGOW

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

### 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 Kuchannel [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 Saunoks [LP NEC]; Emyln 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]; Dilkes [USDAW NEC]

### LIVERPOOL

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

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



Nearly 200 angry EETPU members from Ford occupied the canteen at the Hayes Court headquarters of the EETPU last Monday. "We want to lobby our officials, but they wouldn't come out to be lobbied", said one shop steward.

Three coach-loads of EETPU members from the Dagenham, Basildon and Langley plants had arrived at Hayes Court at 10 am to call on the Executive to make their strike official from the beginning of the dispute.

Unlike the T&GWU and AUEW members, EETPU members will not be getting strike benefit for the first four weeks of the dispute, if the EETPU Executive's decision stands.

The lobby had been decided on the previous

Friday at a mass meeting of Dagenham members, attended by representatives from Langley and Basildon.

Leaders of the lobby spoke briefly with a national officer, but none of the union's senior officials was prepared to discuss the Ford men's demand for a change of policy on the part of the Executive.

In protest the members decided to occupy the canteen for a period.

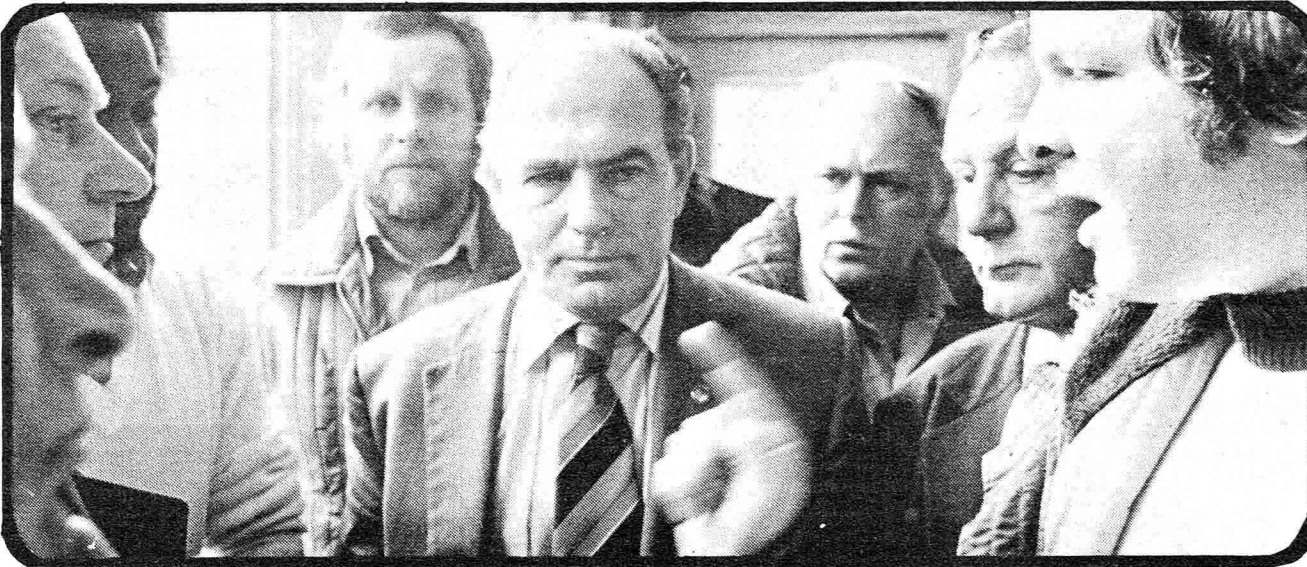
Messages of support were received from Ford Southampton, and also from members at Ford Halewood who jammed the Hayes Court switchboard with calls in an attempt to get through to the officials.

Right: EETPU members speak to officials

Photos: Julian McKittrick



# FORD ELECTRICIANS OCCUPY EETPU HEADQUARTERS



Left: Pickets outside Hayes Court

## John Aitken, EETPU senior steward and a member of the Ford NJNC, explains why Ford electricians are angry with their union's Executive

On the 21st September the Ford Motor Company replied in full to the claim submitted on behalf of all Ford workers. The claim was as follows:

- ★ A £20 a week minimum increase in the basic wage
- ★ A five-hour reduction in the working week
- ★ Improvements to annual holiday; improvements in the service related holidays; sabbatical leave; time-and-a-third for all holidays
- ★ Payment for sickness after one year's service
- ★ Increase in the shift-work premiums
- ★ Line workers' allowance
- ★ Better pensions
- ★ Lay-off payments

The Company made their position clear from the outset—that they intended to keep strictly within the government's 5% pay norm. The

trade unions adjourned until the following day.

The trade unions at their meeting on 22 September considered the Company's offer. Before reaching any decisions it was felt that the trade unions needed to ascertain the Company's position. Were they prepared to continue to negotiate in a free collective bargaining situation?

Ron Todd, the chairman of the trade union side, phoned Paul Roots, the Ford industrial relations manager, to put this to him. Roots replied that we had to face the "realities of life", and that was their position.

Having established this clearly, the following resolution was passed unanimously: "That the trade union side of the Ford NJNC (National Joint Negotiating Committee)

having contacted the Company in an unsuccessful attempt to establish free collective bargaining, totally rejects the Company's offer as expressed yesterday in response to the unions wages and conditions application and decides to support the actions of our members against what we consider to be a derisory offer.

"We further recommend to the respective executives of signatory unions that they fully support any industrial action against the Ford Motor Company because of the Company's refusal to negotiate in a free collective bargaining situation."

On hearing this the total Ford work-force of 57,000 were out on strike action within two days.

In the light of these events, our union, the EETPU, which had by their actions on the FNJNC and in a clear policy statement rejected the government's 5% pay policy, restated in a circular (26 September) to all branches and officials the Union's clear rejection of the government's pay policy.

In view of this we would have expected the Executive to meet to consider the new situation.

The Executive failed to meet, and not only to consider these events: the September meeting did not take place.

Within three days of the

dispute starting, the AUEW made the strike official. All the major unions were meeting to give consideration to the situation, to make the strike official, and to begin to pay our strike pay.

It appeared, however, that our Union was making no response. This provoked the membership to demand that the shop stewards lobby Hayes Court (EETPU headquarters) to seek a meeting with the union's general secretary, Frank Chapple, to demand some action.

### Fight goes on to control our union

The eight shop stewards were told on their arrival at Hayes Court that Frank Chapple could not be disturbed because he was attending a more important meeting.

The stewards insisted on seeing someone, and eventually they saw Charlie Lovell, plumbers' national secretary, who could do nothing. After some discussion and sympathetic ear, the stewards asked him to request Frank Chapple to see the stewards.

For five minutes Charlie Lovell went to see Frank Chapple. When he returned a few minutes later, the stewards were informed that Frank Chapple had left the building ten minutes earlier.

This was almost more than the shop stewards could stand.

After some shop-floor remarks, they left to return to their members and report back on their abortive meeting.

Finally, on the 31st October the Executive Council at last met and out of that meeting the following letter was posted to all EETPU members working at Fords: "At their meeting on the 31st October, 1978, the Executive Council discussed the Ford dispute. They noted that the dispute had begun whilst the existing agreement had four weeks to run and was based upon support for the principle of free collective bargaining as opposed to the government norm of 5%."

"They also noted that on the 13th October the management made an offer of 8%, coupled with a productivity deal, and offered to continue negotiations in which more money would be available—'pounds not pence'."

"In the light of that offer the Executive Council believe that a resumption of work should have taken place to allow negotiations to continue in the normal manner."

"In reaching a decision in respect of this dispute, the Executive Council had to take into consideration the fact that our members could hardly have been expected to remain at work whilst the rest of the work force were on strike."

"However, with regard to the payment of benefit, the Executive Council decided that to pay benefit from the date the strike began would create a precedent for breaking agreements that could not be sustained in the light of union policy."

"Accordingly, the Executive Council made the following decision. That the dispute be made official and that dispute benefit be paid as and from the date that the contract with the company expired."

What the hell are we to

make of this?!

How can they draw these conclusions?

The Executive noted that the dispute was basically about opposing the 5% and in favour of the principle of free collective bargaining. They also noted that an offer outside of 5% was made nearly three weeks into the strike. In view of this alone, how can they say that they will only pay strike benefit from the end of the current agreement (21 October)?

Or did they fail to note, in noting everything else, that the Company, prior to the strike, categorically refused to move outside the 5%. Rejection, as already stated, was our Union's policy.

Finally, they recognised, they said, that a return-to-work for our members was hardly practicable as the rest of the workforce were on strike. Now even if a majority of EETPU members had supported a return at any stage—which they did not—how on earth can they conclude, recognising the actual situation, that strike pay should only be paid from the 21st October? Remember, there was no direction from the EETPU full-time officials to the union's action on the FNJNC once the Company's position was clear.

Question: doesn't Frank Chapple take notice of his own members or even of his own officials anymore? We cannot and will not allow the union leadership to ignore the wishes of the membership in this way. Let us ensure that the fight goes on within our union to establish full democratic control over our officials and the leading bodies of the union.

To help in the Ford workers' struggle, make sure your branch or lodge has a resolution supporting the Ford workers and condemning the EETPU Executive's decision.

John Aitken (EETPU Dagenham Auto 8 and Ford NJNC)



# Left & Right

## Household budgeting

Do you spend £2,496 a year on eating out? Is your annual expenditure on clothing £2,470, on leisure £3,684, on transport £2,099? Would you blanch at the thought of spending £10,149 on housing and £3,212 on household expenditure, or £1,924 on schooling? Do you spend £3,094 providing food and drink for yourself and your family? This, it seems, is the sort of money foreign business executives living in London have to throw around.

The average executive featured in a recent survey of 75 businessmen earning over £25,000 a year eats out with his wife twice a week at a trattoria or bistro, once a week at a good restaurant and once a fortnight at a "stylish restaurant."

Lest too many workers get to hear of the plush lifestyle of their "betters", the 55-page survey by Lloyds Incomes Research is discreetly priced at £50.

## Bad company

Last week you could get the finest roast beef and Yorkshire pudding at Simpson's-in-the-Strand for just half-a-crown. This select restaurant was celebrating its 150th anniversary by providing 350 'cherished, regular customers' with their finest dishes at 1913 prices: treacle roll 6d [now 50p]; draught Bass 4d a pint; and so on. The roast beef is now £3.95 [in case you're thinking of eating out]. Not surprisingly, most of the guests were businessmen who can afford to lunch at Simpson's regularly. But among these pillars of the establishment, who included none other than Labour-renegade Sir Richard Marsh, now chairman of the Newspaper Publishers' Association, was Mr Owen O'Brien, general secretary of the print union NATSOPA. Is this the sort of company a trade union leader should be keeping?

## The good old days

However, things are not so bad as they were. Lamenting the present opposition of union leaders like Moss Evans to the government's 5% pay policy, and hankering for the "good old days", David Wood, 'The Times's' right-wing political commentator, recalled [6 November] the kind of leader the bosses really appreciate:

"Thirty years ago...I travelled from Euston to Blackpool for a Labour Party conference in company with the general secretary of a building workers' union...His men, exploiting the scarcity of skilled labour, had wanted an increase of 6d an hour. The Attlee government...asked for restraint. The general secretary told his executive that 6d an hour was preposterous and he would go for a settlement at 1½d an hour. On that understanding he went into the final talks with the building trades employers, who immediately opened with an offer of 6d an hour.

"The union leader promptly called for an adjournment and took his opposite number aside. 'You do not,' he said, 'destroy me like this with my own executive and membership. You will offer me 1½d an hour now, and three further stages of 1½d an hour at six-monthly intervals. In the national interest, your interest, and my interest I cannot go back and say you offered me the full demand without a struggle.' The employers did as they were told."

Fortunately, with elected officials, shop stewards and elected lay representatives on national negotiating committees, at least in some unions, things have changed a bit!

## 'Tsar of all the vodkas'

How to celebrate the 61st anniversary of the October revolution? Why, by stepping up vodka sales in the capitalist west. More foreign currency, less drunkenness at home? "Stolichnaya is real Russian Vodka," proclaimed a full-page advert in the 'Evening Standard' [8 November]. But why should we drink it? Because Stolichnaya is "Tsar of all the Vodkas"! It's best to drink it neat, we are told. But "mix it if you must [may the Tsars forgive you!]." If the Russian exporters are responsible for this disgraceful advertising copy, it is unforgivable.

The much-heralded 'Daily Star' appeared on the streets on Thursday 2nd November. Like a lot of other workers, I bought a copy to see if it really could be worse than the 'Sun'.

The launch of the 'Daily Star' was quite an event for the British monopoly press—it is the first mass-circulation daily for 75 years and its 1.4 million print was sold out for the first two days.

The 'Star's' owners, the giant monopoly, Trafalgar House, are attempting to break into the tabloid market and take readers from the 'Mail', the 'Mirror', the 'Sun', and even their own 'Daily Express', which went tabloid when Trafalgar House took over Beaverbrook Newspapers.

The current sales of the 'popular dailies' is between 10-12 million and the Fleet Street bosses seem to believe that there is only room for four mass papers, and with the 'Sun' setting up in Glasgow early next year, it was 'now or never' for the Trafalgar House owners.

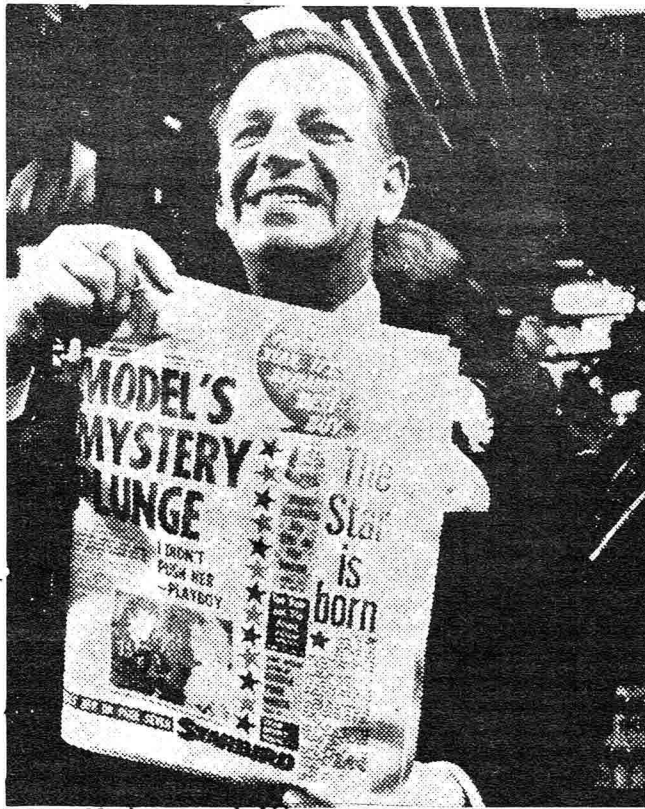
The production of the 'Star', however, is being done on the cheap and is really no gamble for the owner, Victor Matthews, whose monopoly has assets of £347 million and made a profit of £70m last year. The new paper is using the existing press facilities of the 'Express' in Manchester and transferring some of the Express's Manchester staff to the 'Star'.

Although taking on a few extra staff, the 'Star' is using a lot of casual staff and has persuaded some of the NUJ members to work an extra day a week. It has bought some second-hand equipment and is also using equipment from the now defunct 'Scottish Daily Express'.

The staff at the 'Star'/'Express' say that they are



## war in the gutter



Victor Matthews: proud of his new paper

prepared to accept short-term sacrifices in the hope that when the future of the 'Star' is being reviewed in January, the facilities and staff will be expanded, although it is freely admitted that the

production of the two papers instead of one has created 'sweatshop' conditions.

It does seem possible, however, that if the 'Star' does continue in January, facsimile printing will be

different approach.

It is hardly a modern novel. It was written long ago, but it has a charm and wit which makes it a favourite for children and adults alike. It is 'The Story of the Amulet' by E Nesbit.

Generations of children have loved Nesbit's story of 'The Railway Children' and adult readers may have noticed the political ideas that surface, on occasion, in that book.

### Slaves

These ideas are much more obvious in 'The Story of the Amulet'. This concerns the children who were the heroes and heroines of 'The Phoenix and the Carpet' and 'Five Children and It'.

While left in the care of their old nurse (??? read on!) in Edwardian London the children find half of an ancient amulet and the story tells of their search into the past and the future in the search for the other half, as the completed amulet will grant anyone his heart's desire.

During their adventures, the Queen of Ancient Babylon is transported to Edwardian London: "The Queen of Babylon beheld the wonders of London...She liked the Tower and the river and the ships filled her with wonder and delight. 'But how badly you keep your slaves. How wretched and poor and neglected they seem...You'll have a revolt of your slaves if you're not careful,' said the Queen.

# A DREAM OF THE FUTURE

'The Story of the Amulet' by E Nesbit. Penguin [A Puffin Book] 50p

For socialists who are also parents there are special problems.

It often seems that you are bringing up your children in an utterly alien environment. Television, especially ITV with all the horrors of adverts for things you can't afford and things you do not want to afford, trains our children to be good little worker-consumers.

Even the "good" programmes like 'Blue Peter' have their problems: the too frequent presence of those heroes of the Armed Forces, for example, and the automatic respect trotted out to any member of the royal family. And there is always the unquestioned assumption that our way of life is almost perfect—and all it needs, they

imply, is that dollop of charity at Christmas when we donate old books and stamps etc.—a small inkling of how our wasteful, brainless system might be transformed by intelligent planning.

Books are not much better. Many books have appeared in recent years, especially for older children, which have working class heroes and heroines. There are also stories for younger children which have been deliberately written to exclude the sexism and racism so common in children's books.

### Kings

However, capitalism continues. There may be good kings and bad kings but there are always kings—or bosses. There is seldom a vision of another future.

Recently, I have had the pleasure of discovering, through my daughter, one book which has quite a

introduced, i.e. a telecommunications link will be established with London, and few extra jobs will be created on a long-term basis.

The £1 million spent on the 'Star' in advertising made no attempt to hide its declared aim to consist of humour, sex and money, or to quote one of the editorial staff, "a bum and tits" paper.

The 'Star's' big business backers are using the crudest ingredients to entice new readers. In an effort to rake in more advertising revenue, the 'Star' is particularly trying to capture young readers, whom the high-spending advertisers (cigarettes, entertainment, fashion) regard as a prime market.

The political message of the 'Star' will, it seems, be virtually non-existent, only reporting a bare minimum of news and remaining most of the time 'apolitical', in an attempt to create a 'comic' newspaper concentrating on sport, scandal and competition.

But the daily effort to dope, dupe and titilate the less conscious sections of the working class is itself a political role: papers like this deliberately deaden understanding of the system from which they pretend to offer a momentary "escape".

And we may be sure that while avoiding the real political issues the 'Star' will nevertheless make its own contributions to Fleet Street's daily efforts to blacken the labour movement.

What the British people need is not the gutter press of the monopolies, such as the 'Sun' and the 'Star', but a working-class paper that tells the truth, shows a way forward and fights for the workers' interests.

Forward to a daily 'Militant'.

### Dave Farrar

(Salford LPYS)

"'Oh no,' said Cyril; 'You see they have votes—that makes them safe not to revolt. It makes all the difference. Father told me so.'"

Later the children travel into the future—to a green and pleasant land: "Men, as well as women, seemed to be in charge of the babies and playing with them...It was the expression on [people's] faces that made them worth looking at.

"The children could not tell at first what it was. 'I know,' said Anthea suddenly; 'They're not worried; that's what it is.' And it was. Everybody looked calm, no one seemed to be in a hurry, no one seemed to be anxious or fretted and though some did seem to be sad not a single one looked worried."

The children learn some of the rhymes taught to the children of this beautiful socialist future. One of these has become a favourite with my own children:

"I must not litter the beautiful street,  
With bits of paper and things to eat,  
I must not pick the public flowers,  
They are not mine but they are ours."

You cannot explain economics to young children, but you can try to begin to explain your dreams. In a child's terms, and with all the magic of one of the world's great story-tellers, this book shows what the future can hold.

### Terri Paterson

(Clackmannan & East Stirlingshire CLP)



# STAND BY THE BAKERS

## Parkers, Bristol - "Its us or them"

The 420 bakery workers at Parkers Bakeries in Bristol, part of the Allied Foods Group, have reacted swiftly to the national strike call.

24-hour pickets have been arranged and lorries turned away. Management are producing bread—they have even set the security staff to work! It is supposed to be for hospitals, but it seems they are also supplying retailers.

The drivers have expressed sympathy with the strike. It is hoped that a positive decision of support including not crossing picket lines will be taken soon.

All are agreed that management's offer is an insult. The productivity deal has been designed with the specific aim of breaking the strength of the union. Shop steward Dave Evans read a letter which management had sent that day to all the strikers:

"...we have been making a little profit but not nearly enough, and the present strike will put us back in the red, and that must put jobs at risk.

"The Federation has decided that we cannot go on helping to finance union disruption. So we are stopping the deduction of union dues from your pay unless and until the union can convince us that they will in future act responsibly.

"If anyone falls behind with his dues, we will take no disciplinary action against



Bakery workers at Sunblest, Walthamstow on the picket line

Photo: Julian McKittrick

him or her even if he or she is expelled from the union. If you do decide to work during the strike every opportunity will be given you..."

The pickets reacted angrily. "They're trying to break the closed shop and kill the union," argued Len Parker, to nods of agreement.

"They won't succeed though," retorted Peter Wride (shop steward). "This letter has made us all more determined to win. Management

are trying to impose eighteenth century conditions!"

Len Parker showed me his wage slip. For 63 hours he had received the princely sum of £71.29 before deductions. "That's what the strike's all about, to secure a decent living wage."

Another worker came forward: "We break them, or they break us. It's that simple."

As the night drew in and

the pickets gathered around the brazier, preparing for the long evening shift, the mood was confident. "Fourteen of us are off to Mother's Pride at Warmley tonight to do picket duty. We want to give Ford's a hand in breaking this 5% for good."

**Parkers pickets spoke to Robin Clapp [Bristol South Labour Party Young Socialists]**

## Not on these terms

The employers have offered 5% on the basic plus 6% for productivity, making 11%. Quite a few wanted to take the money—until they saw the conditions attached.

The money would only be paid if the union unconditionally accepted: a return to customary bank holiday working (withdrawing the gains made after last year's strike); increased mobility of labour; only one half-hour break in eight hours; plants to start up whether short handed or fully staffed; management's right to put women on permanent nights (12-hour shifts).

If these conditions are not accepted the offer will be withdrawn, no union contributions will be taken from wages and management are threatening to do away with the post-entry closed shop agreement.

The employers want to break the union and close several more bakeries, which they were forced to keep open when Spillers closed. The other two companies were

forced by the union and the Labour government to take some of these bakeries over.

One out of every three sliced loaves on your tables is now made by Ranks—an indication of the monopoly they have. RHM made a £8 million loss on the baking side last year, which has been turned into a £16 million profit this year.

The company use the baking side to cut its bills by overcharging on products sold to it by other parts of the RHM empire.

For example, we do a lot of confectionery here and use a lot of jam. RHM makes its own jam and sells it to Landers. We found some bills last year—and we could have bought a jar of jam cheaper in Mansfield market than the price they were paying.

**The bakeries should be nationalised. These people aren't fit to employ workers.**

John Dale (Mansfield LPYS) spoke to Martin Whatmore, Pete Simpson and Chris Gleave on the picket line at Landers Bakery, Mansfield.

## CARDIFF - "We're determined"

Last Wednesday, on the second day of the strike, a van taking out bread baked by the managers of the Sunblest bakery in Cardiff drove through the pickets and knocked one of them down.

The van was driven through on the orders of the General Manager after one driver had refused to defy the 30 or so pickets outside the gates. One of the pickets, branch chairman Phil Reid, was knocked down and taken to hospital—

the factory nurse refused to attend to him.

The already bitter feelings of the strikers has now been reinforced. First by the decision of the managers to bake bread, supposedly for hospitals, and then sell it off to private shops, and now by this violent attempt to intimidate and injure pickets.

The police stood idly by while the van raced through but later came out of their shell to see that vans and cars

from private shops could collect bread from the bakery. "We intend to see that none of these shops get bread from here once the strike is over," said pickets.

All the strikers are determined to win their claim in full. One told 'Militant': "The offer that they have made us not only takes away what we gained in the strike last year—they want us to work all bank holidays from now on—but it would take us

back ten years!"

"I have to work 54 hours a week to get anything like a decent wage because I can't live on £38 a week basic," added another.

No amount of intimidation by the bakery bosses and attacks from the press and TV will stop these workers.

**Chris Burns [Cardiff SE LPYS] spoke to pickets**

## Acres, Brighton - 100%

At Acres in Brighton there is 100% support for the strike.

Dave Clapham, branch secretary, told 'Militant' "We have had no trouble with lorry drivers this morning [first day of the strike], as soon as they saw the picket line they agreed to take the supplies back and wished us luck.

"The morale is good and we are prepared to dig in for a long battle. Our view is if we hit hard from the beginning we will shorten the dispute

"So we are out to cut off supplies to the independent bakeries, in particular the bread departments of big monopolies like Tesco's. We will send pickets everywhere to make sure they don't get flour and other ingredients.

"We are concerned that the old and sick are not made to suffer so we will be baking enough to meet the needs of hospitals, old people's homes etc. However, we are insisting that a steward rides on lorries making such deliveries, so that management don't take advantage of our concern."

**Dave Clapham spoke to Ray Apps**

## ON THE PICKET LINE

### Determination wins

By Peter Jarvis (Hackney South CLP)

A scarred face, bruised limbs, torn clothes and 8 arrests: that is the price of the right to strike and picket after the first few days at H W Nevill (Sunblest), Walthamstow, London.

Management, with the help of the police, seem determined to smash the strike and the union.

The crucial time is 6.00 am, when the bread vans attempt to leave. On Thursday 9th, 45-50 strikers manned the picket. About 80 police arrived. A fire engine appeared at the end of the road.

Determination was the only answer to this massive show of force. Understanding that if the first vans got through others might follow, giving the bosses if nothing else a moral victory, the men resisted.

There were twelve members on duty when the first van tried to get through. The police, hell-bent on clearing a way through, made their presence felt. The first van driver turned back—he was not going to kill anybody. The supervisor took over.

With boots and fists flying, the police got four vans out. Charlie Shepherd, branch secretary, was knocked to the ground and kicked.

Then, seeing the brutality of the police, the drivers called a halt. Now only bread for hospitals will be delivered—some 14,000 loaves. Normal production is 1 million a day.

The strikers' mood is confident, with only 7 of their 200 members scabbing on the dispute, and only one of these a production worker.

### They can afford it!

**The bakery bosses and the press are trying to claim that our action will hammer the housewife by pushing up prices.**

If just 1p of the increases the bosses have already made on the price of a standard loaf was paid to the workers, it would result in a basic wage of £62—a 50% increase.

But anyway, given the massive profits of the bread monopolies, particularly on the milling of flour, it would be quite feasible to meet our demands in full, without any price increases.

## VICTORY FOR US ALL

When I left school in 1976 I went to work in a bakery in Weymouth. It's only a small family bakers, which then had 8 people in the bakery department with me. My wage was £15 for a 40-hour week, rising to £19 at 17, because I was an 'apprentice'.

My basic wage has now gone up to £36 a week. But for this I have to do early morning starts at 5.00 am and frequent night shifts. To increase my money, I am now working an average of 55 hours a week.

The boss refuses to allow a union on 'religious' grounds, and of course we had to blackleg during the last bakers' strike.

From talking to bakers in large factories, I've found out that they're on similar low rates and are forced to work excessive overtime for

a decent wage. I support their claim. They need it, and an increase in their rates would help us in small bakeries to demand increases.

I hope that in the present bread strike, small bakery bosses like ours will not find it so easy to obtain flour etc. to force us non-union shops to help defeat a strike which is in our interests. We must try to use this opportunity to unionise ourselves and join the strike.

The bakers deserve the support of the whole trade union movement in their present struggle. It's a crucial battle for low-paid workers.

**By Tony Prowse (Baker, Weymouth Labour Party Young Socialists)**

## POLICE HELP STRIKE-BREAKERS

In the early hours of last Wednesday morning, 20 or more members and our shop steward were on the picket line at Wilkins Bakeries, Bournemouth.

At 2 am, ignoring instructions from his shop steward, one of the drivers, a member of the UTRE, crossed the picket line. It was claimed that the bread was for Fareham hospital.

After the intervention of 30

to 40 policemen, the driver was allowed to leave, with the understanding from the police that a union member could follow the lorry to ensure the bread would only be delivered to Fareham hospital.

However, the police stopped the car, 10 to 15 miles outside Bournemouth, for a "routine" check. This enabled the lorry driver to deliver bread unhindered to

Fareham depot for private sale. The police had given the lorry an escort.

The feelings of the bakery workers, antagonised by the police action, are running high. They are in a militant mood, and are not going to allow any lorries to cross the line again.

**Andy Rosser (Bournemouth LPYS)**



A meeting is being held this week in Newcastle to set up a campaign committee on the issue of welders' lung. Michael Boddy, a welders' shop steward at Caterpillar Tractor Co. Birtley and an organiser of the meeting, explained the issue and the importance of the meeting to John Pickard.

Welders' lung affects almost all welders in the trade for any length of time. There is a gradual build-up of iron dust on the lungs, associated with the appearance of calcified white spots, peculiar only to welders' lung.

The medical profession say the iron dust is a 'benign' condition, but there is an abnormally high incidence of bronchitis, emphysema and other chest complaints among welders, way above the national and even the regional average. When a welder catches a common cold or flu it always seems to go straight to the chest and disables him straight away.

The worst conditions are welding in confined spaces—in double bottoms of ships, for example, where there may be only 18 inches of space. In industry, heavy duty CO2 dual shield welding means problems—the fumes in that case could rapidly fill up a large volume of space like a workshop, never mind a confined space.

Of course the problem is not confined to welders. In many respects burners in shipyards and in engineering are even more at risk—the fumes are not so easily visible, the dust is very fine—but there is a lot of ozone produced.

At Caterpillar recently a

welder retired—he is only the second welder to retire in 20 years and we have 250 welders in our factory.

Recently we had a NCB X-ray machine brought in and out of the 150 or so men who had X-rays taken, 26 were found to have welders' lung—some of them still in their thirties. They received a letter from the company doctor:

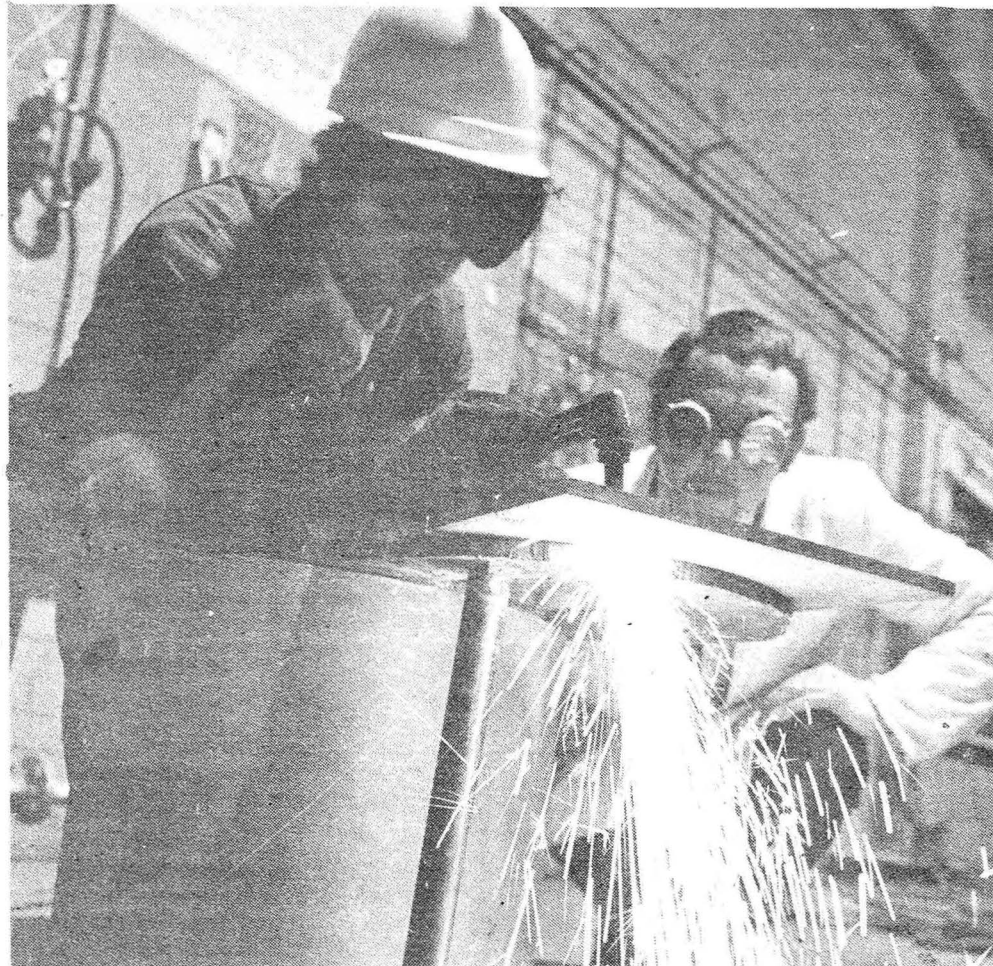
**Many improved methods are available but companies are dragging their feet—they are interested only in productivity**

"Your recent X-ray at Caterpillar Tractor Co Ltd shows some markings on the lungs due to deposits of iron which is consistent with your years of work as a welder. It is otherwise normal. This condition is known as welders' lung and does not affect your health."

That letter illustrates the official attitude. The employers and the government just do not want to know.

# WELDERS LUNG-

## Employers don't want to know



More protection needed for workers

As far as we are concerned it is the same as pneumoconiosis and asbestosis. Before they were recognised as industrial diseases the trade union movement suffered and fought for decades.

The employers and government realise how much it would cost them if they recognised it as an industrial disease. In our union alone (Amalgamated Society of Boilermakers) we have about 70,000 welders. The meeting we are

**Readers of the 'Militant', especially those in shipbuilding and engineering areas, should move resolutions through their Labour Parties, with the assistance of local shop stewards and trade union officials, in order to put pressure on all Labour MPs, and the government to recognise WELDERS' LUNG as an industrial disease, under the same terms as pneumoconiosis, asbestosis, silicosis and similar related illnesses.**

calling is for all welders, related tradesmen, and other interested parties. We hope to set up a campaign committee similar to the one in the Wearside District. Eventually, if there were similar groups in other areas of the country, the campaign could unite on a national basis and be more effective.

Many improved methods are available, but companies are dragging their feet—they are interested only in productivity. One

manager in my firm actually said "We don't want to increase ventilation because it will affect the heating—drawing away fumes will make the factory colder."

Extraction does not mean spreading the fumes around the local neighbourhood either, there are plenty of filter systems available to prevent that happening.

We are demanding more advanced warning and more precise information about the chemical composition of the various fluxes used.

We want rigorous and exhaustive tests on all the various types of welding and cutting gear and the results to be available to trade unionists.

At national level we want Labour MPs to campaign for the recognition of welders' lung.

On a local level, we want shop stewards to use what provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act they can. We want the awareness extended throughout the shop floor.

We may have to go to a campaign of one-day stoppages or something like that (as they already have done on the Wear) to generate publicity. It is up to us to force changes on management and the government.

We want regular statutory air-testing as they have in the mines. The Threshold Limit Values were set by management influenced people, although they are habitually exceeded.

We want the workers to set their own TLVs—as near to zero as possible. That would be possible with proper ventilation and extraction methods.

Workers were subjected to blue asbestos dust and PVC fumes for years before it was eventually stopped. We believe that we are being subject to the same thing now, and we want it changed.

If you find an article in the capitalist press on welfare or social security, there is a good chance it will be another "scrounger" story.

A survey conducted by 'New Society' in the last six months of 1976 of the press, television and radio showed that 30.8 per cent of these articles dealt with social security abuse.

What proof is produced for this "abuse" of the social security system? Not surprisingly, we are referred to "common knowledge" or to the loaded question: "How many others?" In reality, there is little substance to these stories.

A good example comes from the 'Daily Express' editorial (18 December 1977) after the publication by the Co-ordinating Committee on Social Security Abuse of figures which showed fraud to be only about 1½ pence in every £50 accurately paid: "It is the official figure based upon frauds which have been paid out. Nobody knows how much larger the figure would be if we could take into account the undiscovered fiddlers and thieves."

Now that unemployment is up at the 1½ million mark the capitalist press cynically claims: "It Pays Not to

## "Fiddlers"—the facts By Dave Hollis

TABLE I Benefits as a percentage of average net income

	NUMBER	PER CENT OF TOTAL
NI benefit only	470,000	33
NI benefit and Supplementary Benefit	129,000	9
Total receiving NI benefit	599,000	42
Receiving Supplementary Benefit only	574,000	40
Others unemployed registered for work	265,000	18
Total registered unemployed [including school leavers]	1,438,000	100

[Department of Employment Gazette, April 1978, Table 112]

Work" ('Daily Express', 13th March 1978); or "How the £75 a week man is better off on the dole" ('Daily Mail'). The examples of such headlines and articles are legion.

The right-wing press's "representative" example goes something like this: "Take the example of a married couple with two small children where the man earned £55 a week and the wife did not work. They would normally take home £45.55. Now if the man lost his job and claimed everything due to him—£30.30 flat rate National Insurance benefit, after two weeks the

Earnings Related Supplement of £8.50 and he continued to claim his child benefit—his net income would come to £41.30."

The example given is, of course, unrepresentative. Only 13% of those unemployed are a couple with 2 or 3 children. Also, in November 1977, well under half of the registered unemployed were receiving National Insurance benefit (as Table I shows). It should also be remembered that only about 40 per cent of those receiving NI benefit also received the earnings-related supplement.

There are a few examples

where it is possible to be better off on the dole: If you earn £25 gross (in 60% of all cases); £35 gross (4 cases out of 15); £45 gross (during weeks 3-28 for a claimant with dependent wife); and £55 gross (during weeks 3-28 for a couple and two small children). All these figures assume that everything possible has been claimed—child benefit, FIS, free school meals and free welfare milk.

Another false argument from the capitalist press when the National Insurance and Social Security benefits increase, is how much better life is on the dole than working. The facts show otherwise. There has been a gradual but marked decline in benefits as a percentage of average net income (see Table II).

The unemployed are now beginning to be represented among the ranks of those below the Supplementary Benefit level. The Family Expenditure Survey of December, 1975, showed there were 60,000 families with a male head who had been unemployed for three or more

months and were below the Supplementary Benefit level.

It was also estimated that a further 70,000 who had been out of work less than 3 months were also eligible. These incomes were recently

TABLE II Percentage of unemployed receiving NI benefits

Type	Highest level [Reached in 1971]	Level in 1977	Drop in percentage terms
Single person	57.5%	47.6%	9.9%
Married couple with no children	70.8%	59.6%	11.2%
Married couple with two children	77.9%	68.4%	9.5%

[Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth, Report No. 6, p299]

described by the Supplementary Benefit Commission as "barely adequate to meet their needs at a level that is consistent with full participation in the...society in which we live."

In times of slump or crisis in the capitalist system workers are made to pay for it through cuts in public expenditure, their living standards

and unemployment. It is not a crisis created by the workers and they should not be the ones to pay for it.

If work is short it should be shared out with no loss of pay. Useful public works should be set up to provide employment for the unemployed. There is an obvious need for new hospitals, schools and housing.

Labour should take up this programme and deal with the

real scroungers in society—the monopolies which take £25 million a day in state handouts and tax concessions.

By bringing them under the ownership and control of the labour movement as part of a socialist plan of production, the problems of unemployment and bad living conditions could be solved.



# WOULD REFLATION SOLVE OUR



A reply  
to  
Tribune  
by  
Ted Grant

**In opposition to the Labour government's policy of wage restraint and spending cuts, the Tribune group calls for a policy of reflation: tax cuts and increased public spending to stimulate the economy and create jobs. This is now the alternative policy put forward by the TUC and many trade union leaders. But within the framework of capitalism, could a reflationary policy really solve the burning problems facing the workers? In the first of two articles, Ted Grant shows that Tribune's "alternative" is an illusion.**

It is not merely bloody-mindedness which has led the capitalist class to adopt the ferocious policies which are put forward by people like Keith Joseph, Margaret Thatcher and the other leaders of the Tory Party and which are also advocated by the CBI at the present time. The CBI, for example, is calling for a further cut of £3,000 to £5,000 million in state expenditure, a programme that would undoubtedly be attempted by a new Tory government.

Of course, the capitalists and their Tory flunkies in Parliament would not feel the effects on themselves or their families. They have private education, private insurance, private health and hospital care. Faced with the crisis of their system, therefore, they are quite prepared to wreck the former 'welfare state'.

It is their pressure which has compelled the labour leaders to take the measures of retrenchment they have done.

The reason why the ruling class takes the position of 'class war', of savage cuts in living standards, is that there is no other way if capitalism is to survive. As Marxists explain, it is the working of the social system as a whole which explains all the developments that are taking place at the present time.

The reason for the intransigence of the capitalists in comparison with the position of the 1950s and the 1960s is that in the meantime there has been an enormous fall in the rate of profit. The CBI complains that this year the rate of profit will only be 3%. In the 50s the rate of profit actually reached 35%.

This fall in the rate of profit, of course, is due to the very expansion of industry. The fact that the

capitalists have to spend more and more on what Marx called 'constant' capital (i.e. machinery, and buildings, etc) means that the ratio of the 'constant' to the 'variable' capital (i.e. the wages that are paid to the working class) has increased enormously in the course of the last few decades.

The capitalists get no profit from the investment in machinery and buildings. The only profit they can make is from the surplus labour—that is to say, the unpaid labour of the working class. That is what the investigations of Marx into the capitalist system demonstrated. Thus capitalists are cold-blooded and brutal in defence of the sacred god of profit.

And it is these difficulties which explain why the capitalists have taken the stand that they have on the question of cutting state expenditure and further cutting into

last five or six decades. They rely on national assistance from the state. They are millionaire parasites and beggars. Why should the labour movement accept this monstrous situation?

Whatever measures are adopted by the state, so long as the monopolies control nine-tenths of productive industry, they will provide no solution to the problems of British capitalist society and even less so for working people.

Neither inflationary deficits in state expenditure, nor cuts in state expenditure and deflation will solve them.

Under these circumstances, the only solution that would solve the needs and the interests of the working people lies in the transformation of society. Marx long ago explained that one social system is replaced by another social system

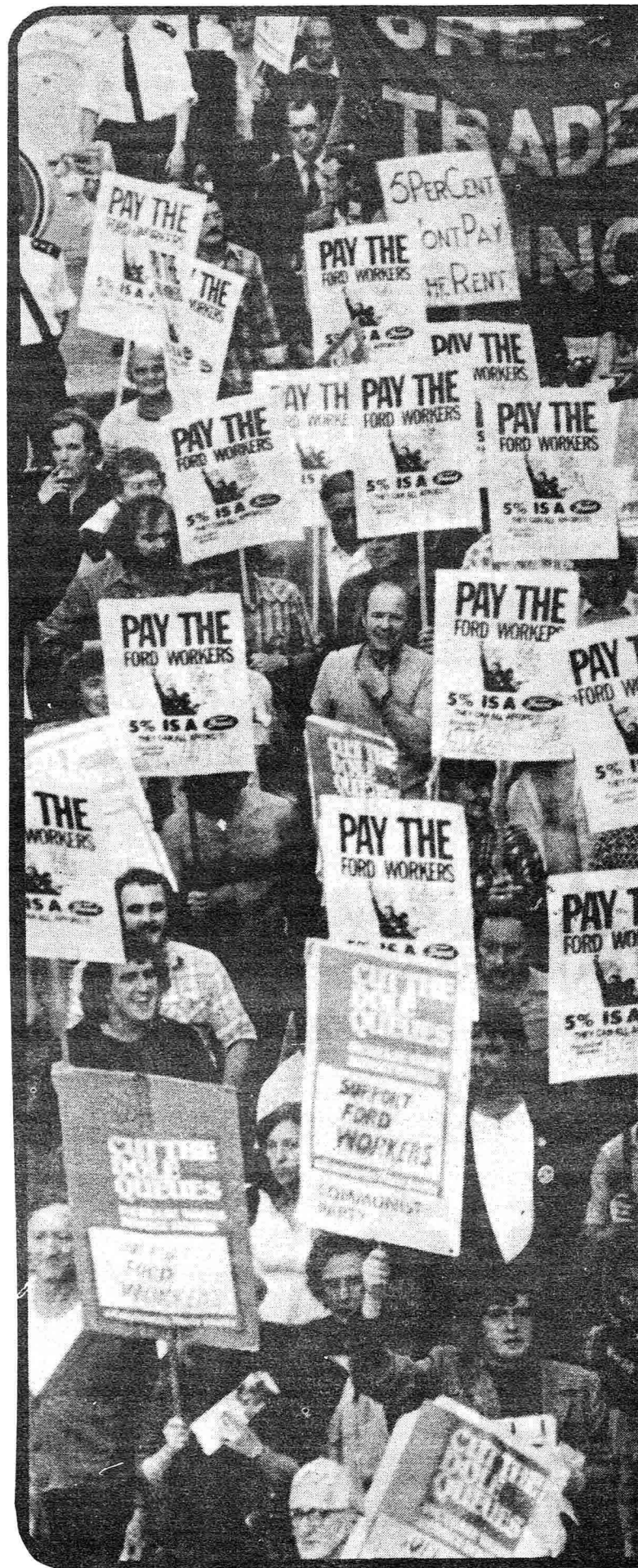
**The reason the ruling class demands savage cuts in workers' living standards is that there is no other way if capitalism is to survive.**

the share the working class takes of the wealth it produces. They begrudge even the miserable amount of tax that they pay at the present time, and want more and more and bigger and bigger subsidies for the industrialists.

The fact that they cannot stand on their own feet is an indication of how parasitic monopoly capitalism has become during the course of the

when it can no longer serve to develop the productive forces, that is to say the means of life, the power of man over nature.

Once a social system becomes an impediment to the development of the powers of science, of engineering, of technique as the capitalist system has now begun to do, that marks the beginning of the end for that social system. This is shown by



## The organised workers by tightening their belts

the fact that on a world scale productive capacity of industry can only be utilised at the present time to 85% in the USA in 'boom', and in the case of Britain, only 80% of productive capacity is now being utilised.

The wave of strikes threatening to engulf Britain this winter, following on the car workers' disputes, the bakers' strike and many other 'small' strikes is an indication of the present mood of the organised workers in Britain. This is through the experience they have gained during the last three years.

They have seen the falsity of the

arguments of the right-wing labour leaders that by tightening their belts and by accepting low wages and derisory increases they can fight inflation.

Cuts in standards of living have reached a level to which the working class is no longer willing to submit. The complete bankruptcy of the position of British capitalism, and standing on this basis of the ideas put forward by Callaghan, Healey and the other leaders of the right wing of the Labour Party which have benefitted big business by a bonanza of profits at the expense of



# PROBLEMS?

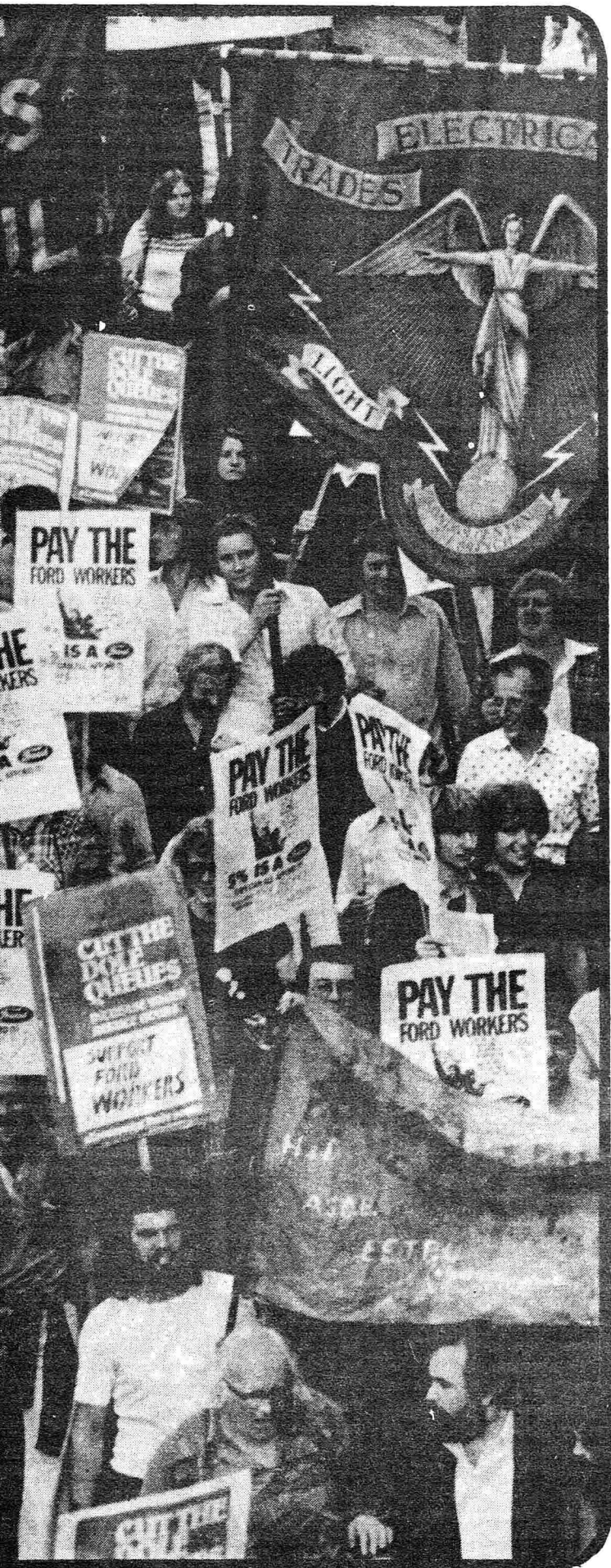


Photo: Julian McKinnick (Militant)

Ford workers demonstrate in support of their claim

## no longer believe that they can fight inflation

the workers, has led to the more advanced layers of the working class in the labour and trade union movement looking for a different solution to their problems.

It is in this atmosphere that the 'Tribune' has come forward [in its issue of 14th October] to argue for an increase of £1,000 million in public expenditure.

Putting forward what they imagine is a moderate and realistic programme, 'Tribune' claims that an increase in state expenditure on these lines would lead to at least 235,000 new jobs.

This demand is exceptionally

moderate when it is considered that the cut in state expenditure in 1975 and 1976 was £8,000 million. The health service, social services, transport, and other state and municipal services have been undermined as a consequence of the cuts.

Against this background, even an increase of £1,000 million would be a mere flea bite in face of the problems which are facing the British state and which are facing the working class.

The question that immediately arises is why in all the countries of capitalism—America, Sweden, France, Britain—there is a rejection

of these Keynesian ideas—that through state expenditure and deficit financing the problems of the market can be solved for capitalism? Why should the Treasury, Callaghan, Healey and the other leaders of the Labour Party—or if it comes to that, the Tories—why should they be in favour of slashing state expenditure if, by measures of state expenditure, it would be possible to solve the problems which face the ruling class and the British people at the present time? The idea that the ruling class does not understand how to run capitalism, that the ruling class does not understand its own interests, is pathetic.

It is the experience of the last twenty-five years which has crushingly demonstrated to the ruling class what the Marxists have always argued, that Keynesianism, i.e. deficit financing over a period, far from solving the problems of capitalism actually aggravates them.

One of the main reasons for the explosion of inflation throughout the world during the course of the last three decades has been precisely deficit financing on the part of capitalist governments. The Keynesian illusion has been completely shattered for all serious capitalist politicians and for all serious capitalist economists.

The Tribunites have correctly attacked the 'monetarists', the theories of Friedman and other representatives of capitalism. These are the theories which have been accepted by the Tories as the basis for the policies of the government in the future. Their theories, in fact, are the theories of deflation, of cutting down state expenditure, of holding down wages, and in that way guaranteeing the value of the currency. By that means they hope to end inflation.

As correctly pointed out by the Tribunites and trade union leaders, this would mean mass unemployment, it would mean a collapse of the market, it would mean untold misery and degradation for the working class in Britain. This 'cure' is even worse than the disease.

All that is perfectly true, but it does not alter the fact, that from the point of view of capitalism, such a policy is nevertheless the only solution to the problems that they face at the present time. To continue on the road of deficit

### Given the crisis in capitalism, the only solution for the working class lies in the socialist transformation of society.

financing, would inevitably mean an increase in inflation to the level of that in the Latin American countries, and if continued to even worse.

That is why the ruling class has abandoned completely the illusions of Keynesianism, that it is possible to solve the problems of the capitalist economies by measures of state expenditure.

The Tribunites answer the arguments of the Marxists by accusing them of being monetarists. In reality, all that the Marxists are doing is analysing the way in which the capitalist system works, and recognising that on the basis of capitalism any increase in the number of pieces of paper, or pound notes in circulation, without the backing of goods or gold, would inevitably mean an increase in inflation.

The idea that this elementary proposition of economics, not even Marxist economics, is 'monetarism' is ludicrous. Karl Marx wrote, more than 150 years ago: "If the quantity of money issued be double what it ought to be, then as a matter of fact, a pound would be money made not of a quarter of an ounce, but on an eighth of an ounce of gold. The effect would be the same as an alteration taking place in the function of gold as the standard of prices. Those values that were previously expressed by the price of a pound of gold would now be expressed by the price of two pounds."

Leaving aside the reference to gold, which it is not necessary to explain in this article, it is clear that if the number of notes, taking the economy as a whole, which would cover the amount of goods that are produced would be 1 million, and the state, in currency and treasury notes increased this (for arguments sake) to 2 million, it would mean doubling of prices.

In that sense, the arguments of Mrs Thatcher and the arguments of Keith Joseph—the arguments of the right-wing leaders of the Labour Party—are perfectly correct: deficit financing and the use of the printing press inevitably leads to inflation.

Of course, they do not see the other side of the contradiction; the consequences of deflationary policies. As far as the working class is concerned, neither inflation nor deflation can solve the problems

present situation, but does not get to the roots of the problem. The further point that by a price freeze over the next twelve to eighteen months, that £3,000 million would be saved and would constitute an argument against wage increases, as the 'Tribune' article says doesn't hold water.

The figure of £3,000 million is given on the basis that the firms are putting up their prices 8% to 8½% to make up for inflation. It is suggested this will take place during the course of the next year or so. The argument that, therefore, by lowering prices, the market would be increased and thus the capitalists would get back their money in that way is false.

The capitalists don't produce goods for the sake of selling them, the capitalists produce goods in order to make profits, and if 8%

### The real problem is that the Tribunites do not understand capitalism as a system of production.

that face them. It is only the choice of hanging or burning.

The real problem as far as the Tribunites are concerned, is that they do not understand the capitalist system as a system of production. Capitalism works by the fact that the surplus, or unpaid labour of the working class, is the profit of the capitalist class.

This creates a dilemma for the capitalists in the sense that they themselves consume in luxury and wasteful expenditure only a small part of the profit that they make. Most of the profit or the surplus extracted from the labour of the working class is reinvested in industry, commerce, tourism, investments abroad, or other forms of capital expenditure.

One of the most telling points made in the 'Tribune' article, a point which has been repeatedly emphasised by 'Militant', is the fact that the big monopolies in Britain, the big corporations, pay almost no tax whatsoever. This is because of the exemptions, the very lavish exemptions, given by the government allegedly to stimulate investment. In addition, corporation tax, like all the other taxes intended to

was to be cut off the prices that they charge, that would mean a cut in profits. If they sell more goods on the basis of this cut in prices, that would mean a further reduction in the profits that they would expect to make.

Already, the CBI has threatened that if there were a price freeze, they would cease to invest, not that their investments have amounted to very much in any event! Undoubtedly, however, under such conditions the Labour government would be faced with the sabotage of capital that was threatened by the CBI before the elections.

Wilson himself in his memoirs wrote of the Labour government of 1964-70 of the sabotage of capital with which the government was faced. A threatened sabotage of investment unless the Labour government would capitulate to the demands of the monopolies. And from a ruling class point of view, there is no other way in which they could act.

All the material of the Tribunites has a fundamental lack in not seeing that society is divided fundamentally into two absolutely antagonistic classes with hostile interests and hostile needs, that is the way capitalist society is constituted.

The situation now is that the profit of the capitalists can only be gained out of cutting the share of the working class in the wealth that they produce. That explains why the capitalists are not interested in lower prices as such, and are not interested in higher prices as such. They are interested in the maximisation of profits alone.

All the attempts to avoid the real class antagonisms in society involve the Tribunites in one convulsive contradiction after another. In essence, they are suggesting that the monopolies should be soaked. 'Militant' has always called for drastic action against the monopolies, but to try and limit prices by edict would be like trying to stop a bulldozer with a feather duster.

While they control the means of production, all the means of life, all the means of producing the machinery, the food and the necessary goods, the ruling class have a thousand and one ways of avoiding actions on the part of Labour governments.

**In Part II next week, Ted Grant will continue his analysis and spell out a Marxist policy for Labour**

hit the rich and to hit the monopolies, has in practice a thousand-and-one loop-holes through which the monopolies have succeeded in reducing tax to negligible proportions in the last two or three tax years.

It has become such a scandal that even serious papers of the capitalists like the 'Sunday Times' have taken it up, pointing out that it is through tax loop-holes and through the numerous subsidies that the corporations pay no tax whatsoever. That is why the formula adopted by the Tribunites Stuart Holland and Paul Ormerod of tax relief "only on the basis of proven need" is a naive formula. If by 'proven need' they mean the need of the individual then that should be stated; just as national assistance is given to individuals on the basis of need only, so in same way we have always argued that when industries are nationalised compensation should be on the basis of need only.

The Tribune formula is so ambiguous that is not clear that this is intended. On the contrary, what is obviously meant is that the 'lame ducks' of capitalism, capitalist firms in trouble, instead of being nationalised, should actually be subsidised as they have been under both Tory and Labour governments in the last two or three decades.

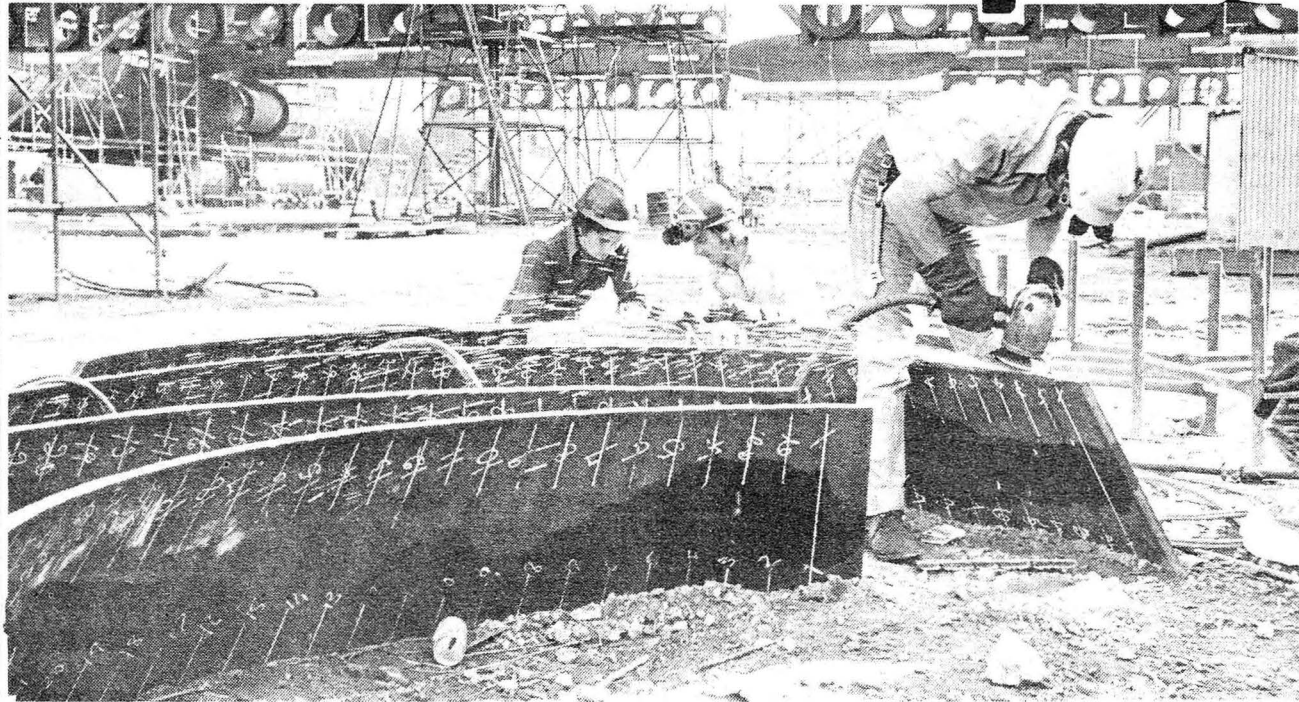
The tax of 52% which has been suggested on profits would be a step forward in comparison with the



## INTERNATIONAL

# WORLD SHIPBUILDING

## Thousands of jobs to go



Scottish workers constructing an oil rig

Photo: John Sturrock (Report)

**Tens of thousands of jobs are threatened in shipyards throughout Europe and the world in the worst shipbuilding crisis since the 1930s.**

At that time, the town of Jarrow, on Tyneside, 'died' with the closure of the local yards. Today the outlook is equally grim for workers in several European towns.

In the decade up to 1974 the world merchant fleet doubled. But that year saw the first simultaneous

small slump hit the world economy. World trade fell, ships were laid up and new orders began to dry up.

1974 also saw the quintupling of oil prices. Suddenly the feverish scramble to build ever more supertankers tripped over itself as half-million-tonners were tied up in the wake of falling demand.

Now there is a glut of ships as the traditional shipbuilding countries try to continue in business and the newer countries like Korea and Brazil increase their output from modern yards which outstrip the outdated European yards. These countries, Poland and Taiwan, undercut the price of bulk carriers from Europe, America and Japan with ease.

This is the bleak picture:

### Norway

The merchant fleet is likely to decline from 48m tons dead weight last January to 43m by the end of the year. At the beginning of this year only 4m new tonnage was on order for Norwegian ship owners—2.2m tonnage for delivery this year, down to 1.6m for 1979 and a mere 300,000 for 1980.

### Sweden

Capacity in state-owned yards is to be cut by 20% in the next two years, reducing the workforce to 10,000. Kockums, the only remaining big private

yard, reports a loss of SKr 20m this year and is likely to sell out to the state.

More jobs will go after 1980 if the Liberal government has its way, with cuts of 30% in the smaller yards' capacity. Sweden's output was once second only to Japan's.

### Denmark

With ancillary industries included, until recently shipbuilding accounted for 12% of the industrial workforce. Now **half the workers face unemployment** as orders have crashed.

In 1972 Denmark's eight yards had orders for 73 ships of 3.9 gross tonnes. At the end of 1977 orders for new ships totalled 56, amounting to only 651,000 gross tonnes, a massive fall of 82%.

### Japan

The idea that Japan is increasing output at Europe's expense is a myth. Its share of world shipbuilding has fallen between 1970 and 1977 from about 49% to 43%.

Last week the Japanese government and yard owners agreed to make a "painful" cut in capacity of 35%. As a result, 50,000 Japanese shipyard

# DUTCH SHIPYARD WORKERS

**Over the last five years half the shipyard workers in Holland have lost their jobs.**

The Dutch shipbuilding industry has been hard hit by the crisis of world capitalism. The slow down of world trade has meant a decline in the demand for ships to carry freight.

In 1972 the Dutch shipyards employed 45,000 men, but by 1977 the number had dropped to 22,000 and attempts by employers to cut back production and employment still continue.

Dominated by the giant RSV concern, the most important shipyards are situated in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Flushing. RSV took the lead in cutting capacity and jobs by announcing the closure of its yard in Amsterdam, NDSM, with the support of the right wing coalition government.

### 3,000 jobs

Of the 3,000 workers who would lose their jobs, only 250 would be given new work at another Amsterdam shipyard, ADM. In addition thousands of jobs in the supply industries would be destroyed.

The mood of the NDSM workers when they heard the

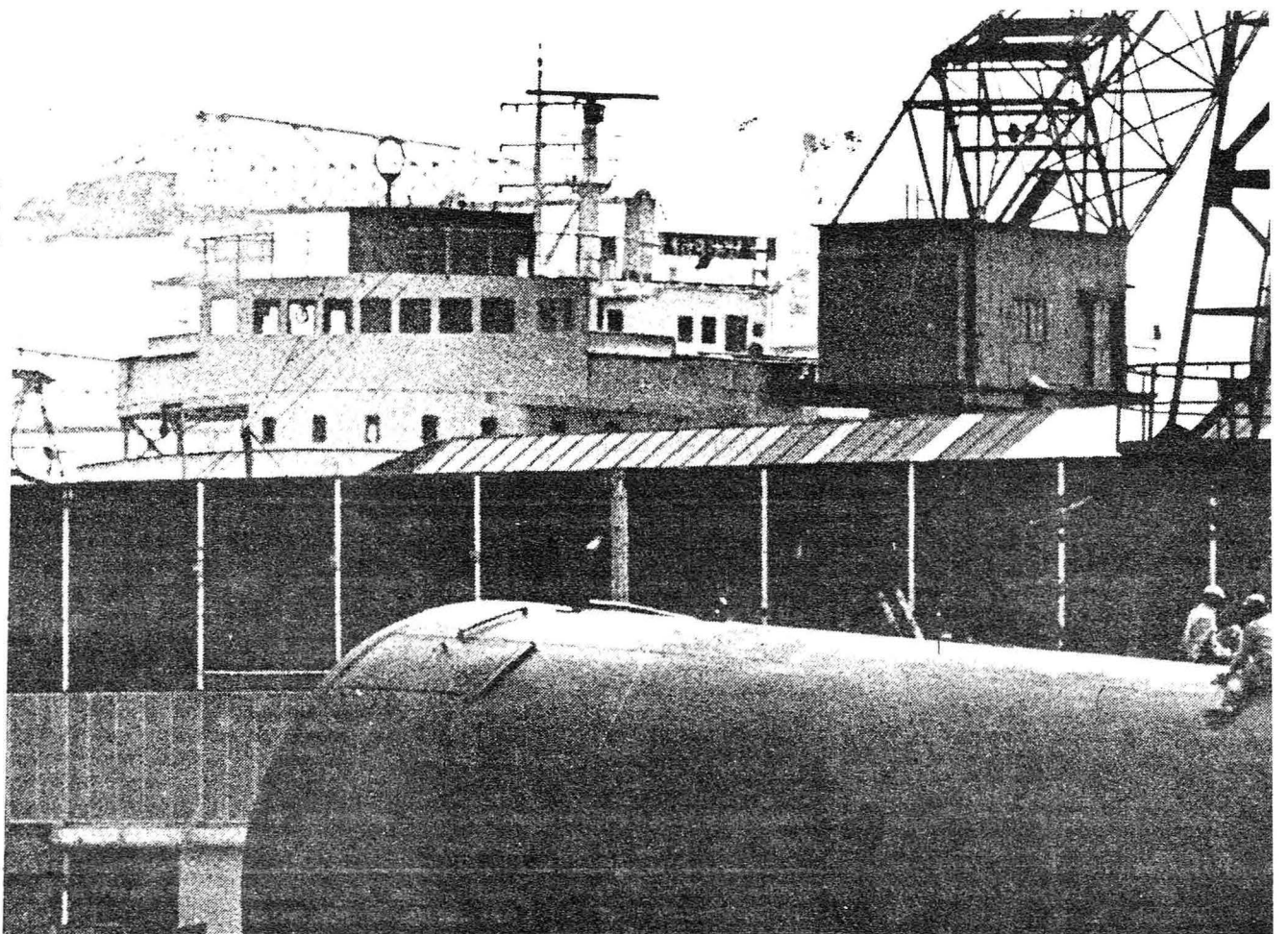
By Anneke Poppe

(Amsterdam  
Young Socialists)

news was one of anger and determination to fight. Officials of the Industriebond (trade union in the engineering and shipbuilding industries) who took up a defensive attitude were sharply rebuked at branch meetings by a militant rank and file, and a mass meeting held during working hours was attended by most of the shipyard workers in Amsterdam.

The trade union leadership unfortunately failed to lead this upsurge of the workers. They failed to bring forward any real alternative to the plans of the employers and the government, accepting that private profits needed to be restored and that redundancies were inevitable. Their main concern was to hold back redundancies to a minimum.

Action committees were formed at NDSM and ADM.



Dutch shipyard—what are the prospects for future work ?

Overtime work was banned and token industrial action was organised. But apart from this, the workers were not mobilised, they were left out of the struggle.

The union leaders confined

themselves to top-level negotiations with employers and the state. Worst of all, they remained in the Shipbuilding Commission through which the attacks on the workers were being launched!

In this way, as the months went by, the militancy of the workers evaporated and turned into frustration and pessimism. Young workers started looking out for new jobs (though there are more than

100,000 young unemployed in Holland). Older workers resigned themselves to an early pension and permanent redundancy after a lifetime of working in the yards.

Finally, in September, the



# CRISIS

By Brent Kennedy

workers will find themselves on the dole in the fifteen months from next January.

## Common Market

EEC officials predict even worse closures in the near future. They believe that by 1980 the nine member countries' yards should build only half of last year's 5.4m tonnes and the number of jobs axed should be 75,000, not counting the supply industries.

Things can only get worse in the coming years. Another rise in oil prices is predicted soon. A deeper

world trade recession looms on the horizon, bringing cut-throat competition and protectionism by the capitalists of all countries.

With protests already taking place in Toulon and Hamburg, Birkenhead and Cadiz, the trade unions must fight to protect the livelihood of shipyard workers everywhere. But one thing is certain. While production lies in the hands of private owners, where decisions are made solely for the profit motive, and while the fate of this industry is so closely linked to the

of world trade, any planning of the world's shipbuilding resources is impossible.

The first step towards rational planning of production to guarantee jobs must be the nationalisation of the yards in each country, under democratic workers' control and management. Only then can available work be shared out with no loss of pay. If there is no demand for ships, the valuable skills of the workers and the resources of the industry must be fully utilised in producing other needed goods and equipment.

The unplanned overproduction of shipping followed by the destruction of yards and jobs is an indictment of the criminal anarchy of the profit system. What better example is there than shipping and shipbuilding that the two major obstacles to economic progress today are the private ownership of the means of production and the existence of competing nation states? The way out of world slump on a scale bigger than the 1930s lies only through the ending of capitalism and an international socialist plan of production, of which the creation of the Socialist United States of Europe must be the first step.



Portuguese workers demonstrate outside the Lisnave Shipyard

# FIGHT BACK

unions came forward with a plan. They called for the merger of NDSM and ADM into a single shipyard, ADSM. NDSM and ADM would each own 40% of the new company and the state would own 20%. Not all but some of the jobs would be saved. Public money would be paid over to the shipyard owners, without any form of public control and with the old bosses still holding the reins.

The plan was supported by the Labour Party, the Communist Party and some Christian Democrats as well. The response of the workers, however, was less enthusiastic.

No more than 500 workers attended the meeting on 9th September where this plan was announced (no discussion from the floor was allowed). Most of those present had been mobilised not by the union but by the CP. The workers' scepticism was justified. The ADM turned down the idea of a merger, and nothing further came of it.

On 28th September RSV, ADM and the government finally reached agreement on "reducing capacity" at NDSM. Frightened perhaps by the reaction of the workers in March, they dropped the plan for a total closure. Instead, a "reorganisation" of the repair and the building sections was announced.

The repair section would be

merged with ADM and the building section would be turned into a separate company. 300 jobs will be lost in the repair section and between 800 and 900 in the building section. The state will donate 35% of the capital for the new company.

## Mass meetings

The trade union leadership accepted these proposals. A union spokesman lamely described it as "the most that can be achieved." The workers, however, tended to disagree.

A mass protest meeting in Amsterdam organised by the action committees on 28th September was attended by 2,000 people. At the union branch meetings which were called on the same night many workers made it clear that they were far from satisfied.

Klaas Veldman, leader of the action committee at NDSM and a Labour Party councillor, drew the following conclusion: "Maintaining NDSM in this way means continuing with the old relationships of control, therefore no real change in the positions of power. What we have done is to solve part of the unemployment problem within the existing system. We have seen that it is not arguments that are decisive, power is."

Apart from the loss of jobs, the workers have suffered

another setback. The employers succeeded in opening up divisions between the different shipyards. They insisted that either the Amsterdam or Rotterdam shipyards had to be closed. The Amsterdam workers were told that they could only save their jobs at the expense of their brothers in Rotterdam. The union leaders had no answer to this. The Communist Party also yielded to the mood of chauvinism and took up a "pro-Amsterdam" position.

No end to the attacks by the capitalist class on the shipbuilding workers is in sight. From Britain and Germany we hear similar reports. Socialists in the Labour Party and the trade unions are beginning to see more clearly the need for a fighting programme that will offer a solution to the threat of mass unemployment and unite the workers in all the yards.

## Nationalise

It is clear that RSV, ADM and the other shipbuilding companies are incapable of offering the shipyard workers a secure future. These firms must be nationalised under workers' control and management. On that basis a national plan for the shipbuilding industry can be drawn up and the work can be shared out among the workers without loss of pay.



Soldiers turn their guns on their officers and overthrow the Kaiser, winter 1918

# WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' COUNCILS ACROSS GERMANY

workers' and soldiers' council was set up.

Real revolutionaries among them knew how to go about organising it: "You must now set up a committee, and you who live here must unite with the soldiers who are coming now and immediately put delegates into the Town Hall."

There was no government; the Kaiser had gone and everything was upside down. Only the army was united.

The older comrades started. We had quickly got together. Within about two days we had a committee.

The People's Assembly was called together in the market place. A couple of messengers, of whom I was one, ran off some leaflets on an old duplicator. I don't know where the paper came from.

We had installed ourselves, but the population had to know who we were. In the market place, which was crammed full, we wanted to be endorsed by the masses. We explained what we had done, and said that we would take command until an election, and that we wanted socialism.

Some suggestions came from the crowd until we were a committee of about 25, and then that was put to the vote by shouting and the raising of hands. We were confirmed and governed everything else in the district command.

The soldiers were officially disarmed. This was done, apart from a few exceptions, completely without force. It was explained to them and their officers that here they had to submit to the workers' and soldiers' council.

Only a few were unwilling to do so. Some of those were thrown into the area prison.

The police did absolutely nothing. The workers' and soldiers' councils called up for work. The factories which had been producing war goods had first to be converted.

But the factories were not yet expropriated, they were still controlled by the capitalists. Until the factories were back in order, we worked for the town—digging graves or such like. But only four hours a day, then we stopped.

The workers' and soldiers' councils spread and more positions were assigned to govern the area. I don't know anything about the wages of the administrators of the workers' and soldiers' councils. We received money for our work for the town; sometimes, however, something to eat as well, for example, bread or potatoes. Everything moved forward very quickly because we all worked.

Two weeks ago 'Militant' published an article explaining the events of the 1918 German Revolution, when the workers in and out of uniform rose up against the ruling class which had plunged them into the horrors of world war. This week we publish extracts from an article which first appeared in the German Marxist paper 'Vorwärts' in which a veteran socialist describes these events seen through his own eyes. A member of the Metal Workers' League and the Communist Party in the 1920s, this comrade, now 77, is today a member of the SPD.

**"When the soldiers returned from the war they were billeted in the factories. Then we joined with the soldiers, but we no longer did any work. We went to work, but did nothing.**

The war was over, we didn't need any fire-lighters. I was a fire-lighter, all we did was tidy up. And when the soldiers came, everybody went to them.

They still had food, and we were starving, really undernourished. For example, in order to get up on to the pavement, I had to lift my leg up with my hands.

I worked then twelve hours on days one week, the next on nights, at 16 or 17 years of age. There were eight children at home. When I worked nights I couldn't sleep during the day.

We boys were interested in what it was like to be a soldier. From them, of course, came radical ideas.

"Wilhelm has scrambled, now we must finally make a change," and so on. I understood even at that time something of politics, my father was active.

And then things started!

Discussions took place about the workers' and soldiers' councils.

We civilians knew little about these, but the soldiers had already participated in them, they had been in other billets. One or two days before, they had founded workers' and soldiers' councils, then they walked from France.

They thought the war was shit, that the Kaiser had fled, and that therefore all this fighting was unnecessary.

Those who had already spent four or five years at the front had had enough. I liked hearing about that, so I found out quite a lot about what it was like at the Front.

## No more orders

The officers had no more to say; the soldiers simply didn't listen. If the war had not come to an end, there would have been a revolt anyway.

There were already deserters, and many had turned against the officers. There were no more orders.

When the soldiers returned and we stopped working, we then put the factory in order, and oiled the machines so that they didn't rust away. Then we had political discussions with the soldiers, since they told us everything.

Almost every day there were different ones. If they stayed longer than a day, we discussed with them how a



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

## LETTERS

## 'No' to the Shah

Dear Comrades

The Worthing Constituency Labour Party passed the following resolution at our General Committee meeting on 24th October and asked that you be informed of this.

"This Labour Party dissociates itself from the Foreign Secretary's public statement on the situation in Iran and expresses its opposition to any support of the Shah."

Yours fraternally  
Antony Bignell  
Hon. Sec., Worthing CLP

## Landlords forced into servitude—shock disclosures

Dear Comrades

It was interesting to read in 'The Times' (20.10.78) that the Small Landlords Association is taking the government to the European Commission of Human Rights over the various Rent Acts, especially the Rent Act 1974.

The Rent Acts, they say, mean that rents are held down while landlords have to maintain their properties. So they have to work to subsidise their tenants. This, they claim, violates article 4 of the Convention which outlaw "servitude and compulsory labour".

Also by English law, landlords find it difficult to repossess their property and this contravenes article 8, which "guarantees respect for family and home".

Finally, they find that the Rent Acts are just plain discriminatory (against article 14 of the Convention) since a tenant may end his tenancy at any time with or without reason, while the landlord has to get a Court Order to do so.

The Association suggest a 'phasing out' of security of tenure for furnished accom-

Dear Editor

Through a series of joint meetings the LPYS in Scotland and the Scottish Organisation of Labour Students planned a day school on racialism, given that the policy of both organisations supported such activity.

However, despite the fact that virtually all the arrangements had been finalised, the LPYS Regional Committee have decided to withdraw from the venture. The subsequent disillusionment of SOLS is therefore understandable on several grounds.

Firstly discussion has hardly yet begun on the subject of racialism in Scotland and as the National Front have recently been leafleting schools in Glasgow, it is vital that this issue is taken up now.

Secondly, the LPYS Regional Committee had a mandate from their 1978 conference to hold such a day school. Thirdly, the initiative for this event came from SOLS and finally, the LPYS have persistently criticised SOLS for an unwillingness to co-operate with them.

Such action by the LPYS has jeopardised this vital initiative and ultimately has undermined the fight against racialism. SOLS has, however, decided to go ahead with the arrangements as we feel it is too crucial an event to be shelved. We feel very sad that the LPYS do not agree with us and sincerely hope that readers of this paper will support us.

Yours fraternally  
Margaret Curran  
Secretary, Scottish  
Organisation of  
Labour Students

## Fighting against racialism



LPYS anti-racialism demonstration 1974

William King, Vice-chairman of the Scottish LPYS replies:

By studiously avoiding mention of the facts Miss Curran uses the postponement of a day school to launch an unjustified attack on the LPYS.

The LPYS were forced to postpone the day school on 18th November because of its proximity to the YCAU Industrial Conferences on November 25th. A large number of LPYS branches intimated that they would be organising days of action which would clash with the school.

The Regional Committee agreed to postpone it, therefore. At the same meeting we made the offer to SOLS to share a session at a weekend school organised by the LPYS on racialism. This they declared to be unacceptable with no explanation. It is now obvious that the SOLS leadership wanted to use this issue to go on a sectarian binge against Labour's youth rather than fight racialism.

Perhaps in the circles

frequented by the SOLS leadership a discussion on racialism has 'hardly begun'. In the labour movement it has been a burning issue, with the LPYS and 'Militant' supporters playing a key role in the campaign.

In this year alone the LPYS organised a day school in Glasgow on the question of racialism. Pollok LPYS, organised a large and successful public meeting.

It was the LPYS and 'Militant' supporters who committed the District Labour Party in Glasgow to a class campaign against the fascists. The only resolution at the Strathclyde Regional conference was initiated by the LPYS.

In Pollokshields in the largest immigrant area in Scotland after a socialist campaign led by the LPYS the number of immigrants in the part rose from a handful to a third.

Yet the Regional Committee are criticised for 'breaking their mandate'. What pious hypocrisy! This day school is the one and only event organised by the SOLS leadership since their election last January! The SOLS leadership hope to hide their lack of programme and policy behind a campaign of innuendo against the LPYS.

Far from 'jeopardising a major initiative' the LPYS have been to the forefront of the fight against racialism and fascism. However, the fight against unemployment and the mobilisation of hundreds of young workers for the YCAU Industrial Conference must be seen as the first priority over the next few weeks.

Racialism will only be defeated by removing the system which breeds it not just by talking about it.

## Manchester Direct

## Works—Dispute led to management offer

Dear Comrades

Councillor Bill Risby, Chairman of Manchester Direct Works Department, made the point in a recent letter to the 'Militant' that the dispute at the Direct Works now satisfactorily resolved, was unnecessary. The Direct Works Convenors disagree with this comment.

For a lengthy period of time the unions were attempting to revise the incentive scheme, which, it was generally accepted, contained many anomalies. Eventually, in 1977, management agreed with the unions to set up a sub-committee to draw up a revised scheme.

After negotiating for over a year, there still remained six unresolved points over a work study-based scheme proposed by management. The unions felt that management were not seriously trying to resolve issues, proceeding with negotiations at their leisure.

Eventually, according to the unions, negotiations broke down (Councillor Risby disputes this). Under pressure of a seven day strike notice from the shop stewards, a compromise was reached, which would have enabled a joint working party to discuss the six points at issue.

The management then introduced to the negotiations the Personnel Section Works Study Department, and this team, who had not been a party to the previous compromise, placed a completely

different interpretation on this agreement and on the six outstanding items.

A stewards' meeting thereupon called a strike and within days, all 4,000 operatives had withdrawn their labour. At a subsequent mass meeting, only two operatives out of 1,000 voted to accept a union official's recommendation for a return to work.

The union membership then adopted the position that rather than merely restricting the strike to a call for the Compromise Agreement to be put into effect, leaving the outstanding six issues still in the hands of the joint working party for negotiations, they put forward eight demands over the outstanding matters in dispute in the proposed incentive scheme, which they required to be met before a return to work would take place.

The operatives had decided then to press for the bonus scheme agreement to be concluded, in view of their history of the negotiations which had made them suspicious of management's intentions, and realising that with full support for the strike they felt strong enough to conclude the matter once and for all.

Within days of these eight demands being put to management, an offer was forthcoming from management which almost entirely met the demands of the operatives. Accordingly the settlement was accepted, and a return to work took place.

One of the main issues in contention was management's proposal that performance should be paid at 33%—which for Manchester operatives would have involved a cut in bonus on average of £7 weekly. The eventual offer was for an additional 15% on top of the 33%, which the unions are confident will mean that there will be no overall loss of earnings.

Managements often do claim, when substantially conceding to unions' demands during the course of a dispute, that the strike was unnecessary and that negotiations without recourse to strike action would have produced the same end result.

This point has been made by various representatives of the Direct Works management, and to this the convenors point out that even after a year of negotiations, and an anxiety by the unions to get rid of the anomalies, there were still six items to be resolved, and negotiations had not appeared to take the matter any further. A two week dispute had resolved all the matters in contention, leaving it to management to now introduce the new scheme, to the satisfaction of the operatives and their unions.

Yours fraternally  
Pat Skemp  
Blackley CLP

## "All this money and one has to walk"

Dear Comrades

On this evening's 'Tonight' programme I saw one of the first reports of this year's CBI conference. Interspersed with the predictable union-bashing and calls for belt-tightening on the part of workers, were a few hints as to the lifestyles of our bosses.

Delegates, apparently, have been asked not to park their Rolls Royces too close to the conference hall because this might suggest too affluent a lifestyle to observers. Before workers down tools and rush to the aid of these exhausted captains of industry who have to walk the extra 500 yards or so, it must be added that sustenance and comfortable surroundings for recovery are close at hand.

Not content with normal conference facilities at Brighton, £150,000 has been spent in organising and decorating the halls in just the right style—naturally, a rather natty blue. In a specially erected, chandelier-lit marquee, dinner can be ordered at the bargain price of £7.50, and no doubt the bars are doing a roaring trade throughout the day. Nothing like roughing it with those worker types, you know.

One thing, however, was clear from the conference report. All speakers on the opening day were united in their animosity to unions. The favourite term for describing these upstart organisations was that they were "unrepresentative of workers".

What the camera didn't show were the rows of faces wistfully shaking their heads and muttering, "If only it were true, if only it were true..."

Yours fraternally  
Alan Beynon  
York LPYS



modation—allowing the landlord to kick you out whenever he wants—and a 'fair' security of tenure for unfurnished flats.

Also a fixed let system whereby you would be bound to stay in a place for a fixed period of time, e.g. six months, making it difficult for you to move; and above all landlords should be allowed to charge 'economic rents'.

I live in a small bed-sit behind a shop. The bed-sitting room is 12 feet by 10 feet, the kitchen about the same size, and I pay £25 per week, plus of course heating, lighting, food etc. After two and a half months searching it was the best I could afford.

Have I also got a case for the European Commission of Human Rights? I am forced out to work just to try and make ends meet; and in every way I find capitalism discriminates against every worker. If I do, where am I going to get the thousands of pounds necessary to take it up?

Yours fraternally  
Dave Crack  
Croydon NW Labour Party



# GIVE US....

# A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

The government have 'won a vote of confidence' recently on the basis that the alternative would be the lunacy of Thatcher and Co.

But anyone active in the trade unions or canvassing for Labour on the doorstep will know the reaction to the government's policies.

All regular readers of 'Militant' know that given an opportunity to explain the basic ideas of socialism, these are enthusiastically taken up. Working people are looking for a solution to their problems and those of our class. But we must have a continued vote of confidence from you, our readership, in order to bring you the news, comment and analysis vital to the future of socialism.

Will you give us that vote of confidence, in hard cash, even if it's the first time you've read the 'Militant'?

This week's total of £1,536.64 is better than last week, but still below the £2,000 per week we need to reach our target. Don't leave it all to the last minute and then find you can't raise the money! **Send what you can now!**

Thanks especially to workers at DHSS Central Office

Newcastle contributing to £30 collected there, to Stirling University students for £25 and two readers in Swansea and Tyneside who gave £20 each.

J Cairney (Lanark) and a number of students in W Wales sent tenners, while Newcastle student supporters collected £7. Those donating fivers included Eddie Croke (Convenor, Kelvin Diesels, Glasgow), Cllr Bill Hicks (Tower Hamlets), Jane Spiers (Birmingham), Bob and Gill Jelley (Coventry), B White (Southend), R Barr (Bristol), T Surridge (Blyth) and G Hydes (Littlehampton).

R Thomas and K Mullen (Bristol and Nottingham USD AW respectively) sent £3 each, and £2 came from J McAllion (Dundee), M Lee (Oxford), and L Buckham and K Batchelor from Blyth LPYS, amongst others.

M & S Ward (Balham) sent a cheque for £3.75 and £4 came from D Woods (Harlow). The £1 donations included four Newcastle readers, A Auld, B Millett, R Phillips and R Todd, G Smart (Bristol), A Laird (Dundee), T Huzzard (Oxford), 'Liz' (Stafford), R Thomas (Llanelli), J Campbell (London), B Hollingsworth (unemployed,

Birmingham); and G Pierson (Leicester UPW).

The recent 'Militant' sellers rally gave a boost to this week's figure to the tune of £855—many thanks to all who contributed. A Militant Readers' Meeting in Nottingham collected £24.12 and discussion groups in Dundee (£3.70) and Huddersfield (£4.37); students at a Bristol Day School (£2.05) helped their targets along.

Good initiatives from Tyneside included a home-made appeal sheet in a hospital canteen, which attracted 80p in half an hour, and charging George (surname unknown) £1 for his first copy of 'Militant'. University Labour Club students collected a total of £6.50 and union conference expenses from a Newcastle reader (£6) were sent to us.

A Leeds POEU member also sent us a donation from union expenses. 'Extras' on badges came to £1.10 in Stirling and £1.20 in Tower Hamlets, and comrades charged £2 for lifts in Eastbourne and 54p in Huddersfield.

A helpful £13 was the result of a social in Dorset and panto tickets were popular in Lanark (£11.20), Dundee (£8.10) and Southend (£7). £4 was donated with the (coded?)

## FIGHTING FUND - TARGET £70,000

Area	Target	Proportion of target received	Received
Eastern	4,400		2,651.58
Hants & IOW	2,100		2,336.81
Humber side	2,200		1,661.37
Lancashire	1,500		646.70
London: North	7,700		5,932.60
London: South	3,800		3,093.27
Manchester & Dist	2,900		1,835.13
Merseyside & Dist	4,500		2,644.49
Midlands East	4,400		2,771.65
Midlands West	7,400		5,427.28
Northern	4,900		3,298.43
Scotland East	2,500		1,659.98
Scotland West	2,900		1,706.52
South East	2,300		2,205.26
South West	2,300		2,056.31
Thames Valley	1,700		1,353.12
Wales East	2,000		1,543.61
Wales West	2,300		2,048.13
Yorkshire	5,200		2,952.64
Others	3,000		6,288.18
<b>Total</b>	<b>70,000</b>		<b>54,113.06</b>

message: "a debt repaid—good luck in Tipton" and 50p came from 'washing' in Coventry, but the comrades don't say who washed!

Extras on posters produced £2 in Gwent, and domino card profits included £5.30 from Blyth. A collection at a Nottingham party helped by £1.50 and a LPYS bingo win (Tyneside again!) of £10 was

also sent to us. Christmas catalogue surplus from Huddersfield contributed £8.42, and sales of food and drink from Stevenage, the Isle of Wight and South London together brought in nearly a fiver.

Tickets are now available for the 'Militant' New Year draw. There are really marvellous prizes, including a

holiday in America! The dream of a lifetime could be yours for only 10p.

Selling these tickets must be one of the least painful ways of raising money and ensuring your area passes its fighting fund target by Christmas.

**THIS WEEK:**  
**£1,536.64**

## WORLD BOOKS

Marx and Engels:—  
Communist manifesto... 15p  
Lenin:—  
Left-wing communism... 25p  
State and revolution... 25p  
Trotsky:—  
Marxism and the trade unions... 25p  
Cannon:—  
Socialism on trial... £1.25  
Reed:—  
Ten days that shook the world... £1.25  
Tressell:—  
Ragged trousered philanthropists... £1.50

### MILITANT PAMPHLETS

Grant:—  
Menace of fascism... 40p  
Silverman and Grant:—  
Bureaucratism or workers' power?... 30p  
Order from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN  
Please add 25% to cover postage. Autumn booklist now available.

## 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

BATH Militant Public Meeting 'What Militant Stands For'. Speaker: Richard Sheppard (Bristol NUR No 4 branch). Century House, Pierrepont Street, Bath. 7.30 pm. Monday 20th November

CAERPHILLY Militant Public Meeting 'The Fight for a 35-hour Week' Speaker: Terry Burns (Bedwellty Labour Party) Twyn Junior School, Caerphilly 7.30 pm. Monday 20th November

PETERBOROUGH Readers Meeting 'The 5% and the Socialist Alternative'. Speaker: Mike Cleverley (Walthamstow CLP). Wednesday November 29th. 7.30 pm. Coalheavers Arms, Park St, Peterborough

TYNESIDE Militant Readers Meeting. Subject: Iran. Speaker: John Pickard. Friday November 17th. 7.30 pm. Committee Room A, Students Union, Newcastle University

## DISCUSSION GROUPS

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

NEWCASTLE Marxist Discussion Group. Every Friday, 3 pm, Students' Union, Level 6, Newcastle University. Phone Newcastle 774948 for details

SUNDERLAND Marxist Discussion Group. Wednesday November 22nd, 8.00 pm. 'Industrial Democracy'. For further details contact Diane English, Sunderland 44365

## CLASSIFIED

ISLE OF WIGHT LPYS Youth Campaign Against Unemployment Public Meeting: 'Fight for the 35-hour Week'. Tuesday 21st November, 7.30 pm, Sunday School Hall, Carisbrooke. Speakers: John Mew (Secretary, NUPE Isle of Wight branch); Cathy Wilson (Labour PPC, Isle of Wight)

CHELMSFORD YCAU Meeting. 'Action Now for a 35-hour week'. Speakers: Phil Frampton (Chairman, LPYS); Ian Burge (Secretary, London Hospital Joint Shop Stewards Committee). Wednesday November 22nd, 8.00 pm, AUEW Hall, Primrose Hill, Chelmsford

To Sandra and Ian Jenkinson of Portsmouth — a daughter, Emma, 3rd November

## Militant Irish Monthly

November issue out now

- ★ National wage agreement
- ★ Labour in Dublin
- ★ Education
- ★ Zimbabwe

Price 8p. Order from MIM, 75 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin 1.

## MILITANT INTERNATIONAL REVIEW Autumn 1978

Articles on: Spain; Communist Party; Sri Lanka  
Price 40p + 10p postage and packing

Order now from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN, or your local seller

## 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.

## BLACKTHORNE RECORDS



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PEGGY SEEGER & EWAN MacCOLL

dealing with

Racism. Wife-battering. The Nuclear Threat. The Fight against Fascism. Apartheid.

**LAW AND ORDER** PROPERTY AS THEFT

£2.75 (P&P incl) from Blackthorne Records, 35 Stanley Ave., Beckenham, Kent, BR5 2PU.

## 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 £4 for 6 column centimetres [maximum 25

words] and £2 for 3 column centimetres [maximum 15 words]. Rates for display are: £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!



# 'We've never been stronger'

I believe that we are in a stronger position now than during the nine week strike in 1971, due to the backing of the labour movement.

Becket has got an increase of 80%, while they offer us a pathetic package of 16%. Where's the fairness of that? Last week's mass meeting in Port Talbot was very good. The penalty clauses were totally exposed for what they are. We felt we were entitled to a bigger share of the £300m profit.

Of all those who spoke, not one spoke in favour of the agreement.

Apart from the other important demands of the claim, we feel very strongly about the issue of holiday pay. At present, we are paid holiday pay at the bare day rate, which must mean that we are losing about £100 per year, as normally throughout the year we work and are paid for a three shift system.

We have demanded time and a third for holiday pay. The company has offered us this but has withdrawn our bonus of £70 (which they

recently offered to increase to £80 in this deal). We are not prepared to make this concession.

*Management have blamed absenteeism for many of Ford's problems. What do you think?*

First of all, absenteeism arises from the boring nature of the job itself. Management treat the workers as just another machine.

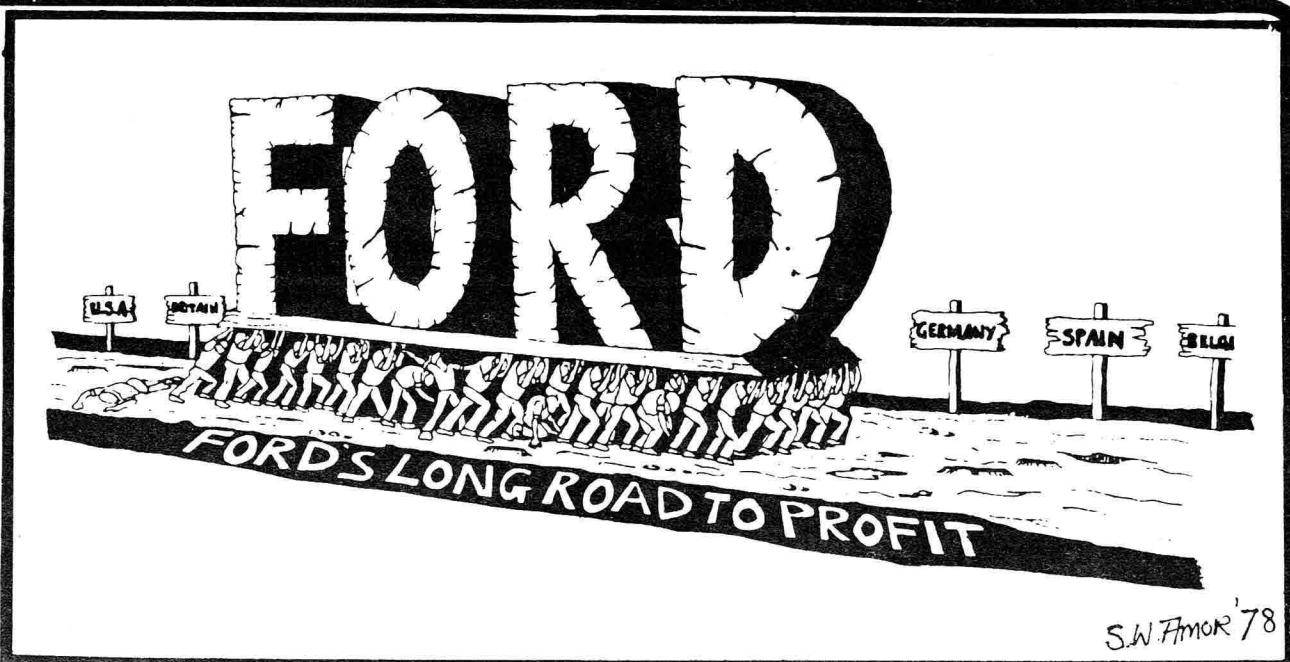
A lot of the lines have too high scores. In order to have a breather, it's like 'Beat the Clock!' In order to cut corners you break your neck and expose yourself to injury.

And now they talk of a self-financing productivity deal!

My machine is forty years old—what position would I be in with a productivity deal? Like it said in the *Militant* the other week, the chap from Halewood estimated that with the machine he works on, he'd be lucky to get £3 bonus a year!

**John Davies**

(AUEW Swansea) spoke to 'Militant'



## IT'S A SHOP-FLOOR STRUGGLE



Orville Foulkes [right] talking to Ed Bober

photo: Julian McKittrick (Militant)

### FORD SPEND £15,000 - ON LETTERS

In the week after the massive rejection of the company's offer the strike seems to have faded from the news. It's almost as if the media think that by ignoring us the strike will go away.

The company sent us all another letter. That's £15,000 they have spent in sending out letters now.

As usual it was full of half-truths and misleading statements. They said the unions had refused to negotiate on the 'attendance payments plan', and that if they had, an acceptable formula could have been reached.

This is an outright lie. It was the unions who suggested that a sub-committee should be set up to look at the

company's proposals.

This committee met for two hours and for two hours the company refused to give way on any of their penalty clauses.

How can you negotiate with some one who just says no all the time?

**Ford electricians protest at EETPU executive's decision see page 4**

I think we are in a strong position. We have never been in a stronger position. The stewards are solid behind our officials, the pickets are high spirited.

The Dagenham works is still very much a viable proposition—that is the main criteria of whether the company will pay or not.

After our last wage increase in October '77 our tax and national insurance went up. By this year we have lost well over one third of it. Directly over the rise, average take-home pay with overtime was £76. Now in 1978 it's about £70.

People are misguided by the mass media. People are under the impression we earn £90 to £100 a week. Some of those blokes, I know for a fact go home with less than £50.

We are doing a shift system: if you take the shift allowance away we are one of the lowest paid sections in the whole of industry. A man with a mortgage finds it very difficult on present wages.

I am married with three kids. My income was not that great before I came out on strike. It's a struggle on strike, but a worthwhile one.

Then if you see some of the working conditions that the workers contend with, especially on the line it's terribly monotonous and boring. We have appalling toilet and changing facilities.

And the attitude of management, they just want to push you around and get away with as much as they can. 'The Times' called it trench warfare—it is trench warfare.

A lot of people ask why we are against productivity deals.

The company's idea of a productivity deal is that we would all go back inside the plant on worse conditions than when we came out.

If a section of the workforce has a grievance the company want to be able to switch them to working on another section, rather than deal with the grievance.

People ask why output is lower compared to Germany. Look at the tooling arrangements in Britain compared to Germany—it's like chalk and cheese. The majority of presses have been here since the plant was made. Actually some of them are pre-war.

The shop stewards' committee has led a vigorous campaign to get the company to install a new press for part of the Fiesta during the shut-down last summer. It took the pressure of the working class to get manage-

ment to install it.

What is your attitude to the negotiations?

Many representatives from the shop floor now sit on the National Joint Negotiating Committee. Now that we have these lay representatives, shop stewards from the plants, it's a struggle from the shop floor instead of just trade union officials.

In has always been our intention to negotiate from the floor direct with the company, using our strength at a national level.

**Orville Foulkes [EETPU shop steward, Dagenham body plant] talked to Ed Bober [London Labour Party Executive] during a lobby of Transport House.**

# NO LIFE OF LUXURY

Reading the article in last week's 'Militant' about the woman who was having problems with the DHSS, I thought other readers might be interested in some of the difficulties the Ford strikers have experienced.

In the Southampton plant there are 4,000 workers. Up to two weeks ago only 2,000 had claimed, and the local DHSS manager estimated that only 50% of those would be paid.

Nationally the DHSS have only paid out £170,000 to Ford strikers; the T&G alone

have so far paid out £2 million.

Those figures alone give some idea of how difficult it is to get any money when you are on strike. So much for Maggie Thatcher and her cronies when they say that the social security system in this country subsidises strikers.

However the figures don't tell the whole story. It's only when you look at some individual cases that you can see why some people vote to go back to work, against their wishes.

One man in our plant has fallen behind with his rent—

only a couple of weeks, but the council still sent him a letter telling him that if he didn't pay up they would evict him. He's a single man so he can't claim anything from the social, but he still went down to see if they could help.

All they told him was that he had a car so he could sleep in that. Fortunately the union got in touch with the council and they withdrew the eviction notice.

Another Ford worker was threatened with a summons over his rates. Social Security told him that he had a capital asset (his house) and he could

use that to raise money.

Even in cases where people are entitled to money, mysterious delays can happen.

In my plant a man whose wife worked for the first two weeks of the strike, informed them of this and gave them the name of her employer. They didn't pay him any money because they claimed they had no proof of what she had earned, even though he was only claiming for the weeks when she didn't work.

A couple of the stewards took his case up and, surprise surprise, a few days later he received a cheque for

£48.

However even for those of us who do receive some money we are not living a life of luxury.

We are allowed £11.60 for a wife, £4.10 for children under five and slightly more as they get older. On top of this they pay the rent or mortgage interest and rates.

In my particular case they estimate that I need just over £23 a week to live on, but they deduct any income I receive from strike pay, income tax rebates, child benefit etc. This means that by the time they have taken all that into

account I get £8.66 a week from them. When the union paid out two weeks' strike pay, I got £2.66.

**It makes me laugh when the press and media talk about people being intimidated at mass meetings to vote for a strike. If anything the boot is on the other foot; people are put under enormous pressure to vote for a return to work.**

**By John Kelly (Ford Southampton worker)**



# GKN NATIONAL STRIKE

By Don Lemmons

(AUEW shop steward  
(GKN Laycocks, Sheffield)

## -United fight on pay

On Monday November 20th, GKN workers throughout the country will be engaged in a national strike against the 5% pay policy.

It has been called by the GKN Workers' Association, made up of representatives from the vast majority of GKN plants throughout the country.

We have recognised that to

effectively fight against the pay policy, we need to act as a collective body, as opposed to individual plants.

We have learned from hard experience that the Social Contract is merely a device for lowering living standards. All

the promises made are hollow. That's why we are fighting the 5%.

My own plant, Laycocks in Sheffield, does not have its settlement date until June 1979, while some GKN plants are in negotiations now as

their settlement date has arrived. But if we are to breach the 5%, we have to ignore the normal settlement dates and act as one body.

**So we are calling the one day stoppage to fight for GKN workers as a whole.**

Wage restraint has caused extreme anomalies in pay, particularly on piecework. At Laycocks, on the same labour grade—two men classed as doing the same job—there can be a difference in earnings of anything up to £19-£20 and more per week.

Six men may be working on a line and get times for a job. Then two leave: the four men do the same production and

arrive at six men's wages.

This not only causes anomalies, but also reduces the employment of new workers.

Obviously as an individual plant, we have little chance of alleviating these anomalies and getting a satisfactory result. That in itself shows the need to act as a body in collective action.



Productivity deal won't end long hours and low pay for railway workers

photo: Chris Davies (Report)

## RAILWAY PRODUCTIVITY DEAL

### -a hollow offer

By Kenneth Harper

(Portsmouth NUR)

The derisory pay deal the NUR has just negotiated for railway workers cannot be implemented unless ASLEF, the train drivers' union, agrees to it.

My hope, and the hope of many railwaymen, is that they oppose the deal, negotiated without proper reference to the NUR rank and file.

Under the much-publicised productivity deal, in addition to the 5% railwaymen have been told they will get an additional £3 per week (gross) provided they accept certain guidelines. But already British Rail management are claiming that freight traffic, and therefore productivity, is falling; they calculate a princely payment of £1.80 a week!

Although redundancies are not supposed to be necessary

to pay for this productivity deal, the NUR has accepted 'rationalisation'. In many areas, youngsters will not be recruited to replace retiring men, which we all know does nothing to help the unemployment situation amongst school leavers.

Since 1975, 16,000 railway jobs have been cut through 'natural wastage'. And there are still 9,000 vacancies in other railway positions, yet every day scores of trains in the South of England have to be cancelled because there is no guard or driver.

Management claim that they cannot fill these vacancies. Is it any wonder! The working hours for train crews are abysmally unsocial.

Not just ordinary shift work; on at 2 am one morning, perhaps 10 am the next, then back to 3 am. Over 50% of all guards recruited

on the Southern Region leave before completing 6 months with BR.

Ah, claim the Tory press, some railwaymen actually take home over £100 per week. In fact, the railways are so chronically undermanned that the average railwayman works 12 hours a week to try to keep the service going.

Thousands of railwaymen are below the minimum earnings level, and are forced to try to raise their earnings by overtime.

**Accept 5% and the productivity deal? We should say NO!** The NUR claims it is making strides to achieve a 35-hour week. Don't they realise that men on average are working 52 hours a week to get a living wage?

'Collective decision-making' with the government (an incomes policy), claims Bro. Weighell, means the NUR are

making great steps towards trade union involvement in the running of the economy. Doesn't he realise that you can only plan what you also control? 'Planning' wages under capitalism does nothing to help the working man!

Railwaymen should oppose the cuts in services. We should oppose the derisory productivity deal and demand a filling of all vacancies. Measures must be taken to reduce the excessive overtime working by paying a guaranteed minimum wage, to provide work for the unemployed.

We reject the approach whereby public industries are forced to exploit consumers to balance their books. Let us have more democratic control of the nationalised industries and an integrated transport system within a planned economy!

## LIVINGSTON STRIKES GET OFFICIAL BACKING

Two strikes are taking place in the Livingston New Town area of Midlothian.

One involves 250 workers at the British Petroleum depot in the village of Pumpherston. BP developed from the shale mining industry, which produced paraffin, and Pumpherston, now a tiny part of the BP empire, was its first headquarters.

An overtime ban and work-to-rule was put into effect three weeks ago over management's failure to keep to agreements at domestic level, and a long-standing claim for parity with other BP plants. Pumpherston workers are approximately £17 a week lower paid.

Then on Tuesday 31st October a man was told to fill two tankers at the same time. His shop steward told him to refuse. He was given a verbal warning and told that if he continued to refuse he would be given a written warning, then dismissed.

A mass meeting was called and the work-force voted to go on strike. After meetings with full-time officials of the T&GWU, they were told that it would be made official.

At **Ashton Containers**, Livingston, during a joint maintenance (AUEW and EETPU) shop stewards' meeting with the Bristol and Clay Cross stewards in June, the Livingston stewards discov-

ered that a national agreement in 1975 meant they were being underpaid for shift work.

The stewards claimed that they were due back money under this agreement. Management agreed to pay the new shift rates, but not the back pay to 1975. They wanted an arbitrator to decide.

The AUEW and EETPU full-time officials decided against going to arbitration, as the agreement was clearly what the stewards claimed. They and management went to a meeting with ACAS but ended with a failure to agree.

Four weeks ago the maintenance workers therefore

decided to withdraw their labour. A maintenance squad of management staff supervised by two skilled electricians, the factory engineer and the engineering supervisor, was formed.

This inflamed the maintenance tradesmen. Production workers in the G&MWU are at the moment operating machines that the management staff team are repairing.

On 2nd November the Falkirk District Committee of the AUEW recommended the strike be made official.

By Roddy Miller

(AUEW Convenor, Munro and Miller, Broxburn)

## ARNTZ

### 'Co-operation' means £18 wage cut

Ten members of the TGWU at Arntz Belt-ing Co., Longridge, Preston have been on strike since Friday 27th October. The Executive Committee of the TGWU are in the process of declaring the strike official. Shop steward Joe Dixon spoke to Steve Crookes [Preston Trades Council]

"Five shop stewards from the Londonderry plant, Northern Ireland, who have been on strike for three weeks in support of a pay claim, visited our factory to ask for support. The wage slips and copies of wage agreements they brought with them showed that for similar work as we were doing, they were getting about £18 per week more.

"We had heard rumours of this situation before. Only two days previous, management had told us that nobody in Londonderry was doing similar work for such money and that both workforces were on parity. We were also warned that if we supported the Londonderry strike we would get 5%, but if we co-operated we would be treated fairly.

"When the Londonderry stewards came we saw the effects of our past co-operation: £18 per person per week in lost wages for us and increased profits for them. Now the cat was out of the bag. Management said they couldn't give us parity because the Londonderry workers were overpaid.

"Now we have an agreement

By Steve Crookes  
(Preston Trades Council)

with the Londonderry stewards that no one group will settle without prior agreement from the other. The Londonderry stewards showed their solidarity by pledging that they would only start negotiations on the basis that our wages are brought up to their level for starters.

**"We ask for your support in our fight for decent wages:**

Picketing assistance; our factory is on the Shay Lane industrial estate which is well signposted. Blacking of all fan belts with the 'Optibelt' trade mark and all brand names produced by our company. As much financial support as possible—several strikers are sole family breadwinners (receipts given)."

No union members are crossing the picket lines and collections made in the local labour movement are beginning to come in. Requests for blacking have gone out to all T&GWU branches.

Longridge is largely a rural area, wages have tended to be low. This is one reason why the success of this strike is vitally important for the working people of areas like Longridge.

**Please send messages of support, finance, requests for further information to:- Joe Dixon, shop steward [T&G WU 6/359], 73 Ribbleson Hall Drive, Preston, and Ken McAdams, [AUEW shop steward], 69 Glenowen, Londonderry, N. Ireland.**

For details of the Londonderry dispute—see the November issue 'Militant Irish Monthly'

**CORRECTION.** In last week's interview, Jimmy McCarthy, Cammell Laird G&MWU convenor, was quoted as saying that men over 55 were not getting redundancy payments, and should have a decent pension to retire on. In fact he said men over 65.

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# Militant

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## BOSSSES BLACKMAIL DERRY WORKERS



LEC workers discuss their case with Joan Maynard MP

**Two hundred workers at LEC refrigeration in Derry have been involved in a bitter dispute with management. On 5 September management locked out the workers.**

**By Julian McKittrick**

Beginning as a dispute over a bonus agreement, it has now been turned into a battle to save the workers' jobs.

Last week, four representatives of the workforce came to Britain to win support for their struggle. As a result of their visit, Southampton dockers have agreed to black all LEC products and donated £100 to the strike fund.

Tony Saunois (Young Socialists' representative on Labour's Executive) and Ray Apps (Brighton Kemptown Labour Party) took them to see Joan Maynard MP who agreed to do all she could to

help them in their struggle. The workers who have been sent their P45s are receiving no money from the social security who claim they are ineligible because they are in dispute.

While lobbying Joan for support they also met Don Concannon (NUM-sponsored MP for Mansfield and minister responsible for industry in Northern Ireland).

While rank and file LP members and trade unionists have been keen to back these workers, unfortunately this junior minister was not. "That bloke's in the wrong party," was the response of the delegation, who were understandably taken aback by Concannon's introductory greeting: "So these are the Kamikaze pilots. If we support you," he said, "we'll lose the jobs." When asked by Alan (the convenor) about getting social security he merely said: "It's not my department."

LEC and other companies in Northern Ireland, as Alan said, "have been getting profits out of the workers for years and now they are taking our jobs." Concannon's answer was that "LEC owes you nothing at all in terms of money or jobs."

Unemployment in Derry now stands at 22%. Between 1976 and 1978 there has been

a net gain of only 200 jobs. If LEC closes this will be wiped out.

Concannon, however, appeared totally uninterested in these facts. "Derry has had more than its fair share of money and jobs," was his reply to the workers' demands for their jobs to be kept.

When Joan Maynard and the workers asked why the government can't take the factory over and allow the workers to run it, they got no answer.

The fight of these workers is crucial to activists in the labour movement in Britain. The response from Don Concannon has only made the LEC workers even more determined to fight for their jobs.

The strikers are contacting the NUM to protest at the attitude taken by this sponsored MP.

Money and support from workers in Britain is desperately needed and must be rushed to: LEC Refrigeration ATGWU, 56-58 Carlisle Rd, Derry, Northern Ireland.

increase taxation, curb the money supply, and cut public spending even more.

"Denis Healey's conversion to orthodox monetarism," commented the 'Sunday Times', "almost makes him one of the City's own."

This is the cruel logic of the government's policies. If we are not prepared voluntarily to accept sacrifice (for higher profits) through wage restraint, then we will have sacrifice imposed on us by means of the very policies advocated by Thatcher, Joseph and her Tory crew!

This is the road to disaster for the Labour government!

While supporting those workers now battling for decent wages and shorter hours, the labour and trade union movement must intensify the fight for a fundamental change of course by the Labour leaders in government.

For a start, the Labour ranks must demand that the government immediately implement the policy decided on by Party Conference for the nationalisation of the banks.

Let us get rid of the financial parasites who are running the economy—and trying to make us pay dearly for it!

## SUPPORT BAKERS

[Continued from page 1]

book to maintain production. Managers and supervisors are baking. Union members have been offered inducements to strike-break. And the concern felt by bakery workers for the

jured by a scab van, is being repeated up and down the country. As the East Midlands NEC member of the BFAWU said: "The Cossacks still charge the peasants but now they use three-ton bread vans."

In Canterbury following three arrests, a police Inspector has boasted to the local BFAWU secretary that every picket will be arrested if they try to stop vans entering the factory.

The democratic right to picket was won only through years of struggle and solidarity by the labour movement. If the last Tory government couldn't take this away from us, we cannot allow the bosses and police to trample over these rights under a Labour government.

The unity of the bakery workers has been magnificent. In Manchester, for example, the strike is 100% solid.

Unfortunately in certain areas van and lorry drivers have been delivering and collecting bread. The fight of the bakery workers is vital for all trade unionists. The initiative of the strike committee in Manchester in sending a delegation to lobby the local offices of the van drivers' United Road Transport Union should be taken up nationwide.

The employers are clearly determined to break the Bakery, Food and Allied Workers Union. Every union leader must make it clear that this is a threat to every trade unionist.

At the special conference this weekend BFAWU members will, without doubt, reaffirm their determination to win. The trade union movement must now swing behind the bakery workers to ensure a crushing and rapid victory.



Picket injured at a London bakery

old and sick has been cynically abused.

As the report from Wilkins Bakery in Bournemouth (see page 6) shows, bread produced for hospitals by striking workers who are donating their money to charity, has been used to supply distribution depots and shops.

The employers are using scare tactics, threatening to close factories if the claim is won. The press have tried to isolate and demoralise the bakery workers by claiming that the strike is crumbling. The claims of returns to work in many cases have proved to be lies; 6,000 workers at small firms have returned because they have in fact received their £10 rise!

Worst of all have been the physical attacks on pickets. The incident at the Mother's Pride Bakery in Manchester, where two pickets were in-

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## TAKE OVER BANKS

[Continued from page 1]

market). This bankers' bonanza follows a period of already high profits. In 1977/78 Barclays Bank, for example, increased its profits by 569%. The merchant bank, Guinness Peat, pushed up its profits by an incredible 1,268%. And the Sun insurance company increased its profits by 895%.

Now they will make even more.

When the City financiers have this sort of a grip on the

economy, what chance is there of economic policies to benefit the working class? The government's latest measures confirm how well advised the TUC was this week to stick to the policy decided at the TUC and Labour Party conferences and reject the government's 5% pay policy.

Denis Healey, with the backing of Callaghan, has now threatened that if the 5% limit is not kept, he will

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