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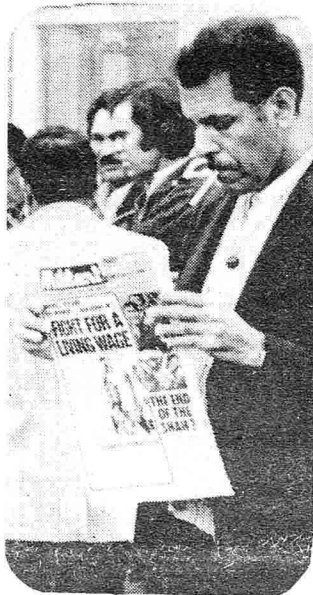
THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR AND YOUTH

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ALL UNIONS MUST BACK BAKERY WORKERS

“If the Federation can't pay a decent wage, then they have no right to be employers!”

This is Sam Maddox's answer to the pathetic plea of Rank-Hovis and Allied British Food that they can't afford to meet the Union's very reasonable claim.



The Trade Union Congress, all trade unions, and every section of the labour movement must back up the strike action of the Bakers Union. The bakery workers are now in the forefront of the struggle against wage restraint and for a decent living wage.

In answer to the claim of the Rank/ABF-dominated Federation that Grade D Plant Operatives are now being paid £70.85 for a 48-hour week, the Bakers' Union (BF&AWU) general secretary replies:

“No one, I repeat no

one, gets £70.85 unless they work Sundays and nights.

“If the Federation wants to make statements like that, I challenge them to settle now for £70.85 for 48 hours! That's the figure they state, not me.”

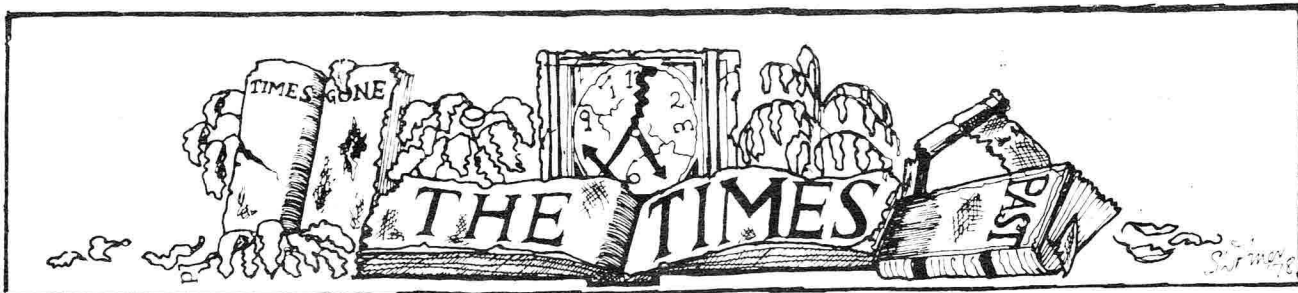
In answer to the Federation's assertion that “losing your union card has nothing to do with your legal rights,” Sam Maddox asks: “Why, then, does the union have to pay out thousands of pounds in legal fees to substantiate workers' compensation claims?”

The bosses claim there is “overmanning”. But how many times has every bakery worker had to work short-staffed?

The Federation denies that it is calling for permanent night-working. ABF, however, has sacked women who refused to go on permanent nights!

The Federation bosses are out to blacken the name of the union and to undermine its strength for very good reasons: Because the union stands

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TIMES BOSSES STAGE LOCK-OUT

Over 3,000 print workers from Fleet Street and outside joined NATSOPA's demonstration and lobby of parliament on Tuesday in protest against 'The Times' bosses' planned lock-out of the century—which still looks like taking place on 30 November.

The management of Times Newspapers Limited (TNL) claim that they presented their proposals to 'The Times' unions seven months ago. But most Times workers have had a chance to read and study the management's detailed proposals only in the last few days!

The truth is that seven months ago TNL presented

By Jim Brookshaw (AUEW, The Times)

an ultimatum to the unions: agree in principle to accept our broad conditions (on the key issues of disputes procedure and the introduction of new technology) or we will not discuss the details with you

at all.

When trade union rights and thousands of jobs were at stake, no union chapel could really afford to accept such an ultimatum.

Now it is quite clear: the TNL proposals were nothing but a manoeuvre to prepare the way for a major confrontation with the unions.

Behind the bosses of 'The Times', moreover, stand the other Fleet Street tycoons.

Their screams about the threat to the “freedom of the press” are so much hypocrisy when the national and provincial press is owned and controlled by a tiny handful of rich families and big business monopolies.

Behind the scenes the press barons are undoubt-

edly backing 'The Times'. No one knows how much cash they are prepared secretly to hand over to sustain TNL's lock-out.

In the case of 'The Times' and the 'Sunday Times' the owners are not so worried about a permanent loss of circulation, as they would be with “popular” dailies. All the press barons, who would like to impose similar conditions, have a vested interest in TNL smashing the print unions.

'The Times', of course, claims the unions are taking a Luddite stand against new technology. In a reasonable system of society, of course, new technology would save labour, shorten working hours and improve life for everyone. Everyone would welcome that!

Under the capitalist system, however, new technology means the dole queue for more and more workers. When the bosses talk of “new technology”, “social progress” and so on, what they really have

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FORD SANCTIONS

Ford indignantly claims that sanctions will cost them £60 million.

However, commenting on the Commons statement of Denis Healey—“who seemed uncharacteristically modest about disclosing the sanctions”—‘The Times’ [29 November] said he “left the impressions that the

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YCAU

PUT THE 35 HR WEEK

Last weekend ten industrial conferences were held in regions throughout Britain to campaign against unemployment with a 35-hour week. Nearly 2,000 delegates from trade unions, shop stewards' committees, Labour Parties and Young Socialist branches represented hundreds of thousands of workers.

- They committed their organisations to take up the fight for jobs with fighting, socialist policies:
- Put the 35-hour week in Labour's election manifesto
 - No redundancies—share out the work
 - Action now for a 35-hour week with no loss of pay
 - An end to wage restraint
 - A £70 national minimum basic wage
 - Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies under democratic workers' control and management, with compensation on the basis of proven need

YORKSHIRE

Doubling our expectations, 300 delegates from the Yorkshire trade union movement attended the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment Industrial Conference to discuss the call for a 35-hour week.

The mood inside the movement was felt throughout the discussion, a mood determined to fight for a shorter working week and to secure that gain by a defence of living standards and the basic wage.

In debate, Brother **Stan Lawrence** from the Leeds AUEW district committee, told the conference how he took part in the apprentice strikes of 1937 for better pay and shorter hours. Now unemployment was still a massive problem today.

In supporting the 35-hour week, Stan also called for retirement at 60 and even 55 in the future, a demand which would appeal to older workers in a struggle to end unemployment.

Conference showed its appreciation to all the platform speakers, like **Dennis Skinner** who said that parliament had MPs who did not work a 35-hour year. In taking an issue raised in discussion, he pointed to the good work being done by a number of MPs and asked the delegates not to view the role of left MPs in a blanket fashion.

The Tribune stood as a broad church and MPs should be looked at as individuals, as the 71 members of the Tribune vary. This was shown by only seven voting against the 5%.

A member of the Bakers' Union from Rotherham who

came straight from the morning picket line to attend the conference said how a 35-hour week would be marvellous in his industry. It would give him a seventeen hour reduction in the total of hours worked!

But if that happened today, bakers would be on less than £40 a week. That is why they are fighting for a 26% rise, which sounds a lot, but is only 10% on the basic rate of pay.

Conference gave its full support to these workers and warmed to other workers addressing the meeting who are involved in industrial struggle at the present time, including sacked striking bakery drivers in Scarborough and Tetley brewery workers.

In summing up the conference, Militant Editor **Peter Taaffe** said: "We are not yet back to the misery of the 1930s. But make no mistake, we will be back, and even worse, if we allow this system to continue. Only socialism can liberate working people from the problems of unemployment and the human misery that means."

Conference ended calling on delegates to organise local meetings on the issue and called on the TUC General Council to organise a rank and file rally to co-ordinate the fight for a 35-hour week.



photo: Andrew Ward (Report)

"We cannot allow the capitalist system to smash any union" —Sam Maddox at the London conference

LONDON

"As long as we have capitalism we'll have unemployment," declared YCAU President Eric Heffer MP at the London and South-Eastern industrial conference.

"When the Labour Party Young Socialists started to fight against unemployment under a Labour government some voices said it would rock the Labour Party boat. But nobody in the Labour Party can accept 1½m unemployed."

The myth peddled by the Tory press that the unemployed are scroungers was scotched by **Steve Glennon** from Stevenage who told of one worker there who had biked 50 miles one day looking for a job. As a result, he collapsed of a heart attack and was taken to hospital. But having to get by on Supplementary Benefit, his

wife couldn't afford to visit him!

CPSA National Executive member **Pat Byrne** demonstrated how a 35-hour week, taking people off the dole queue, would save the government money by not having to pay out unemployment benefit and other expenses. "So why not introduce a 35-hour week bill into Parliament? Because big business are mounting pressure against it as they would have to meet the cost out of profits."

The need for united action by the labour movement to counter this pressure was hammered out by **John Aitken** of Ford's National Joint

Negotiating Council. At Halewood, the Ford workers had made the demand for 35 hours the main issue, even more important than the wage rise, because of the mass unemployment there.

Ford had refused to reduce hours because, they claimed, their 'competitors' would have an advantage. But pressure was rising from the workers throughout Europe. Belgian workers had won a reduction in hours and the German workers were also fighting.

As a practical example of the unity of interests of the working class internationally, John explained that the reason why Ford workers had agreed to negotiate their annual claim in November from next year was to get into line with the Ford workers in Germany to prevent Ford's playing one off against the other. The need for internationalism was also expressed by the Chairman of Stavanger Trades Council, Norway, who gave greetings to the conference.

The biggest applause of the day was given to Bakery

workers' leader **Sam Maddox**. "When Spillers closed and laid off 5,800 workers our union seized the opportunity to demand a 5-day week, which we estimated would save 3,000 jobs. But the bosses haven't all kept this agreement—some bakery workers still have to work six days a week."

This was backed up by a bakery worker from Brighton who described how family life was disrupted by shifts. "You often don't get to see your kids at weekends."

LPYS National Chairman **Phil Frampton** summed up the mood of delegates when he said that "The lesson of four years of Labour government is that you can't solve workers' problems just by tinkering with capitalism. Eric Heffer was right about capitalism causing unemployment. The only way to end this scourge is to end the system which spawned it by nationalising the banks and the 200 big monopolies under workers' control and management so that we can build a socialist, planned economy."

BRISTOL

The YCAU conference attracted some 60 delegates. As Rolls Royce is by far Bristol's biggest single private employer, quite a lot of discussion was centred around the aerospace industry and the role that the 35-hour week campaign could play within it.

John Blackley (Chairman of Rolls Royce Production Shop Stewards' Committee) pointed out that the much discussed silicon chip was almost the culmination of years of increasingly capital intensive technology in industry. He estimated that over

the last 15 to 20 years, advanced machinery techniques had reduced jobs by a third in Rolls Royce, thus only a reduced working week could keep people in jobs and John had "no hesitation" in supporting the Labour Party Young Socialists in their call for a 35-hour week.

John Sharpe (Secretary of the AUEW TASS Youth Committee, Rolls Royce) showed what an expensive mistake Concorde had been, particularly for workers made redundant as a result of its failure to sell. Most of the work is now on products which are either never used at all or are used to kill workers in other parts of the world.

Socially useful goods should be produced. Worldwide, in fact, there is massive overcapacity in the aero-engine industry. "Workers' control and management is necessary to stop this chaos."

NORTHERN

Excluding Northern Ireland, the North East has always suffered from the worst effects of unemployment in the UK. At present the regional rate of 8.8% is almost twice the national average and it is the only region not to have seen a drop in unemployment over the past months.

With this sort of background, the prospects of Job Creation, 'Job supremos' or regional development holds little hope for the future, a point which was made forcefully during the course of the conference.

Neither did the conference feel that wage restraint had helped to reduce unemployment, in fact the opposite had probably happened. **Bill Connors** [USDAW National Organiser] speaking in a

personal capacity, pointed out that wage restraint had led to an increase in overtime working, something which had been actively encouraged by the employers.

Furthermore it had also been in their interests to line up behind the government's 5% and show that they could not give both an increase in wages and a shorter working week. Thus the 5% limit means either a continuing existence on the poverty line whilst in a job or a similar existence on the dole.

That is why **Brian Ingham** [Militant Industrial Correspondent] pointed out that wage restraint had to be rejected and the alternative of a 35-hour week with no loss of pay linked to a £70 minimum wage had to be taken up by the labour movement.

IN LABOUR'S MANIFESTO!



Above: part of the audience at the Yorkshire Conference
Below: Labour MP Eddie Lovden speaking at the North West Conference



SCOTLAND

"The minute the trade unions accept any redundancies they accept the argument of management that we have got too many workers," said bus conductor Alex Burns a delegate from the TGWU 7/11 branch, in talking about the redundancies in the bus services.

"They were 450 drivers short in Glasgow. What was the Greater Glasgow Transport Executive answer to this? Is it to make the job more attractive? Is it cut our working hours?"

"No, their answer was to

cut the services of the working people so that it doesn't look as though they are so many drivers short. They are now only 200 drivers short because they have taken buses off the road. This is typical of capitalism and of that system's answer to the problems of working people."

A shop steward from SOGAT, the printworkers' union, Jimmy Friel, told the conference: "People have said there is no unemployment in our branch and this is true because so many people have left the printing industry over the last few years. They have been forced to go to other jobs or gone elsewhere."

Jimmy Friel also put forward the idea of unemployed workers' trade union cards to

get identification with the unemployed workers from the trade union movement.

In talking about a shorter working week, Jimmy quoted from a song: "I'm looking for a job with a sky-high pay, with a four-day week and a three-hour day!" That may be a utopian demand under the profit system but the possibility with all the new technology of a much shorter working week is there if everything was harnessed to our benefits.

"We don't want to leave this system to our kids. We have suffered under it long enough and our parents suffered under it before us. We want to make sure that our kids aren't going to suffer under it."

A collection at the end of the meeting of £10 was raised for the workers at Weirs who are on strike at the moment.

WALES

The waste, despair and exploitation of mass unemployment was demonstrated by speaker after speaker at the Welsh Industrial Conference.

Rob Sewell gave an horrific account of the despair of one school leaver who was unemployed for six months alongside his father and brother. "He had been from factory to factory looking for work. Finally, walking home, he stopped at a pelican crossing in the high street.

When the traffic stopped, he knelt down and placed his head in front of a lorry's tyre. When the lights changed, the lorry pulled off killing the lad. How many working class

youth have committed or contemplated suicide under these appalling conditions?"

We want work

A CPSA member who works in a Benefit Office gave a further illustration of the plight facing working class youth. He told of a girl of seventeen who works for a local hairdresser on a Job Creation Scheme.

"She works from 9 am till

7 pm, six days a week, and receives £18 each week. This is against the rules of the scheme, but then the employer pays not a penny so why should he worry?"

Another example was that of a handicapped lad on a Job Creation Scheme who works day in, day out sweeping the floor. As this CPSA member said, "We do not want cosmetics, we want a change in society, so that these young workers can carry out useful work."

All these examples of the effects of the crisis laid the grounds for the conference to clearly state that "We want work" but not just any work, it must carry with it decent training and wages! At the end of the conference a Wales YCAU body was formed with Derek Gregory, Wales NUPE Assistant Divisional Organiser, elected President.

EAST MIDLANDS

"We're on the brink of a technological revolution," said Gary Freeman addressing the morning session at the East Midlands YCAU conference.

Gary graphically demonstrated how two alternatives face the working class, not just in Britain, but in the world. Either we accept a future of massive unemployment brought about by the development of technology in a capitalist system crippled with crises or the trade union and labour movement can harness the resources and technological development in society and use them to improve the standard of life for everyone.

Gary showed how from the 1860s onwards, although technology developed at a record pace, so too did employment at a time when the working population doubled and the capacity of machinery quadrupled. At this time British capitalism was in its heyday but from 1965 onwards the development of technology has led to a reduction of the standard of living for many workers and many have been thrown on the dole.

Capitalism can no longer harness the growing forces of production to benefit society.

In the afternoon session, a statement was read out from John Dilks, a member of the National Executive of USDAW, pledging full support for the YCAU and Joan

Maynard MP praised the LPYS and the YCAU for the work they do in the movement.

Nick Ramsall, AUEW member at GFC, in a stirring speech from the floor accused the present system of being more interested in selling tanks and guns to the Shah of Iran and making money out of death instead of producing heart and kidney machines to save life. He criticised the callous way the bosses at Lucas Aerospace rejected the plans and the shop stewards' proposals to produce these machines.

Over a hundred people attended the conference and £98 was collected.

NORTH WEST

260 delegates attended the North West industrial conference in St Georges Hall, Liverpool.

The meeting was opened by chairman Ray Williams, District Secretary of the NGA, who explained the need for a fight back against unemployment and low wages.

The first speaker was Frank Allaun, Labour Party National Chairman, who commented on the degradation of life on the dole. He pointed out that unemployment was a defect in the capitalist system and not in working people.

Tony Saunols, Labour NEC member, argued that it was our responsibility to challenge the leadership over the scandalous levels of unemployment. Mass unemployment was a permanent feature of capitalism which condemned whole families to the dole.

The 35-hour week could create over three-quarters of a million jobs. The bosses said

that they could not afford it but when had the bosses ever been able to afford the needs of working people?

Speakers from the floor highlighted the unemployment situation throughout the region, especially the continuing closures in Merseyside. A speaker from the Bakers' Union flying picket appealed for support on the picket lines and recounting her experience of the 1920s and 1930s called on the youth to go out and fight.

Kevin Scully, Vice-chairman of the Western Ship-repairers Action Committee, promised the support of his men on the picket line and then went on to thank the LPYS for the leading role they had played in the fight to keep the yard open.

Eddie Loyden MP demanded to know where the

government cash given to private industry was going. It clearly was not going to save jobs in Merseyside. It was time to open the books of the big firms and find out.

Mick Hogan (Garston LPYS) commented on his experiences of being unable to find a job since leaving school. He told of the isolation he felt from his mates who had been lucky enough to get a job and from the struggles of the workers in the factories.

He put forward that unemployed youth should be organised into a campaign against unemployment by the trade unions. That would mean the trade unions opening their doors to the unemployed. The bakery workers' dispute had shown that the unemployed will increasingly be used as a battering ram against employed workers, as scabs, unless they could be made to see that their interests lie alongside those of organised labour.

Reports from Plymouth and Birmingham in next week's 'Militant'.

NOLS National Committee

TWO STEPS FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK

A 35-hour week on the basis of a £60 minimum wage—this was the policy passed unanimously at the last meeting of the NOLS National Committee.

It was agreed to urge the adoption of these demands by the Labour Party in its next general election manifesto together with a policy of nationalising the banks and financial institutions. Unfortunately, however, the NOLS officers reiterated their opposition to the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment, arguing that they had no mandate to support it, ignoring the resounding echo the Campaign has now found within the labour movement.

Also disappointing was the failure of the National Committee to support the right of Andy Bevan, Labour Party Youth Officer, to co-ordinate the activities of the Labour Party Young Socialists during the coming general election to mobilise the youth vote, particularly in marginal constituencies. Mike Gapes, the Party's Student Organiser, argued that the LPYS was in a different legal position to NOLS, which, as an affiliated organisation, could maintain its activities during an election.

The National Committee therefore decided to refer the issue to the NOLS officers for further consideration. It is

By Mark Morton

NOLS National Committee

highly unfortunate that NOLS as the student section of the Labour Party should not back LPYS demands for Andy Bevan to help Labour's youth wing campaign effectively for a Labour victory amongst young voters at the next election.

On Iran, the National Committee expressed its solidarity with the Iranian workers in their struggle against the Shah's military regime. A resolution was passed unanimously, that pointed out that *democracy could only be achieved in Iran through the expropriation of capitalism and landlordism through a socialist transformation of society led by the working class.*

Very encouraging was the affiliation of 17 new Labour Clubs to NOLS. 10 of these support the ideas of 'Militant' and this is a testament to the serious political work carried out by 'Militant' supporters within NOLS.

It is a pity that the NOLS leadership do not use the machinery at their disposal to



campaign upon a bold socialist campaign capable of linking students to the strength of the labour movement. If this was done it would be possible to radically increase the size of NOLS at a time when whole new layers of students are looking for a solution to the day to day problems that face them.

Two issues arising from the National Committee are very disturbing and will, no doubt, anger the majority of NOLS activists. Firstly, Sheffield University Labour Club was suspended from affiliation on the grounds that in the past the club had affiliated to NOLS on a different constitution to that it had submitted to its student union.

This was despite the fact that a number of clubs have different constitutions to the

NOLS model constitution and that Manchester Polytechnic was allowed to participate in last year's NOLS conference even though it had a different constitution for its student union than for NOLS. Allegations that a member of Sheffield ULC was threatened with expulsion from the club are false. In fact, what was really a minor dispute within the club has been blown out of all proportion by the National Committee into an argument against the affiliation of the club to NOLS.

Secondly, it was decided that debts exceeding £5 from clubs to NOLS for literature outstanding since last academic year, if not settled by December 15th, will prohibit the club concerned from participating in NOLS conference. This appears as yet another almighty hurdle clubs

have to negotiate before conference.

One might ask whether the National Committee are intent upon slashing delegations in a bid to maintain the present political leadership intact.

Realistically, it will be impossible for Mike Gapes to collect details of such debts since the Labour Party's Financial Department admit they cannot be sure who owes what! All in all, calculated debts will be approximate, and by the time they are gathered together and sent to clubs, there will be little time left for clubs to settle; especially since it can take up to three weeks for a club to withdraw money from its student union.

The decisions of the National Committee will only increase the mounting bad feeling towards the NOLS

leadership which time and time again has safeguarded its position by changing and bending the rules to suit themselves. There will certainly be a storm of protest over the latest developments from Labour Clubs up and down the country.

Only when NOLS returns to the democracy that existed before the present leadership captured control at the 1975 conference will it be possible for real political debate to take place and for conference to truly represent the political ideas of the majority of NOLS activists. Only then will it be possible for NOLS, armed with a socialist programme and perspective, to become a mass organisation linking students to the labour movement and fighting for the ideas of socialism within it.

Blow to Leicester fascists



Militant supporters march against racialism

The National Front in Leicester received yet another blow to their activities on 10th November. The National Front had 'invited' Martin Webster, hoping for a large turn out which would give a morale boost to their flagging support in this area.

The anti-racist forces in Leicester were told that a clandestine NF meeting was to be held, but had little idea of who was to address the meeting until two days before it.

As a result a picket of the NF headquarters in Hunterstone Road (located in the middle of Leicester's Asian community as a deliberate act of provocation) was hastily organised and over 200 people turned up. The NF must have

been totally dejected as they only attracted a pitifully small audience of between 20 and 30 people.

The picket surrounded the NF headquarters in four strategic positions. At the back entrance of their headquarters, an NF member replied to the pickets by indecently exposing himself through the window.

This act of frustration was obviously caused by the effect the pickets had on the NF

meeting.

This is the third occasion this year that the NF have tried to mobilise at their meeting place en masse, and for the third time they failed completely.

A consistent campaign must be waged to ultimately smash the NF activity once and for all by involving the labour movement, centred around the local Trades Council and Indian Workers' Association, to prove to the NF that the Leicester labour movement will not stand for their continued racist activity.

Heather Rawlings

NO HOUSING CUTS- Say London Labour

Almost 200 delegates attended a Special Housing Conference of the Greater London Regional Council (GLRC) of the Labour Party held at Congress House on Saturday November 18th.

Since the Tories won control of the Greater London Council in May 1977 they have had a policy of massive cuts and redundancies. A key part of their strategy is to wash their hands of any responsibility for housing by transferring all GLC housing stock to the 32 London Boroughs with consequent redundancies in GLC

housing administration and the GLC direct labour department.

Constituency Labour Parties, the GLC Labour Group, a number of Labour groups in the London Boroughs and the trade unions involved have shown a determination to fight the Tories on this issue. Responding to widespread rank and file pressure the GLRC of the Labour Party took the significant step of convening a special conference on housing with representatives from CLP's, Labour Groups and affiliated organisations.

Unions represented emphasised their total opposition to any transfers, pointing out that many Tory Boroughs are already cutting back on their own staff.

This Conference marked an important step forward in building a united opposition of London Labour Boroughs to the Tory GLC, but the task of formulating a consistent socialist strategy to solve the housing problems of the capital city has yet to be worked out.

By Carol Bevan

Delegate
Newham NE Labour Party

SOCIALIST POLICIES TO DEFEAT THATCHER

"To get rid of wage restraint we need to change the system and the Labour government's policies," declared Ford worker Jess Collins at Daventry's first Militant Public Meeting.

The 20 comrades present listened attentively to Tom Smith (Chairman British Leyland Special Products Combine) as he laid bare the bleak prospects facing capitalism in Britain. The real decline of Britain's industrial base was

illustrated by manufactured and semi-manufactured imports rising from 5% of market share 25 years ago to 56% now.

It was against this background that a Tory government could be returned with a 'lunatic' Thatcher at the helm and the monkey Joseph on her shoulder, due to disillusionment with Labour. This would make Heath look like a nursemaid!

There was a lot of discus-

sion on whether a Tory government launching attacks on the trade unions and workers' living standards would provoke the overthrow of capitalism more rapidly. But the feeling of the meeting came out for the return of a Labour government committed to a socialist programme.

By Brian Debus

LEFT & RIGHT

"Her Royal Highness"

Dozens of servicemen took part in a major operation last Wednesday manning RAF Benson base in Oxfordshire, so that a Wessex helicopter could speed Princess Anne from her Gloucestershire home to an engagement near Reading.

She decided against taking a one-hour drive each way along the M4, despite the fact that the base had to be kept open specially, and the helicopter guzzles gallons of fuel per mile. Last spring Princess Anne used a plane to take her to a similar engagement in Cambridge.

A Palace spokesman observed that "the Princess clearly felt she needed the service...She took the helicopter because it is not comfortable to wear evening dress in a car."

Apart from providing a possible explanation of her title "Her Royal Highness", such monstrous extravagance is an affront to the working people, faced with hospital closures and other welfare cuts. It puts the British Royal Family in the same bracket, in that respect, as Nero, Ivan the Terrible, the Bourbons and the Romanovs!

The bus shelter gang

Tory propagandists who talk of the benefit of free enterprise in sorting out the problem of transport in big cities may like to see the results in New York. The existence of any form of bus service in that city seems to be sufficient public enterprise for the City Council. According to 'The Times', adequately marked bus stops are a rarity, and until recently bus shelters were unknown.

Now capitalism has come to the "rescue". Two rival companies are fighting a bitter battle over who should supply these shelters, financed by profits from advertising. One firm, Bustop Shelters Inc., is being accused by the other of "extortionate type activities" and the FBI is looking into allegations of criminal actions. The firms rival each other in the promises of how much of the enormous profits the city will receive, and are even bickering over the number of bus stops there are in the city to be covered over. Efficiency? More like chaos.

Imitating the bosses

Even the capitalist media have had to publicise recently details of the tax avoidance schemes and perks the bosses enjoy. Now the big business backed Aims group has decided that the best form of defence is attack.

They have published a book 'The Newest Profession' in which they castigate trade union leaders as a new ruling class. The author of this tract claims that union chiefs receive expenses, perks and payments for serving on quangos [Quasi autonomous Non-government Organisations], putting them ahead of judges, professors, exporters and other 'important' people.

Aims are of course being totally hypocritical. It is their supporters who are the ruling class, owning industry and creaming off all the wealth of Britain. It is their supporters who garner the bulk of the perks in society. The bosses are using an opportunity to demand an "independent" enquiry into trade union finance. The only way to combat these attacks is for the rank and file of the movement to insist that their organisations vet all expenses and outside interests of their leaders.

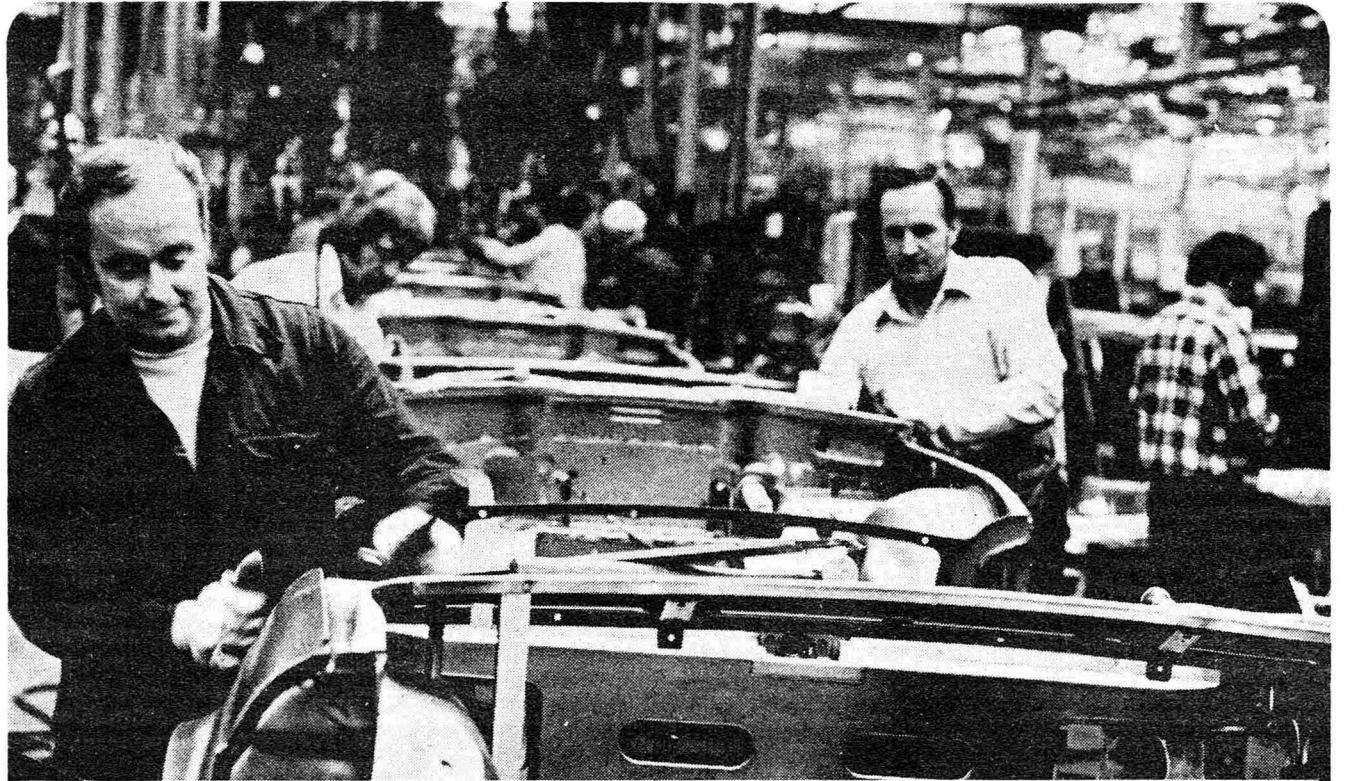
After all, how can they represent us if they imitate some of the worst habits of the bosses?

A planned economy

The Chinese government recently announced that steel output this year had already reached 28 million tonnes and would reach 30m by the end of the year. Despite all the disruption caused by the undemocratic control by a large caste of bureaucrats in China, the advantages of a planned economy are obvious.

Steel production is perhaps the most important indicator of industrial strength. In 30 years since the Chinese revolution, that country has been transformed from an extremely backward peasant economy suffering from constant famine and terrible diseases to an increasingly important industrial country.

Compare this to the situation in Britain where a rapid decline in steel production parallels that in industry generally, and the failure of capitalism is obvious.



Production at Speke

Photo: Angela Phillips (IFL)

WHAT HAPPENED AT SPEKE?

A review by
Alan Runswick
(Wallasey LPYS)

The closure of Standards No. 2 plant at Speke was a disaster for the Merseyside labour movement. 3,000 jobs were lost—without a serious struggle. Beynon's pamphlet, commissioned by the Standards T&GWU 6-612 Branch, explains how they got away with it. It is vital reading for every trade unionist.

The Tory press has embarked on a vicious campaign against Leyland. A picture of the Merseyside car worker especially has been built up by the media—lazy, strike-happy, rushing like lemmings to bankruptcy. The closure was "the workers' own fault."

Beynon, in contrast, documents the history of under-investment and mismanagement at Speke and throughout Leyland—investment running at half the level of major competitors, with devastating effects.

A worker points out:—"... (at Standards) there were no tools. All the special hammers and things which we used at Fords, they didn't have them—they'd never heard of them. At Fords if you had a door panel with a crease in they had a tool which you used to straighten it out. At Standards they would just scrap those doors."

This was compounded by government and management incompetence. For example: "They had this car with a windcooled engine and they were testing it in the garage. They put it on the roller bed and ran the car. We said to

them: 'You'll need a wind tunnel with that'. They didn't listen. They ruined the engine. Two hundred times they did that."

The managers responsible for this, and other incompetence have been re-employed, to give other Leyland workers the benefit of their 'management skills'. Leyland, backed by the NEB and the Labour government, had decided that the Speke workers had to pay. Such was the logic of profitability and rationalisation. They decided to close Speke No. 2 plant—but they still had to carry it through.

The Speke workers were set up by a strike deliberately provoked by management. Beynon quotes Ron Powell, a worker asked to take part in BBC 2's 'Brass Tacks' programme: "They told me that they had three managers who were prepared to be interviewed (in silhouette, to conceal their identity) and say that the strike was provoked. It didn't happen like, but the people at the BBC told me that they had the evidence."

The Leyland's Board even admitted that if the plant had produced at full production throughout 1977, it still would have closed.

The issue chosen to provoke the strike was retiming of jobs

on the mean 1 day work system without union agreement. The workers struck. Management sat tight for sixteen weeks, then announced the closure of the plant. Shaken, the workers returned to fight—only to end up accepting the redundancy carrot. But why?

The bosses had carefully undermined the fighting spirit of the workers—lay-offs, the long strike, and the constant press propaganda about Leyland not being "viable". An atmosphere of inevitability about the closure had been created.

The trade union leaders, without an alternative socialist strategy, accepted the crazy capitalist logic of 'rationalisation'. Shamefully, the Confed executive recommended acceptance of the closure.

The shop stewards were embroiled in a fake 'participation' scheme—though the "Cars Council" was not even informed of the closure! And crucially, the stewards had allowed the men to become isolated and prey to the media.

In sixteen weeks, two mass meetings took place—to call the strike and to call it off. Beynon quotes a worker: "The worst thing that you can allow to happen is ...a

vacuum...The boss gets in there and fills it with his ideas. And that's what happened to us."

Towards the end the stewards began to look at alternative production, more useful than expensive sports cars—invalid cars, low-pollution cars. But this was not convincingly developed to take root as a viable plan in the workers' minds.

Faced with a closure backed by the Labour government and the unions—their own representatives—the workers saw no possibility of a successful fight. The stewards recommendation to oppose closure was lost, and the plant shut down.

This is an angry pamphlet. It slams the bosses, and those in the labour movement who are not prepared to fight them.

Most importantly, it shows the pitfalls facing any Shop Stewards Committee in a struggle against redundancies, and the need for a conscious, socialist leadership to win such battles. In honestly analysing their defeat, the T&GWU 6-612 Branch has made a vital contribution to future victories.

"What happened at Speke" By Huw Beynon. 50p. Can be obtained from Branch Secretary, 6-612 Branch T&GWU, 38 Caldwell Road, Allerton, Liverpool 19. Special terms for Shop Stewards Committees and trade union branches.

A Worker Wakes up to Reality

Look mate, don't call me Comrade,
I'm not like you, I've got it made.
With a house and a car and a colour telly,
Me a wage slave? not on your nelly!
I should worry! Try to be rational,
I'm working for a multinational

With the whole Common Market at its back,
What's the chance of me getting the sack?
So don't let's argue any more.
Switch on the telly for the latest score.
If me eight draws come up,
I'll tell you what,
We'll buy out the Pubs, and knock back the lot!
What's that he's saying? A

late news flash?
Sensational Multinational crash!
Bloody wars! It can't be true!
With me mortgage and jam jar licence due.
It's lucky I managed to save a few bob,
But at my age what chance will I stand for a job?
Gawd, the old woman won't half raise a shout

When she knows our holiday cruise is out.
Still, with firms of that size going bust,
Who the bleed'n hell can you trust?
Come on now tell me, what would you do
To stop this sort of thing happening to you?

F. Thain, Slough.

Don't let the Nazis wreck the unions

In a recent issue of the 'Morning Star' (1 November), Tom Sibley, a member of the Communist Party's 'race relations advisory committee', decided to take a look "at the vital issue of how trade unionists should respond to National Front members in their own ranks."

Condemning the capitalist press's hypocritical outrage when the National Union of Railwaymen began to take action against NF members within its ranks, Tom Sibley rightly observed that developments like the NF 'Railwaymen's Association' present a challenge the unions cannot ignore.

Infiltration

He then went on, however, to define and qualify the NUR's action in a way that has appalled NUR members who have been actively fighting NF infiltration and have opposed the NUR leadership's retreat on its original promise of action against fascists within the union: "The NUR has gone to great lengths to stress that it is not National Front or any other political affiliation which is being brought into question. Only where racist members use the union's machinery to further activities would disciplinary action be taken against them."

"In other words, it is racist activity which exploits the union machinery which is under attack, not political affiliation."

There are socialists within the union, it seems, who do not understand the Communist Party's nice distinction between "affiliations" and "activity".

"The Trotskyist left, led by the Militant Group,....has been pressing for all National

Front members to be expelled from their unions."

This, asserts Sibley, is wrong: "We should absolutely clear. Trade unions are mass organisations organising workers on an industrial basis and with their own democratic structures and rules."

"Within these structures there is a constant political struggle involving forces of the left and right, and trade unionists of all political affiliations and none."

"As long as the struggle is conducted within the rules of the movement, then there can be no question of using the union machine to squash political differences."

"Such demands must be resisted. People's ideas do change. Many NF members, through their trade union experience, can be won for the broad aims of the movement. What is required is not expulsion for Front membership, but a political struggle against all forms of racism, not least in the field of ideas, particularly when it exploits the union machinery."

Sibley argues that for Trades Councils, for instance, to ban NF members would bring "into question the right of union branches to elect delegates of their own choice."!!!

Incredibly, the so-called Communist Party equates working class measures against fascists with attempts by the right wing to move against the left within the movement! "This is no academic issue—bans and proscriptions have operated in individual unions

the unions

at TUC and Labour Party level for decades, and they have been used against the left and Communist Party members in particular...

"In my view it would be

wrong to deprive individual trade unionists of their democratic rights on the basis of their political views alone. It is another matter when these views are translated into



NF thugs: threat to trade unionists

photo: Jake Sutton

"I think Tom Sibley first makes the cardinal mistake of equating Front members with backward types who have racist ideas [Thatcherite supporters]. It raises the question of where you stand if a backward Tory trade unionist stood up in a branch and started supporting Thatcher's or Powell's arguments. Would you move his expulsion?"

No, you would argue strongly against him and try to keep him out of any position; but a fascist, that's a totally different question.

The NF is not just another racist organisation, it is a fascist organisation, and fascism, to repeat the lessons of the past which it seems is necessary, stands for the destruction of all organised bodies of the labour move-

ment, as well as all democratic rights and liberties.

That is the difference between the NF [despite its denials] and a Tory Party supporter, who despite a leadership that is usually anti-union, still at least verbally has to accept the existence of workers' organisations.

To argue that "people's" [NF] ideas do change" through working in trade unions, is akin to inviting an arsonist into your house and then hoping to persuade him not to burn it down.

People's ideas "can be changed by their experiences, even some NF types could be won over, but that is not the issue at stake here."

The overwhelming element of Front members in trade

actions which exploit the union machinery for racist ends."

It is noticeable that although, early in the article, Sibley refers to the National Front's "classic fascist style propaganda", he leans over backwards to avoid describing the NF as fascist.

In fact, while referring to the NF's "racist ends", "racist propaganda", and "racist activity", nowhere

does he describe the NF as fascist—that is, aiming at the complete destruction of the labour movement and all democratic rights.

Is this the Communist Party's policy: simply to wish fascist tendencies away?

Fortunately, two weeks later (17 February), the 'Morning Star' finally printed a letter from 'Militant' supporter Bob Faulkes answering comrade Sibley's article.

unions will use their position to promote racist and fascist ideas and policies.

The original National Union of Railwaymen decision was a big step forward.

But after an enormous outburst by the media, Tory MPs, etc, about this "lack of democracy" and of individual rights, the interpretation was watered down.

The point Mr Sibley makes about bans on NF members "opening up the possibility of right-wing attacks on Communists and others in the future" shows a lack of Marxist understanding and interpretation on this question.

As a member of the Labour Party for nearly 14 years, of the electrician's union, and a 'Militant' supporter, I have

always fought against any bans and proscriptions being used against Communist Party members or any other political persuasion, even the right, except the NF.

Yes, the right wing has always used that method to stifle discussion and democracy; that's how they maintain its position in many cases, but surely any Marxist worth his salt can argue against such a ban by explaining the real nature of a fascist organisation like the NF, which if it had its way would make sure that trade unions and all workers' organisations did not exist.

RFaulkes
Hackney

Bethnal Green Hospital... Management forced to negotiate

History was made at this month's meeting of the

City and East London Area Health Authority. The Authority was forced to recognise the Tower Hamlets shop stewards' committee and start negotiating.

In the five years since the AHA was constituted participation in the proceedings has been confined to members of the Authority and its officers. The Chairman, Mr Cumberlege (of Messrs Thomas Cumberlege and Inskip, tea brokers) has always maintained that 'members of the public'—and this, for him, includes health service workers and their representatives—cannot participate.

At earlier discussions with the District Administrator it was made clear to us that the management were not able to negotiate on Bethnal Green Hospital because their hands were tied by the AHA. Over nine months ago we therefore asked to meet the chairman and members of the AHA.

The reply from one of his officers bleated about 'numerous requests from a large variety of representative groups'. He hoped we would understand his 'reluctance to add to the list which on the

basis of time alone could not be accommodated.'

Management have thus deliberately avoided hearing the views of the staff and their trade unions. They have blindly attempted to press on with their plans, regardless of the hospital workers and the local trade union movement. Through the 'blacking' by the unions of conversion work at Bethnal Green Hospital, a whole chain of inter-dependent plans also affecting the adjacent Hackney Borough and the start of a new hospital there, have been held up.

Mandarins

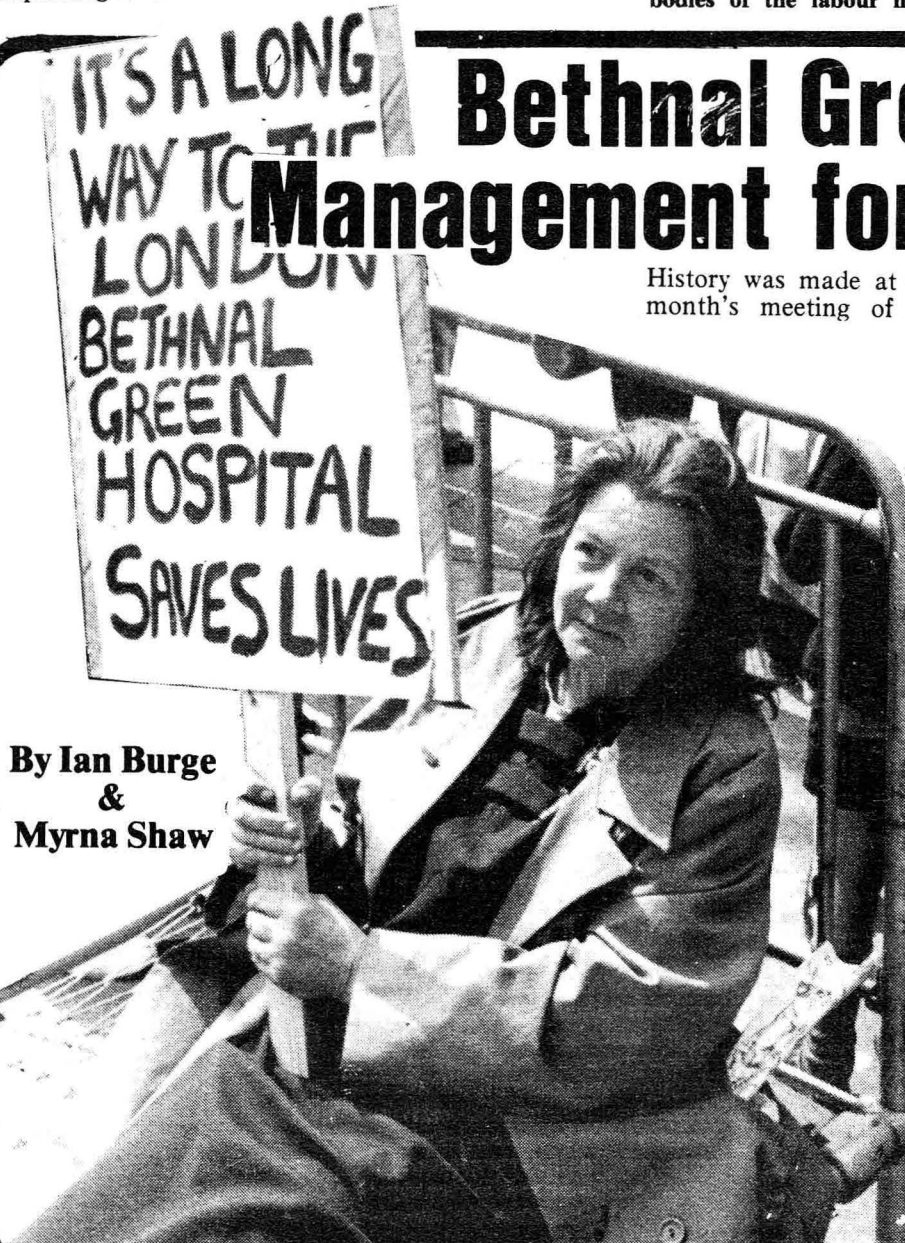
The management at Area level, those remote mandarins who act as the executive for the AHA, had adopted a complete dog-in-the-manger attitude. Here were the unions holding up numerous plans—management were quite happy to just sit tight and let the services run down. Members of the Authority suddenly realised what was happening: the plans could not be implemented without union co-operation, the unions' co-operation was

dependent on meaningful negotiations and they were willing to come to a compromise—yet management were intransigent. Finance earmarked for their new hospital was under increasing threat of being re-allocated elsewhere, due entirely to the incompetence and rigidity of Area management.

In the meeting, AHA members demanded that the shop stewards present in the public gallery be asked to negotiate. Swallowing his pride, the chairman had to appeal to the stewards' spokesman (Ian Burge). But the terms were too narrow—the spokesman explained he would need to consult with the committee. A recess was granted, and the stewards retired to an anti-chamber to consider the offer.

We drew up a statement declaring our terms, and returned to read it out. Confusion reigned. The chairman didn't know what to do—he threw up his hands declaring the whole matter open for debate.

To try and help resolve the matter, the stewards' spokesman referred to a proposal made by one member that the Tower Hamlets management be given authority to negotiate with the JSSC, in effect without their hands tied. Thus item 9 on the agenda, 'to consider a report on the present situation' concerning Bethnal Green Hospital, closed.



By Ian Burge
&
Myrna Shaw

photo: Laurence Sparham (IFL)

BRITISH SHIPBUILDING

For a united fight

Britain's 80,000 shipbuilding workers are facing their biggest crisis and their greatest challenge. On both redundancies and wages they have been presented by British Shipbuilders with proposals which mean thousands of lost jobs and wage cuts for thousands of those left in the industry.

In Newcastle two weeks ago, delegates to a conference organised by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions were informed of management's "compromise" plan for the industry.

Almost 12,300 jobs are to be lost in five years, 15% of the workforce. They did not specify where the jobs will be lost, but the first casualty is likely to be the yard at Haverton Hill on Teesside, which has only four weeks work left. Robb Caledon in Dundee needs a new order before the end of the year if its future is to be ensured.

According to the "The Scotsman" (16 November), British Shipbuilders have been considering going much further, withdrawing altogether from merchant shipbuilding, and just building warships, at a loss of 25,000 jobs.

Already, the Boilermakers' Society have called on their branches to impose an overtime ban and have adopted a policy of total opposition to any redundancies.

"We have decided to blow the gaff on the scale of redundancies" declared their

General Secretary John Chalmers, who is also chairman of the national negotiating committee, "because we are sick down to the last rivet, and it is about time that the figures were talked about."

Guarantee

"We have decided that until we know the final plans, we are going to oppose any redundancies, voluntary or otherwise, in the industry," he continued, suggesting that he might withdraw his opposition at a later stage; "Until we know their full plans, we can't say if the figure is realistic or not."

This is far too vague. The demand must be for a complete change in their plans, to guarantee full employment in the industry. One proposal has been a "scrap and build plan" under which ship owners would be offered a new ship free in return for scrapping two old ones.

Thus the shipping lines, which already get a third of the cost of new ships paid by the government, would be getting 100% subsidies. **There is the clearest case for**

nationalising the shipping companies so that a proper plan can be worked out for the future.

On the basis of the big expansion of trade that a fully planned, socialist society would bring about, there would be an urgent need for more ships. In the meantime the slow-down in world trade can be used for a crash programme of modernisation and rebuilding of the existing yards, some of which are like industrial museums at present.

The management of British Shipbuilders are hoping that fears for their jobs will force workers to try and keep their present ones at any price. That is the only explanation of their latest wage offer, which was unveiled at the same conference. It is a blatant and vicious attempt to divide, bribe and blackmail the workers into accepting a dramatic worsening of their conditions.

The offer is very simple. It would give skilled men £80 for a basic week, semi-skilled £70 and unskilled £62, unless your present wage is £10 or more below these figures, in which case it will be brought up in two phases.

By the beginning of 1980, all wage rates throughout the country will be uniform. That at least marks a step forward, in so far as all the different local and trade negotiations will be scrapped in favour of one national claim.

The offer also provides another week's holiday, the abolition of penalty days, a

sick-pay scheme by 1980, death benefit up from £2,000 to £3,000 and a full-time monitoring committee to monitor the levels of production and self-financing productivity schemes.

At a casual glance, this might seem a reasonable enough offer from an industry which made a loss of £108 million. In fact, it is a baited trap.

Firstly, overall it provides for an average increase of a mere 2.2%, since BS say that a settlement reached earlier this year of 2.8% has to be set against the 5% norm as well as this latest one.

But the crucial clause in the offer concerns those workers who are already earning more than the amounts now on offer. They will get nothing! They must wait until the other catch up before they can expect any wage rise at all.

This is not a standstill for those workers; with prices rising by at least the government's official figure of 7.8%, it represents a savage wage cut! There is no way that this can be accepted.

Threat

The main effect of this clause will be felt on the Clyde, where, thanks to the militant traditions forged over the years, and especially during the UCS battles, the workers won the highest wages in the country. Already shop stewards' meetings have been convened at Govan and

Yarrow's to discuss this threat.

At the Newcastle conference every speaker bar one spoke against the proposals. These now go to each separate union within the Confed, and resolutions expressing their view sent in by 6th December. The result must be a decisive rejection.

It is now quite obvious why BS did not spell out which yards they expect the 12,300 redundancies to come from, something which they must surely have discussed. They are holding the threat of closures over every yard.

They are hoping that in those yards where the pay is lower, the workers will grasp at the offer as the best that can be expected "in the circumstances". They will be thrown a few crumbs in the form of new orders. On the other hand, where there is a fight, the management will threaten those workers that they will lose orders if the workers take industrial action.

That is why it is vital that this should be a united struggle of all the yards and all sections of the workforce within the yards. If BS can pick off the militant areas one at a time then the fight is doomed to defeat.

One other vital issue raised by these developments is the role of workers' democracy,

both within the Confed and the industry. Many delegates at Newcastle demanded the election of rank-and-file delegates onto the national negotiating committee. They also expressed concern at the position of John Chalmers, who is a part-time member of the board of British Shipbuilders.

That is a perfect demonstration of where workers' "participation" leads to—it puts workers in the position of being bosses' representatives at the same time as leading the workers' side in negotiations. They end up as policemen over their own members.

It is not only within the union side, but within the whole industry, as in all nationalised industries, that the issue of workers' control and management is becoming central. Instead of acting as a traditional type of capitalist employer, British Shipbuilders should be put under the control of a board, elected from both the trade unions within the industry and from the TUC, as well as representatives from the government.

The next few months will be crucial to the future of the shipbuilding industry in this country. A bold clear lead is urgently needed from the trade union leaders, to make sure the workers are victorious!

By Alex Allen (Time Trades Convenor, Robb Caledon, Dundee)

OUT COMES THE BEGGING BOWL

Britain's shipyard bosses bequeathed a ruined industry to British Shipbuilders when they handed over their 'assets' in July 1977.

The Tories denounced the nationalisation of the yards on principle. This was hardly surprising. To have accepted nationalisation quietly would have been to admit the truth: that so-called 'private enterprise' was completely incapable of sustaining the shipbuilding industry for a moment longer!

In reality, big business was only too pleased to hand over this archaic industry to be run at the public's expense. They were only concerned to wring the maximum compensation from the state, and to keep any viable, profitable concerns in private hands.

The vast growth of world trade in the post-war boom gave rise to an enormous expansion of merchant fleets. But the British yards' share of the new tonnage went down and down.

Outdated yards, antiquated methods, chronic underinvestment, meant that even the British shipping companies took their new orders to foreign yards who could offer lower prices and faster delivery.

Before nationalisation in 1977, the government—whether Labour or Tory—was time and time again called in to rescue yards from bankruptcy:

1970 Harland and Wolff
1970 Upper Clyde
1972 Cammell Lairds
1974 Appledore

Yet, when it comes to nationalisation, the Labour government repeated all the mistakes of the past and allowed itself to be pressurised into paying incredibly generous compensation to the old owners.

Swann Hunter, for instance, is being paid £15 million for its former shipbuilding companies on the basis of their 'notional stock-market value.'

London and Overseas Freightors (Lofs) will be picking up a magnificent £14 million for the Austin and Pickersgill shipbuilding company (book value £2.76 million).

This generous hand-out is

a welcome windfall for Lofs, which speculated on the oil-tanker boom but now has a 250,000 tanker in mothballs with huge loans and interest payments outstanding.

Last year, the private shipbuilders felt "silent relief at being shot of beleaguered shipyards" ('Economist' 8 July). Now they have switched to noisy protests about being kept waiting for their compensation.

This beggars' chorus is currently led by the chairman of Vickers, none other than Lord Robens, ex-Labour man and former head of the nationalised coal board—another formerly bankrupt industry bought from its former owners for fabulous sums that they would not have made from coal-mining in a thousand years.

Squandered

Vickers is complaining that so far it has received "only" a £7 million advance against assets with a 'book value' of £67.6 million (these included a half-share in British Aircraft Corporation, another concern which would have folded many years ago without government hand-outs and

state subsidised orders).

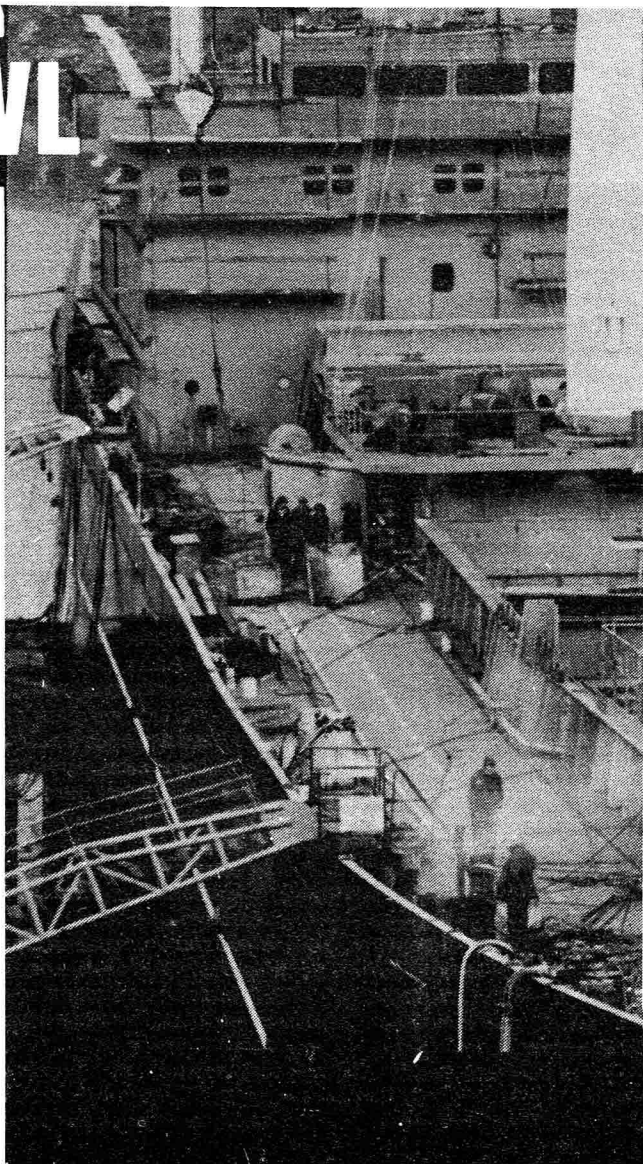
Since the beginnings of the industrial revolution, the shipyard bosses have squeezed profits out of their workers. But for decades they have squandered the skills of shipyard workers by failing to invest in new slipways, up-to-date equipment, and the advanced fabrication processes, necessary to maintain a really viable industry.

Now, when they have to be bailed out, they have the gall to demand enormous sums of hard cash for the very 'notional' assets they have so ungraciously agreed to hand over!

The boardroom parasites are quite prepared to live in luxury for ever and a day off the interest from their compensation—while thousands and thousands of shipyard workers are thrown onto the stones.

The labour movement must demand an immediate embargo on the enormous compensation payments now being handed over. **This cash must be put back into the industry!**

Compensation should be paid to former owners and shareholders only on the basis of proven need!



Why the bosses hate our union

Serge Kuchanny, District Secretary, BF&AWU, Bristol, spoke to Wayne Jones

The germs of the present dispute were sown in April when Spillers closed down 23 plants throwing 8,000 workers out of their jobs. Of these sacked workers, 4,000 were in the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union.

In Bristol we attempted to occupy the factory but the gates were welded together and heavy security was clamped on it before we could do so. It became clear that the closures were carefully planned and all moves to save jobs were effectively blocked off, like a chess game where all the moves have been worked out beforehand.

The employers claimed these closures would lead to greater efficiency in the bread industry! What it really meant was that we now have a "de facto" monopoly controlled by two companies, Rank-Hovis-MacDougall and Associated British Foods.

The response of our union was to give notice to the employers of the Federation of Bakers that we would be putting in a substantial claim, particularly in view of the increased productivity of our members following the Spillers' closures.

Three-shift continuous production was introduced at some bakeries, but while the basic rate had gone up (because of consolidation of part of the supplement into the basic rate) actual earnings fell, in some cases, up to £9 a week!

Only £41.55 basic

The basic rate today is still only £41.55 plus £3.85 supplement. An intolerable situation for our members!

So at our conference in June, our Executive put forward a claim for £10 across-the-board increase. This was overwhelmingly endorsed by the conference, and daily submitted to the Federation.

They did nothing for four months! Eventually, they came forward with the present derisory offer of 11%, together with various penal clauses which are totally unacceptable and an attempt to scrap gains we have made in the past.

There was no alternative but to take industrial action. Since then, the Federation have mounted the most vicious, hostile propaganda campaign I have ever personally experienced, or have even read about in other disputes.

They have sent written instructions to management in RHM and ABF to strike-break by continuing production, and have sought the co-operation of other unions to do the same.

Unfortunately, ASTMS members in the two bakeries in Bristol are helping man-

agement to produce, outside their normal duties, and drivers of the United Road Transport Union are crossing picket lines and driving vans. The other day, I was nearly run down myself while on picket duty at Parkers.

It is also clear that the police have acted like company police on occasions, preventing the pickets from stopping the vans, giving escorts to delivery vans and generally harassing the pickets.

Bunk

As for the strike crumbling, in Bristol the mood is hardening. The only thing that is crumbling is the employers' propaganda campaign.

There is only one way to sum up management claims that they are producing 50% of normal supplies—a load of bunk.

In Parkers we have 245 members on strike, there are 17 managers, so they must be bionic if their claims are true! I'm quite certain the members of our union will take the action necessary until the claim is met.

The tactic of the bosses has been to stir up an hysterical campaign, including intimidation against our members, both physically and through their friends in the press.

The Federation clearly have two main aims: (1) break the strike; (2) break the union.

Why? Because the union is now much stronger, more militant and intends to end the low pay and bad conditions we have suffered for too long.

Our union has changed dramatically. It is more democratic, conference decisions are carried out and the leadership is far more representative of the rank and file.

Nationalise!

The unresponsive officers of the past have been replaced during the course of the bakery workers' struggles since 1974.

My own predecessor, for instance, is now working in the personnel department of ABF in London! Other former national officers have crossed over to the employers' side, at least one of which is notorious anti-TU and could teach George Ward a thing or two!

The employers don't mind sweetheart unions but don't want a strong union who won't listen to their pathetic sob stories about thier inability to pay up—especially when, according to the 'Financial Times', ABF is expected to make £85m profit in 1978.

It's been calculated at our headquarters that a married man with two kids working the basic 40 hours is only 46p better off than if he were receiving benefit!

A 26% claim may sound a lot, but every working man deserves a decent wage. Is £51 asking too much? I don't think it is.

As we proceed towards our 1979 conference, I can see the calls for public ownership getting stronger and stronger.



BLACI BRI

I think our next conference will adopt this.

In my opinion, there must be nationalisation of the bread-making industry, starting with RHM, ABF and the flour mills.

This must include democratic involvement and participation of the workforce in the decision-making process. There must be accountability. This is the only way to ensure a fair wage for our members.

[Serge Kuchanny spoke to 'Militant' in a personal capacity.]

Bowkett's, Broadstairs

At Bowkett's bakery in Broadstairs, Kent, of the 300 Bakers' Union workers, only about 50 people, mainly part-timers, are breaking the picket. Some of these scabs are being collected and driven into work by the managers.

For many of the pickets who are young or new to union activity, the tactics and attitudes of the management has produced a hardening of their determination to win this struggle.

Directors have been sending out letters full of lies to try and trick people into returning to work. They have also driven through the picket line at high speed with an increasing threat of injury to the pickets.

SCAB, LOOK OUT!

Extract from a leaflet produced by pickets in Bristol: IS THIS YOU!

"A scab is a two-legged animal with a cork-screw soul, a water-logged brain, a combination backbone of jelly and glue. Where others have a heart, he carries a tumour of rotten principles..."

"Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Judas Iscariot sold his Saviour for

30 pieces of silver. Benedict Arnold sold his country for the promise of a commission in the British Army.

"The modern strikebreaker sells his birthright, his country, his wife, his children and his fellow-man for an unfilled promise from his employer."

[Jack London's famous portrayal of a 'blackleg' or 'scab'].

Delivery drivers have been dropping their goods elsewhere for management to collect and there is a very strong suspicion that some of the flour drivers are receiving additional payments in the form of 'back-handers' to get the supplies through.

Bowkett's is a typical business for the Thanet area in that it has a vast turn-over of employees who mostly leave through dissatisfaction at having to work long hours for low pay.

This dispute has become a desperate attempt by management to smash the union and the closed-shop agreement.

Pickets realise that with still a high percentage of bread being delivered from this bakery that only through

using the united strength of the labour movement can this fight be ended with a victory for the strikers.

Peter Harris
(Thanet East CLP)

Merseyside

On Merseyside, of the 3,000 members I am responsible for, there are between 1,800 to 2,000 now out on strike. There is no strike-breaking, pickets are organised, the facilities for providing hospitals with bread are also organised (at Thomas Scotts,

I heard this morning that one private bakery, which is not related to the Federation at all, has reached an agreement with the shop stewards, representing £91 for a 41-hour week. When we consider that the employers' recent offer gives our members in the federation well under £15, that speaks for itself.

One hopes that the present strike action will be over very quickly with an acceptable settlement. However, there is always the possibility that it will drag on, and if so, our committee will be considering sending out appeals through the respective Trades Councils.

Messages of support and donations to **Eddie Pritchard**, Bakers' Union, 64 Priory Road, Liverpool 4.



ers Pride

Bakery workers fight for living wage

Eastleigh

YS Praised

Workers at Leigh Road Bakery, Eastleigh, gave overwhelming support on Monday for the continuation of the strike.

During the mass meeting, the Bakers' Union Southern Region Secretary singled out the Labour Party Young Socialists for praise: he said that without the LPYS's support throughout the southern region [which stretches from Poole to Eastbourne] "we would not have lasted so long".

The meeting also resolved to begin mass picketing of Rank's flour mill on Southampton docks from Thursday, and appealed to trade unionists for support.

This week, workers at Ford's Swayling plant donated £50 to the local Bakers' Union. As soon as they returned to work shop stewards made it clear that no bread or bakery products would be allowed into Ford's canteen while the bakery workers' action continued.

Nevilles, Walthamstow

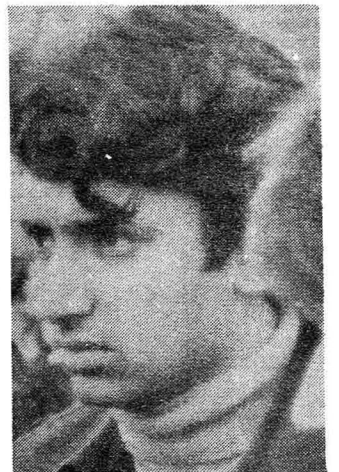
The scene: a very cold Monday morning in north-east London outside Nevilles, Walthamstow. Steve Cawley [Leyton CLP] spoke to Bro Dhillon, leader of the BFAWU pickets.

About 25 pickets have turned out this morning at 6 am: 95% of the workers are out and we back Sam Maddox all the way. We've turned back at least one potential scab this morning, and—as well as the special leaflet—we've given out appeal sheets for our strike fund to other trade unionists, including one of the General and Municipal Workers' Union stewards from a nearby factory who joined the picket line.

Our new leaflet is addressed to the drivers and salesmen, appealing to them for trade union solidarity, and pointing out the employers have had talks with their union United Road Transport Union (URT) leaders about cash-and-carry bakeries: ie. their jobs will go! The drivers are generally sympathetic, except for one or two, but the URT official came down to the bakery and told them they had to take out vans through our picket.

As far as help from the TUC is concerned, they have sent out a circular, but it's been left to individual unions to take action—unfortunately they have not all done so.

Locally, we've had support from the Labour Party, with LP members on the picket, and help in printing our leaflets: this gives us encouragement to fight on. The local



Trades Council have also given us support.

Steve Cawley asked Brother Dillon what his impressions of the London YCAU Conference were:

The 35-hour week is a joke for bakers. Some of our members have to work up to 80 hours for a decent wage. We're fighting for a higher wage in order to bring these hours down, so we spend more time at home than in the bakery—at the moment it's the other way round.

We were also glad of the opportunity to meet Sam Maddox, and the other union members from different parts of the country. We were able to tape-record Sam Maddox's remarks for the benefit of our Branch members who couldn't get to the Conference. The 'Militant' has helped us to keep in touch with what's happening up and down the country in this dispute.

In conclusion, I'd like to add that we know who the small number of scabs are, and they've been expelled from the union. Those of us who are still out will stay out as long as it takes to win the claim.

Manchester

There's little sign of people returning to work in Manchester—just 16 on Monday morning.

Since the mass meetings reporting back from the recall conference, there has been an increased number of workers coming forward for picketing. There has been a 24-hour picket on most bakeries, and a flying picket on stand-by in case of trouble.

Very few supplies are getting into the bakery, but at the weekend management drove in tankers of flour into one bakery, which were brought from Birkenhead. **The workers at local flour mills have been co-operating in not sending flour to federation bakeries.** Yeast and oil supplies have also been turned away.

The strike committee has been distributing newsletters to communicate with the members to combat the lies of the bosses, who have been sending letters out asking people to return to work on Monday morning.

In one bakery, all the

letters were collected in by the stewards, and posted back through the letterbox of the bakery. The committee has also organised a hardship fund.

In one case, they have helped a woman who had already been on strike for five weeks prior to the present strike because her electricity had been cut off.

Two members of the union's district board have been visiting factories to see convenors personally. At Kelloggs the security failed to inform the convenors and told the baker's stewards that he was out. When the shop stewards at Kelloggs got to hear of this, the workers there struck for an hour as a token of their support for the bakers. They also took a collection.

Collection sheets have been circulated to most factories, to Labour Parties and to YS branches, and the LPYS branches are asking for speakers from the Bakers' Union.

Margaret Creear

THIS LEAD



Mother's Pride management getting desperate

Management at Mother's Pride and Manor Bakeries in Stoke on Trent have become more and more desperate as the strike goes on. Not satisfied with offering £16.50 or more per shift to maintenance men on top of their wages to start up the plant they have taken to anonymously calling general meeting in an attempt to end the strike.

None of their tricks have succeeded. In fact, management's latest letter to bakery workers no longer tries to

bully them back to work, but pleads with them offering to rescind previous conditions management have put on the 11% offer.

Management at Manor Bakery are making our hearts bleed, claiming they are losing £½ million per week. Yet the cost of the pay rise for the year would only be £300,000. This shows the tight-fisted, profit-snatching attitude of the management. They would see workers living on £40 a week to break the union and keep their profits

rolling in.

Workers will not be fooled into working permanent nights without proper meal breaks in order to get £4 and lose their union.

A picket has been arrested, refused bail, sent to court, fined £30 with the handcuffs never being taken off for shouting "push". But these desperate tactics will never succeed. Maintenance men have told management where to get their jobs.

Pat Duff spoke to a LPYS meeting where £10 was collec-

ted for the funds. A local chip shop owner has delivered food for the night pickets.

The union has printed Sam Maddox's article from 'Militant' for distribution to the 900 members and have bought 40 'Militant's' for the pickets to boost their morale with truthful reports of what is really happening.

Now all organisations of the labour movement must support this struggle physically and financially.

SPAIN

The attempted military coup had support from many officers in the state machine

CLEAR OUT THE FASCISTS!

Two top army officers have been arrested for plotting to kidnap the Spanish Cabinet and form a government of 'national salvation', three days before the third anniversary of Franco's death. This attempted military coup has laid bare the depths of reaction which exists within the Spanish officer corps despite their new-found, and ill-fitting 'democratic' mask.

Throughout the past weeks the fascist Fuerza Nueva ('New Force') has been stepping up its campaign against the democratic rights which have been included in the new constitution and calling for "The Army to Power."

At the same time more and more sections of the officer corps were coming out into the open against the granting of any democratic rights to either the working class or the various nationalities in Spain.

When Enrique Mugica, a PSOE (Socialist) MP and chairman of the Cortes (Parliament) Defence Commission, told the Madrid newspaper 'El Imparcial' that "The military men with whom I deal are not the military men of before," Lt.-General Fernandez-Longuri Gonzales, former Air Force Chief of Staff replied that "The military men today are... the same military men Spain has always had... They are those who kept Spain from being dominated by Communism." Not a very good example of the "bonds of affection" which Mugica said earlier this year existed between the army and the people!

But this statement revealed nothing new about the reactionary, anti-democratic views of the military bosses. Last July, Lt-General Tomas de Liniers, the Army Chief of Staff, praised the "legitimacy and justice" of the Argentinian dictatorship. At the same time an Army General, an Air Force General and an Admiral, all of whom had been appointed to the Senate by King Juan Carlos, denounced any concessions being given to the national minorities in Spain.

All reports have indicated that 'Operation Galaxy', as the plot was called, involved large numbers of officers. 'The Times' reported that

"even the government is unsure who the leaders were" and that the government was only able to stop the attempted coup because of "a tip-off from only one of the probably many military commanders" who were asked to support the plot. In other words the plotters found wide sympathy amongst the officer corps!

Police doubled

These events only serve to underline 'The Times's' comment that the "armed forces are still essentially Franco's armed forces," something which the Spanish workers are still painfully aware of given their record of continuous assaults on the working class. Even since the election of a parliament last year there has been the 'police riot' in San Sebastian in July, the Policia Armada (riot police) running wild in Bilbao in October and countless assaults on workers such as the attack on a bullfight crowd in Pamplona in July.

Over the past ten years the size of the police forces has doubled to over 100,000—one for every 340 Spaniards. In the militant, industrialised Basque country the ratio is one for every 100 people.

The regime has two special repressive police forces, the Guardia Civil in rural areas and towns with populations up to 10,000 and the Policia Armada which covers the big towns. In January the government announced that it was going to retain the Policia Armada and rename it the 'Guardia Nacional', already in. December 1975 it was announced that its size was to be doubled to over 29,600.

The policy of the government, led by Suarez, the ex-General Secretary of Franco's fascist movement, is to attempt to keep intact the old repressive apparatus while making democratic concessions. Although officers who have blatantly opposed the liberalisation moves have been removed Suarez has refused and is incapable of carrying out any real purge on the fascist military or police officers.



King Juan Carlos, praised by the Communist Party leaders as a 'democrat', with his fascist mentor, Franco

The capitalists rely on the officer corp as the ultimate guardian of their interests against the working class.

In many cases the old repressive policies have been continued. In the summer it was revealed that many telephones were still being tapped, even including those of the Finance Minister and the leader of the CEOE (Spain's CBI)! There have been two cases this year of actors being jailed, for up to two years, by courts martial for 'insulting the armed forces' in the course of their plays!

It certainly was not any commitment to democratic rights which limited the plot's support, rather it was the fear of the consequences if it went ahead.



Guardian of 'democracy' or capitalism?

From the standpoint of the capitalists this almost comic opera coup was completely premature. It can be compared to Sanjuro's pronunciamiento (rising) against the Republic in August 1932.

As with the present plotters Sanjuro had his base in the Civil Guard, whose commander he had been, until his transfer to the less important customs guards. In Seville, where Sanjuro had his base, it was the workers who answered him with a general strike, forcing him to attempt to flee to Portugal, but was captured.

But this recent "coup" never even reached the stage of Sanjuro's plot. Moreover, the crucial difference between 1932 and today is the

crushing power of the Spanish workers who are immeasurably more powerful in numbers, cohesion and social weight in society than in 1932.

The social basis for a successful coup against the Spanish workers is completely absent in Spain today. This can only be created by a series of defeats of the working class and the disillusionment of the middle class in the ability of the workers' organisations to solve their problems.

The trend within Spain at the moment is towards the left with a strengthening of the workers' organisations with the growth in support of the unions and the Socialist Party and Communist Party at the expense of Suarez's Centre Party (UCD).

The fear which gripped the

restrain the movement of the working class, either with repression or a combination of limited concessions and reliance on the labour leaders to restrain the movement.

There should be no illusions in the sincerity of the capitalist politicians who only ceased their open support for the old repressive regime when it was no longer capable of holding down the working class. Queen Sophia in an interview with the Vienna 'Die Presse' in February, which was prudently not reported in the Spanish press, attacked the workers' movement as 'communism', linking it to Stalinism, and saying that it was incompatible with 'democracy', a fine statement from a monarch placed on the throne by a fascist dictator!

It is clear that Suarez intends to use the coup attempt to rally support behind the new constitution which is being voted on in a referendum on December 6 in the same way that the reactionary Karamanlis fought the 1974 general election in Greece on the slogan of "It's me or the tanks!" to win votes by exploiting the masses' fear of reaction.

But despite the fact that the constitution is being strongly opposed by the fascist Fuerza Nueva and the reactionary officers and that it grants certain democratic rights, it cannot be supported by the labour movement. The constitution enshrines the existence of capitalism and the monarchy, gives powers to the King which can be used against the labour movement later, gives the bosses the power to lock out workers and denies the right of self-determination to the oppressed nationalities within Spain.

'Moderation'

But far from opposing the constitution the leaders of the Socialist Party (PSOE) and the Communist Party (PCE) are supporting it in the hope of preventing reaction. The PCE leaders, in particular, are crawling behind the government.

Carrillo, the PCE General Secretary, has said that the only thing wrong with Suarez is that he is not a PCE

member! Some PCE members go even further: Ramon Tamames, a PCE Central Committee member and its economic spokesman, has been calling for a military officer to be made Minister of the Interior since last January!

The PCE Executive's statement on the coup praised the "patriotic attitude of the Minister of Defence and the officers of the Armed Forces" which had defeated the conspiracy and called for the formation of a coalition government of "all the democratic parties." At the time that we go to press neither the PSOE nor the PCE has even yet demanded the holding of a special debate on the plot in parliament, as even the right wing Alianza Popular (Popular Alliance) led by Fraga Iribana has.

The PSOE and PCE leaders frightened by the plot are either keeping quiet or else running to prove their 'moderation' to the bosses and rally behind Suarez and the King. Carrillo told the press that if there was a serious military plot the PCE, PSOE and the trade unions would declare a general strike in support of...the King!

It is clear that the reason why King Juan Carlos, who supported the Franco regime while the old Dictator was alive, and the majority of the ruling class opposed a coup was because they saw that it would enormously endanger their position. While the mobilisation of the working class is vital in the battle against reaction to fight under the banner of one section of the capitalists against another section would mean refusing to strike against the very roots of reaction, the capitalist system.

In addition, to sow illusions in the "democratic credentials" of the King only serves to bolster the monarchy's position which will be used in a later period as a rallying point for a new reactionary onslaught, as well as politically confusing the working class as to the real class interests of the monarchy and the capitalist Suarez government.

Sam Russell, the Foreign Editor of the 'Morning Star', reports that in Spain "many

BELGIAN YOUNG SOCIALISTS

By Bob Labi

are comparing the attempted coup with what happened in July 1936." But he did not explain that the resistance to Franco's first coup only came from the instinctive movement of the working class storming the army barracks while the Republican government attempted to negotiate with Franco!

Ignoring this fact he repeats the touching faith which the leaders put in the constitution that it "demolishes the whole apparatus of the Franco dictatorship," if this is really so how do the Communist Party leaders explain the widespread sympathy which the plotters' aims received among the officers?

The PSOE and PCE leaders are repeating the same policies of the Chilean Popular Unity leaders who believed that the paper constitution would prevent a coup. Between 1931 and 1936 the Spanish capitalists were forced to allow a certain existence of democratic rights, but when in 1936 the working class began an offensive for radical change Franco's coup was organised in reply.

The chances of any coup succeeding at the present time are ruled out, the lessons of the past few weeks must not be lost. There can be no doubt about the depth of reaction inside the officer corps, many officers agreed to keep the plot secret while not participating in it. The ruling class as a whole rejected the coup because it was fearful of its effect upon the working class.

Socialist government

The Spanish labour movement must now take action to prevent any new attempted coup. It must demand the disbanding of the Guardia Civil and Policia Armada, the trade unions to organise the military ranks, trade union control of military training and the election of all officers by the ranks! Only in this way can the control of the armed forces be taken out of the hands of the ruling class.

The workers' leaders were entirely right when they said that any coup attempt must be met by a mass mobilisation of the working class. But this will not drop out of the sky, it has to be politically prepared for by exposing the real aims of the ruling class, not prostrating oneself before the self-styled 'progressive' ex-fascists like Suarez and Juan Carlos, and showing that the threat of reaction will only be finally removed when the Spanish ruling class is stripped of its power.

Such a campaign, linked to the fight for a PSOE/PCE government committed to carrying out a socialist programme, is the only way in which the Spanish working class can remove the bosses' ability to once again launch a counter-revolution to strip them of their hard-won rights and concessions.

UNITE BELGIAN LABOUR with socialist policies

Despite the enormous growth during the past years, a massive lift in living standards and the re-emergence of the mass workers' parties as powerful forces in society, Western Europe has been unable to solve many of the social problems facing its workers and youth.

A glimpse of the upheavals facing the old 'miracle' economies and the equally momentous processes taking place in the youth sections of the workers' organisations was revealed recently by Belgian young socialists.

The conference of the Jong Socialisten—Flemish youth section of the Belgian Socialist Party (BSP)—was a reflection of these processes, indicating that they have shaken off much of the legacy of the post war boom which eased the workers' parties from the pressures of the rank and file and filled the past hierarchies and many of the European youth organisations with careerists and open representatives of big business.

Right wing out

The 100% increase in the attendance at the conference also testified that the youth of Belgium are slowly turning to the BSP as a political lever to use against the growing deterioration in their prospects. Four years after the old right wing leadership was booted out, they have now declared that they are against any further participation of the BSP in coalition governments alongside capitalist parties.

Neither is this decision before time. The monopolies are having a field-day while the BSP leadership is tied up in a government with the CSP, the party of big business, and the nationalists.

The fall off in world trade and the abandonment by the big investors of the crucial coal, steel and textile industries has resulted in massive unemployment of over 8%. Rather than trying to alleviate the situation the government is turning the screws even more.

A whole series of anti-working class measures encompassed in the 'Anti-Crisis Law' are being introduced. These involve a cut of public spending of 2%; a 30% increase in public transport fares; cutting 'brake' money (subsidies for those who can't afford to pay medical bills); a four-hour per week cut in school hours; increased minimum class sizes from 33 to over 40; a doubling in university fees; a witch-hunt against the unemployed and a cut in pensions.

BSP involvement is clearly a disaster, both for the workers and for the party, whose vote has slipped from 37% in 1954 to just over 20% today. Obstructed on the political plane, the working class has been forced to rely on industrial action to defend itself. The cry of opposition from the youth is accompanied by that of the organised workers, despite a hesitancy to go into struggle

By Phil Frampton

(National Chairman,
Labour Party
Young Socialists)

against their own leaders.

This year the postal, steel, petroleum and railway workers have all staged national strikes and a magnificent movement has been developing over the introduction of the 36-hour working week which, it is estimated, could end the job shortage. **Even Ford, so intransigent in Britain, have been forced to accept a cut in working hours.**

The effect has been to embolden other sections of society. Students have been involved in pitched battles with the police in protests over fee increases. Soldiers have been affected, with 10% of the army marching through Liege demanding wage increases.

Nationalism

Fortunately for the Belgian industrialists, they have always had since Belgium's artificial creation in the 1830s, a special weapon with which to divide the workers—that of nationalism. Belgium's 9.8 million population is divided into 5.8 million Dutch speaking people in the relatively prosperous area of Flanders and 4 million in Wallonia who speak French.

Formerly the Walloon capitalists dominated the economy and the state, imposing a chauvinist regime whereby, for example, all court trials were conducted in French, Flemish people being sent to prison completely ignorant of what had been said in court! Flemish soldiers were shot for desertion and disobedience when they simply did not understand their orders.

Thus a national consciousness grew up among the Flemish which forced the Walloon capitalists to make concessions in order to prevent the break-up of the state. But with the capitalists unwilling to put resources into education that would help to solve the language question,

Mass political action by striking Belgian workers.



and at the same time always running to the national question to divert attention from their own economic failures, nationalism continues to flourish and it was over this issue that the last government fell as have many of the 33 others which have come and gone in the last 42 years.

The responsibility for the continued strength of the nationalist parties — the Volksunie and the Federation des Francophones — rests with the BSP who have been unable to show that Belgian workers' problems cannot be resolved by separation but only by the unity of their class which suffers under one capitalist class. Rather than uniting the workers with a programme of taking control out of the hands of the industrialists and financiers they have themselves succumbed to nationalism.

At the JS congress the loudest applause was received by the representative of the French speaking section of the BSP youth who called for measures to establish a firm link between the two youth sections. His statement was in the context of a declaration by the chairman of the two national adult sections which declared that the parties would become completely separate.

Their statement has caused uproar in the rank and file, who can see only a further weakening of the BSP as a result. The JS have the task of seeking to reunite the party, and in particular the youth, who themselves have allowed a cancerous split between their two organisations. The alternative will be an increase in support for the nationalists and a devastating setback for the BSP at the very time when the workers most need a strong, united organisation.

Economic decline

As Belgian Marxists have pointed out, the increasing social problems stem from the economic situation, a decline in world trade and a corresponding slowing of the Belgian growth rate to the current 2% pa. With no likely improvement in world trade, a capitalist economy which exports 50% of production will suffer enormous convulsions.

An economy divided on national grounds would be fatal. On the other hand, a socialist federation would ensure that the wealth produced would go to the producers, propel resources into the education system to erase the language problem and reach out for a socialist planned economy in Europe.

Militant mood

The JS congress showed that delegates were groping for socialist solutions to the economic crisis and chauvinism while at the same time searching for a leadership which will carry out a campaign on these policies. Despite being the only nomination, the Political Secretary was removed from his position, with delegates remarking that it was a warning to careerists who don't carry out the wishes of the membership.

If such a mood is carried out to the working class youth then the JS can once more become an organisation of young workers leading the battle for a socialist programme to unite the party in the fight for a socialist Belgium.

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

MLR
2

Dear Comrades

Yet another blow has been imposed on the working classes of this country. I am referring to the increase in the minimum lending rate to 12%.

Disastrous implications arise from this shocking development: mortgages up, overdrafts up, more homeless people, investment down, unemployment up.

The gutter press blatantly informs us that this increase in the MLR is a warning to the workers, and publicise the fact that the rises are above those expected from the current money market.

To rub salt into the wound, a Labour Chancellor agrees with these rises! What a scandalous situation, but certainly not isolated. The labour movement is now at the stage where the Tories support similar policies to the Labour government.

Comrades, we must make it clear to those in question that an MP's duty is to represent his electors, not to dictate to them. It is time that Parliament became truly democratic.

For that we require two basics: Careerism must end—no more fat bank accounts for the privilege of representing you and me. Most important, all MPs should be subject to recall, hence ending the disgraceful situation which prevails at the present time (Callaghan vs. Party and TUC). Commonsense dictates that representatives are chosen by the people from the people, to serve the people and if necessary to be removed by the people!

A true socialist programme would pave the way to a resounding victory at the polls. By making a manifesto promise—and sticking to it—to nationalise the money holders, whoever they are, and using the acquired fortunes to endorse a 35-hour week with a decent minimum wage plus further policies dear to the hearts of all true socialists.

Yours fraternally
M Krokos
LPYS

END OVERTIME
WITH BETTER PAY

Dear Comrades

With 1½ million unemployed and a continuing decline in the living standards of the working class in this country, the time has come to call a halt.

Because of technical advances in industry the bosses call for more massive redundancies. The POEU replied with a demand for a 35-hour week and achieved 37½ hours shortly afterwards. This is becoming more and more necessary each time the bosses try to cut work forces by using mechanised production methods.

The main problem in the 35-hour week campaign is the need to cut overtime. This is difficult to achieve as workers on low wages rely on overtime to make up a living wage.

This brings forward the demand for a £70 minimum wage. Overtime would not then be necessary.

Callaghan says a 35-hour week is acceptable but workers would have to take a reduction in wages or forfeit present pay claims. In the USA, the greatest industrial nation in the world, workers work an average of 32 hours a week, and are looking for further reductions in hours.

Reductions in hours are now coming forward in more and more disputes. Shop stewards are the workers' link with the labour and trade union movement; they must explain to their members the campaign, and make them aware of the need for it.

Yours fraternally
Secretary, Perry Barr LPYS.

NAZI TORTURERS

Dear Comrades

I am sure that readers of the 'Militant' would be interested in reading a letter we have just received from Chile:

Dear Barbara

It was so nice to hear from you again. My son who stayed in Panama reforwarded your letter to us in Santiago, where we decided to return hoping to be able to do something about our son.

We have heard that he is still imprisoned at a torture camp called 'Colonia Dignidad', run by former Nazis who came to Chile after World War II. If what we have heard is true, he would still be alive, but in very poor conditions after more than three years of detention and torture.

The fascist dictatorship we are living under is becoming

more aggressive, possibly feeling that they are close to their end. Inside we are helpless of course, because one cannot fight machine guns with bare fists.

All the unions have been destroyed and all political parties abolished, including even our local conservatives. The few civilians that support this group of nazis are either insane or sucking more money than they ever dreamed before.

We certainly appreciate your solidarity. We urge you to continue your wonderful efforts on behalf of our poor people who only hope that one day, thanks to the international solidarity, we may again become a free and democratic nation.

Fraternally yours, M and C
Barbara and Ian Sugarman

THE EFFECT OF
IMPORT CONTROLS

Dear Comrades

In Malta the General Workers Union has blacked the importing of British cars and television sets in retaliation to British restrictions on Maltese textile imports. Union members on British military bases and in industry on the Island are threatening to spread the action.

The Maltese government, headed by Dom Mintoff, has closed the British council offices in Valletta and banned all British textile imports for what it regards as this 'hostile political act'.

The 'Financial Times' (15.11.78) stated that: "According to the latest figures, Malta purchases M£13.1m worth of textiles from Britain each year and exports

M£9.9m worth of yarn, cotton and finished clothing to the UK...Malta's textile industry provides nearly 50% of the island's overall exports and employs about 12,000 people."

Import controls are no solution to British or Maltese textile workers, sparking off tariff and quota wars.

With the present recession in world trade and the particular crisis in the textile sector there is the temptation to plump for tariffs. These same tariffs in the 1930s mushroomed, and were no small contributor to the terrible depression.

Fraternally
Paul Walter
Coventry SE LPYS

"DEFENDING
DEMOCRACY"

Dear Comrades

On November 6th 'The Times' published an extract from an interview with three former directors of the American Intelligence Agency.

Among the questions asked was whether the CIA had ever plotted the assassination of any foreign leader. William Colby, director from 1973 to 1975, stated that no such assassinations had taken place, although: "It wasn't for lack of trying in Castro's case I hasten to confess."

Later the interviewer referred to the 1973 military coup in Chile which overthrew the democratically-elected socialist government of Allende and subsequently imprisoned and murdered thousands of trade unionists and socialists.

Colby readily admitted that the CIA had been involved in internal Chilean affairs from 1963, in an attempt to halt the shift to the left among the workers and peasants, and had spent millions of dollars trying to build support for the 'Centre democratic forces'.

He stated that in the 1970 elections, the US government consciously decided not to support the democrats. Richard Helms (CIA director prior to Colby) continued:

"Contrary to popular belief, the Nixon administration wasn't very interested in any action in Chile in 1970...Then came the famous meeting of September 15th when the President told us to stop that guy."

These comments, hidden away in the pages of 'The Times', expose the hypocrisy of the capitalist media when it rails against the communist threat in Southern Africa, Iran or Western Europe.

Marxists of course condemn the methods of organisations like the Soviet KGB, but not without explaining that these repressive tools of the bureaucracy have nothing in common with genuine socialism. A political revolution is necessary in the East to do away with repression and re-establish workers' control and management as existed in Russia between 1917-1921.

Unfortunately for the capitalists, however, with all their sophisticated weaponry and methods of espionage, they cannot halt the relentless march of history towards real socialism and the doing away of this rotten system forever.

Fraternally
Robin Clapp
Bristol South LPYS

LETTERS

MLR
1

Dear Comrades

Furious at the latest government attack on workers' living standards, the Arundel Constituency Labour Party General Committee at its meeting held on Thursday 16th November passed the following resolution unanimously:

"This Party deplores the recent massive and penal rise in MLR which will as usual hit those who are less well off, through increases in prices and mortgages etc., and demands that the Labour government stops the pursuit of monetarist policies and implements socialist policies for a socialist economy as laid down by the recent Labour Party Conference."

Fraternally
Stan Natrass
Littlehampton

FOUL METHODS OF THE RULING CLASS

Dear Comrades

How many people have forgotten what happened in Nicaragua a few months ago?

Nicaragua is a small country sandwiched between Honduras and Costa Rica in Central America, ruled by General Anastasio Somoza, whose family has controlled Nicaragua for 45 years. In September of this year the peasants and workers revolted against the tyranny of this monster.

Under the leadership of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, mostly young people who have borne the brunt of Somoza's dictatorship, these peasants and workers occupied five provincial towns in September.

Not with modern arms from Cuba or the Soviet bloc but with pistols, shotguns and hunting rifles, iron bars and

even their bare hands. The only transport they had was trucks that they had commandeered. Ancient equipment against the armoured cars, ground attack aircraft and the most modern conventional war machines around today.

A report just issued by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has charged the Nicaraguan government with "grave, persistent and widespread violations of human rights," including "summary and mass executions." Six of its seven members found that the National Guard, which is under the direct control of General Somoza (he calls himself President), had victimised all sectors of the population especially the youth and the poor.

The National Guard also

bombarded the towns controlled by the workers and peasants with artillery. The report says: "The National Guard bombing of the population was done indiscriminately and without prior evacuation of civilians, resulting in innumerable deaths of people uninvolved in the conflict."

The report goes on to state that entire families were machine-gunned to death in their homes. One survivor told how the National Guard entered his home in the town of Matagalpa (one of the five held by the people) searching for weapons, and shot dead four members of his family.

"I saw how they machine-gunned my mother and they slit her belly open with a bayonet. They cut off my brother-in-law's genitals and stuffed them into his mouth,"

the unnamed survivor said.

The report also said unarmed youths were forced to dig their own graves before they were executed. The authorities have not released casualty figures, but it is estimated that 3,000 civilians, workers and soldiers have been killed. The Red Cross visited 12 prisons and accused the government of torturing prisoners.

There are a lot of young people who are now up in the mountains, but they'll be back again and again until they have democracy, socialism and most of all a country without torture or death caused by a class war.

Yours fraternally
Anthony Tynan
Rhonda LPYS

WRITE TO
MILITANT

Have you any points on, or disagreements with, letters or articles in the 'Militant'? Any experiences which make you angry? Let us know in a letter [preferably a short one]. Letters to arrive by Saturday morning to the address at the top of the paper.

NOT LONG TO GO

Only £510.63 came in this week's fighting fund appeal and we need over £2,000 per week between now and the end of the year to guarantee production and expansion of the Militant next year. According to recent press reports, the company owning the Sun and the News of the World is in a position to pay £30 million for new premises. Although we have to compete with this sort of money in the battle for the ear of the working class we are not asking you to raise that amount this year. We want you, our readers, to raise one two-thousandth of this in the next few weeks!

With all the special events at this time of the year it should be quite possible: already we have been assured that bazaars in South London and Brighton will raise several hundred pounds. In the case of Brighton this will see the South East district over their target. Is there a bazaar, complete with a suitable comrade as Father Christmas, being arranged in your area? Parties, socials, discos, all give opportunities to help the fighting fund and especially a chance to sell thousands of raffle tickets for the holiday in America. Keep a couple of books on you all the time and send us the money and counterfoils straight away when they're sold.

We've had tax rebates this week from Dorset, Coventry and S London, the last mentioned an excellent £43.35. Most rebates won't be nearly as big as this, which means you won't miss them as much if you send them in to

FIGHTING FUND - TARGET £70,000			
Area	Target	Proportion of target received	Received
Eastern	4,400		2,791.92
Hants & IOW	2,100		2,380.30
Humberside	2,200		1,752.55
Lancashire	1,500		665.23
London: North	7,700		6,180.85
London: South	3,800		3,273.37
Manchester & Dist	2,900		1,889.21
Merseyside & Dist	4,500		2,787.48
Midlands East	4,400		2,851.95
Midlands West	7,400		5,548.21
Northern	4,900		3,524.70
Scotland East	2,500		1,727.60
Scotland West	2,900		1,816.11
South East	2,300		2,274.78
South West	2,300		2,129.93
Thames Valley	1,700		1,480.09
Wales East	2,000		1,581.84
Wales West	2,300		2,115.77
Yorkshire	5,200		3,075.03
Others	3,000		5,661.18
Total	70,000		55,508.10

the Fighting Fund.

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas in the labour movement without the local Militant supporters' 'Fivers' Appeal Sheets: don't rob the readers in your area of the chance to make the usual seasonal gesture, or they're sure to be very disappointed.

This week £32.88 came from Yorkshire, including a £6 donation from Rother Valley LPYS, £5 from T&D Smith (Leeds) and £16 from a jumble sale (also in Leeds). Yorkshire is thus £2,124.97 short of its target, but we've been told of a number of Xmas sales, bazaars and social events which will boost

this figure.

West Wales are £184.23 short of their target, and what with all the holiday get-togethers, rugby matches, etc, if the comrades have alternate 'drinks for Militant' this should be a cinch. Wales East's total this week was £8.33 including £1 from Joe Street (nearly 5) leaving the area another £-418.16 to raise this year.

Thames Valley supporters sent an excellent £72.50, including £52 from readers in Bracknell, £14.50 from a jumble sale, £2 on a Football draw and £4 from sale of Socialist Song books. The readers in Bracknell have

certainly got initiative: as a result the area as a whole need only £219.91 to achieve the target.

South West's £13.41 included £8 from D Morgan (T&GWU, Gloucester) and leaves the supporters in that area only £170.07 behind target.

South East sent £22.05 of which £13 was from a Medway social and £5.80 from spare coppers in Littlehampton and £3 from T Baker, also Medway: just £25.22 will see South East's target reached.

Scotland West accounted for a further £38.68 of which S Fraser gave £10, and N

Taylor £1 (both Glasgow) and "Hillhead workers' commune" £4.50. The area is still £1,083.89 behind target.

£6.53 was sent by supporters in East Scotland, which means they have £772.40 left to raise: we understand that, for some reason, the last two areas will have parties on December 31st, and we hope to be in the thoughts (if any) of our readers at that time!

£16.50 came in from a Militant Readers' Meeting in Tyneside and members of Blyth LPYS raised £9, leaving Northern's total still £1,375.30 short of the target.

West Midlands readers sent in £20.51, including I Simpson £2 and J Singh 65p, (both Coventry) to leave £1,851.79 to be found.

From Midlands East T Warby (Derby) sent £15 and this area needs another £1,548.05 by the end of the year.

From Merseyside we received £39.59, including a 'fiver' from Walton LPYS and £1 from D Roberts, Cammell Lairds. The Merseyside area are £1,712.52 behind their target.

Nothing at all came in this week from Lancashire or Manchester: these areas need £834.77 and £1,010.79 respectively to reach the targets. Even if our readers in these areas think it's a tall order, we hope they won't stop sending us whatever they can afford, and with a bold approach they could fulfill it.

London South's contribution this week was the tax rebate (see above) but we are expecting great things! Only £526.63 to go! Perhaps South

THIS WEEK £510.63

London readers could go over their target before Christmas and thus help out North London whose £47.24 included £5 from M Wedderburn, £3 from P Cowley and friend, and £1 from T Willcocks (Islington) and a PNP supporter in NW London: another £1,519.15 is needed to reach the target.

I Ward (Bridlington LP) gave £2, and B Fleetwood (Hull) £3 towards Humberside's weekly total of £30.23. We also received an ASTMS delegate's expenses from this area. Our supporters are £447.45 short of the year's target.

Hants & IOW are over their target, but still another £11.50 came in, including £2 from D Dykes, Bournemouth CLP.

Last but not least a good £68.22 came in from readers in the Eastern region, with N Bardwell (Ipswich) and T Webb (Kings Lynn) donating £5 each and £19 from a jumble sale in Stevenage. Eastern needs another £1,608.08 but there will be lots of celebration coming shortly, and lots of opportunities.

Thanks to all sellers and readers who have helped us this year so far: as you can see from the figures, but you must make the one last effort needed to achieve the £70,000 total. **Take advantage of charitable feelings and traditional good humour—a socialist society will be better than Christmas all the year round!**

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

BIRMINGHAM Militant Industrial Forum 'The Bakers and the 5%'. Speakers: Bill Mullins (TGWU) Rover Solihull) and a bakers' shop steward. Australian Bar, Hurst Road, Birmingham. Wednesday December 6th, 7.30 pm

ROTHERHAM Militant Public Meeting 'Wage Restraint—a socialist answer'. Speaker: Terry Wilson (Leeds NE Labour Party). Thursday 7th December, 7.30 pm, WEA rooms, Corporation St, Rotherham

DISCUSSION GROUPS

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

SUNDERLAND Marxist Discussion Group. Subject: Labour Party Democracy and Accountability. Wednesday December 6th, 8 pm. For full details contact Diane English, Sunderland 44365

BRIGHTON: Sussex University Marxist Discussion Group. Subject: 'Communist Manifesto'. Wednesday December 6th, 3.00 pm. Contact A Huyton, 61B Park Village, University of Sussex

CLASSIFIED

BIRMINGHAM Militant Xmas Party Saturday December 9th, 8 pm till late. Davenports Social Club, Granvill Street, Birmingham (near Davenports Brewery)

GRAND MILITANT BAZAAR Saturday December 16th, William Morris Hall, Somers Road, Walthamstow, E.17. All helpers contact Cherrie McAskill for details

LENIN'S Collected Works for only £1! Limited draw—only 200 tickets. Draw—6th January 1979. Don't delay: send your £1 for a ticket, £5 for book, now—c/o Lenin Draw, 14 Howard Road, Walthamstow, London E.17. Proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund.

MERSEYSIDE Anti Nazi League calls on 'Militant' supporters to attend demonstration in Mold (North Wales) against Nazi British Movement on Saturday December 2nd at 11 am by Precinct

Calais Mutiny 1918 by A Killick

Price 10p (+5p post and packing)
Order from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

GRAND MILITANT BAZAAR, Saturday December 2nd, Christchurch Hall, Woolwich Road, Greenwich, London S.E.10. Helpers at the hall by 10 am, please.

WORLD BOOKS

Marx and Engels:—
Communist manifesto... 15p
Lenin:—
Left-wing communism... 25p
State and revolution... 25p
Trotsky:—
Marxism and the trade unions... 25p
Trotsky:—
Class party and leadership 10p
Stalinism and bolshevism 20p
In defence of October... 20p
West London Militant Supporters—French Revolution 1789... 40p
Connolly:—
Socialism made easy... 25p
Cannon:—
Socialism on trial... £1.25
Reed:—
Ten days that shook the world... £1.25
Tresselt:—
Ragged trousered philanthropists... £1.50

MILITANT PAMPHLETS

Grant:—
Menace of fascism... 40p
Silverman and Grant:—
Bureaucratism or workers' power?... 30p
Woods and Grant:—
Lenin and Trotsky: what they really stood for... £1.50

Order from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN
Please add 25% to cover postage. Autumn booklist now available.

IT'S TIME FOR THE NEW YEAR RAFFLE

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

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

To be drawn Saturday, 6th January, 1979

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

Send New Year greetings through 'Militant'

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

BLACKTHORNE RECORDS

HOT BLAST

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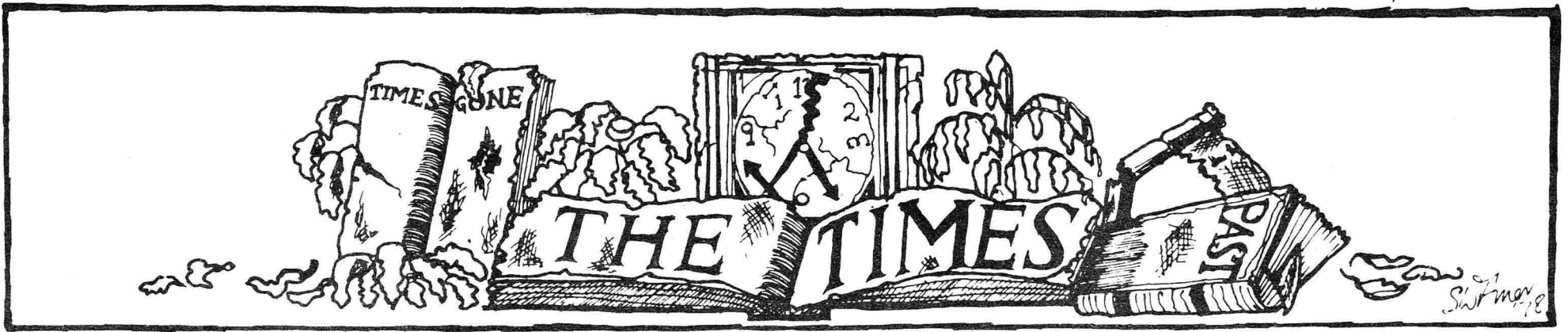
PEGGY SEEGER & EWAN MacCOLL

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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, BR3 2PU.



THE TIME'S RUNNING OUT

On November 30th, two of the nation's traditional institutions may disappear for a short time at least. It seems certain that the management will implement their threat to suspend publication of 'The Times' and 'Sunday Times' and the weekly literary and educational supplements.

This will have more importance than what alternative paper the rich will now have to read. It will be the start of a major battle—a battle, that if won by the bosses, will mean the breaking of the unions in Fleet Street, and a massive loss of jobs, not only on national, but also provincial newspapers.

Over the years, the unions have taken into their hands many of the functions of management; the bosses resent this. In years gone by, in the days of the press barons, the management worked on the principle: 'publish at all costs.'

Now times are changing. The giants like Atlantic Richfield ('Observer'), Trafalgar House ('Express') are taking a much harder line.

Linking their new deter-

mination to restore management prerogatives to the drive to introduce new technology, that means the elimination of thousands of jobs. Confrontation, sooner or later, is inevitable.

By Peter Jarvis
(National Graphical Association)

mination to restore management prerogatives to the drive to introduce new technology, that means the elimination of thousands of jobs. Confrontation, sooner or later, is inevitable.

It is clear from Times Newspapers' stance that a showdown is certainly on the agenda. Although the closing date for agreement was made months ago, the first of the documents outlining management's case was not received until mid-October.

What they require from the nine unions involved is agreement on reduced manning levels, a guarantee of contin-

uous production, a new wages structure, and agreement on the introduction of new technology. The impossibility of such a task in such a short period is clear when you consider that at present there are 54 chapels and each will and must have its say on the future.

"Irresponsible"

The seriousness of the TNL is indicated by their recently having had specially designed, electronic locks fitted to all doors, a request from the workers they refused when there was danger of IRA bombing. They hope this move will stop any planned occupation.

Knowing their plans would certainly be resisted by many on the shop-floor, TNL have gone over chapel heads and appealed to the unions' General Secretaries to inter-

vene. Unfortunately, some General Secretaries have accepted this and in fact have added their voice to accusations that some chapels are "irresponsible".

Divisions are now beginning to appear in the union's strategy for countering TNL's attack. Some unions mistakenly think they can gain from the present situation, but in the long run, if the unions do not stay united, all will suffer.

Undoubtedly, the press bosses are lining up to do battle. In the past they have

been like hungry hyenas picking at any failed or failing paper.

But in the present conflict their interest lies in the victory of 'The Times' management. If one paper can succeed in breaking the print unions, it will spread like wild-fire not only in Fleet Street but the whole breadth of the country.

The newspaper industry over the past decades has been falling into fewer and fewer hands. Until recently, with the launching of the 'Daily Star' moreover, there has been a steady decline in the number of titles nationally and in the provinces. For the unions, the press has been, and still is, one of the best organised industries in the country.

Technology

But the traditional craft skills which were for so long necessary for their production have now been superseded by new technology.

The Thompson Organisation, taking advantage of the North Sea Oil bonanza which accounts for nearly three-quarters of its £126 million profit this year moved its base to Canada. Seeing the battles in North America where new technology was introduced and the power of the unions destroyed, they now hope to do the same thing here.

In one case, the New York 'Daily News', the owners have been able to continue publishing two million copies a day

throughout union strike action—with 35 scab employees doing the job of 900.

One of the main factors in the employers' success was the disunity between the unions, a lesson that we must learn—or the same could happen to us!

For the composing room, where the new technology is being introduced, the TNL plan that the work now done by NGA members, the "first key stroke," should also be done by journalists and ad-girls. In fact, this would completely eliminate the compositors.

The agreement on the 'Daily Mirror', for example, where new photo-type setting equipment has been introduced, still leaves the compositors typing into the photo-type setting terminals. Nevertheless, this resulted in the loss of 74 NGA jobs. These jobs are now gone forever.

The unions must make a stand. To the forefront must be the demands: no selling of jobs and for a shorter working week. But this stand, if it is to be successful in the long run, must also challenge the

present system of newspaper ownership.

Newspapers are an essential part of our life, giving us a useful source of information—if not always the truth.

The Labour Party and TUC have no national or provincial paper that supports them. In a country where both are major institutions, representing the majority of the population, the claim made often by the papers that the press is free, is a complete sham.

Monopolies

The Press facilities must be taken into public ownership and those facilities allocated on the basis of support in society, not, as at present, on the basis of bank balances.

The likes of the late Roy Thompson, who treated 'The Times' as his own play-thing, are now gone. International monopolies now have their fingers in publishing in this country, and they are out to make them pay—at our expense!

For a full analysis of the problems facing printworkers and a socialist solution, read 'A fighting programme for print workers', a 'Militant' trade union pamphlet.

Price 15p (plus 9p postage & packing). order from 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

SOCIAL WORKERS- National Campaign needed

Residential social workers in Newham are preparing for industrial action in support of their claim for regrading, with the support of their NALGO branch.

Residential social workers work in children's homes, homes for the mentally handicapped, mentally ill and physically handicapped. We work a 40-hour week for take-home pay of £37 a week or less.

There is a lot of overtime which the Labour-controlled council refuses to pay for. If we took time off for this, it would probably amount to another three weeks a year.

We work split shifts, sometimes 6-7 in a row, 3 weekends out of 4, plus bank holidays. Even when we work Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day we would still only get £37 for the week.

In one day a residential social worker can find themselves hoovering, dusting, washing, caring, supporting

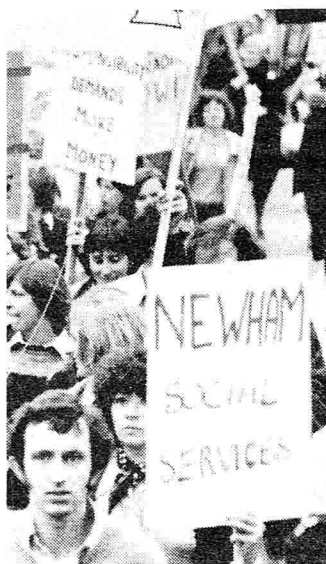
and training the children and in the evening writing sophisticated reports on the children which could affect their whole future.

These workers take care of children and adults who are the victims of bad housing, unemployment and ineffective health service etc. If we weren't there they would probably end up in prison or hospital.

Disintegration

What we are asking for is a just reward for the many duties we perform. That is a cut in the working week to 36 hours, a basic minimum wage of approx £60 a week, to get paid for unsociable hours that we work, a ban on split shifts, better training facilities etc.

Social services are seeing the slow disintegration of existing services, where experienced staff are leaving to get



Social workers on the march

a job with decent money. On average a residential social worker stays in the borough for less than one year. How can a Labour-controlled borough like Newham refuse even to negotiate?

The claim arises from a resolution passed at our last conference. This has already led to some areas taking action. But is it the best tactic for different areas to take guerilla action? Some of these areas have been involved in full stoppages for 14 weeks.

Our dispute, because it also involves residential social workers, will have more of a dramatic effect. At present, it is planned to take restrictive measures and a series of 24-hour stoppages. The union, instead of just giving the go-ahead in some areas, should coordinate a national campaign involving all social workers. This would probably lead to quicker results.

Social workers and NALGO branches must even at this stage of the dispute demand that a national campaign should be waged.

Eva Jarvis
(Newham NALGO, personal capacity)

WEIRS

Management must not succeed

On 3rd November 1,800 workers at Weirs Pumps Cathcart, Glasgow came out on strike after failing to reach agreement over wage increases with management.

The claim was for £12 and consolidation of previous supplements amounting to £22. Management offered consolidation of stages 2 and 3 but refused to consolidate the threshold payments from the time of Heath's government which constituted the major part of the supplements paid.

This was rejected by the stewards. Then the company offered £6.50 plus a 9-point plan for productivity improvement and a productivity deal based on 1977 figures. As productivity has fallen over the last year, it meant that a 3% increase in productivity

was needed before any more money could be earned.

The shop stewards are determined that the strike will continue until they get a realistic offer, they also feel that the management provoked the strike in an attempt to attack trade union organisation in Weirs. They are determined management will not succeed.

Andy Connelly and John Herron [Militant] spoke to Dougie Miller [Works Chairman] and Andy Wood [AUEW Convenor]

Donations to: Mr D Miller, 12 Gateside Cres, Barrhead, G78 1LP

Ford workers victory but.... A STORMY YEAR AHEAD

"Ford workers smash the 5% pay limit". That was the headline when Ford workers accepted the magic offer of 17%. Who could deny that the Ford workers have achieved an important victory in smashing the government's pay policy?

With inflation at about 8%, and likely to go up, it would have meant a real cut in our living standards if our husbands had accepted the 5% originally offered. The fact that we have broken the 5% is also a great morale-booster to the thousands of low-paid workers, such as the local authority employees fighting for a minimum wage of £60.

The fight of the Ford workers is important not only for our own living standards and jobs but for those of the British working class as a whole. The message to the government on wage restraint from the working class is that it is "not on".

By Chris Kelly

(wife of Southampton Ford worker)

The TUC, Labour Party conference, and the majority of the working class are against wage restraint, judging from the pay claims currently going in. If the government chooses to ignore this, and carries on trying to enforce the 5% limit, then thousands of working class votes will be lost—an important factor in the run up to a general election.

Nobody can dispute the victory of the Ford strike. Our husbands were on strike for nearly nine weeks. We have



photo: John Sturrock (Report)

got an increase on the basic rate of 9.75% plus a rise in the holiday bonus.

But the controversial point, i.e. the penalty clauses, will remain. Of course, some clauses have been watered down, but they were only the lateness clauses.

The company's final offer bulletin says that if an employee is involved in a strike or stoppage of work, whether official or unofficial, he will lose his money. If he is taken off pay as an individual or as a member of a group, or if he is laid off (whether directly or indirectly from 'disruptive action' within the Ford group) he loses it. Similarly if he is suspended for disciplinary reasons.

Now, bearing in mind the second point of being taken off pay (i.e. not being paid at all until a return to normal working) that is being punished twice for the same offence (i.e. because the workers concerned would also lose their "attendance allowance" for the whole week). I believe that these clauses represent an attack on the basic right of trade unionists at Ford's, and far from discouraging industrial action, it will be one running battle after another.

Incidentally, when at the start of the strike, the company were asked why they

didn't introduce a proper productivity deal if that would solve the dispute, the Company spokesman claimed it would cost them too much money. This came from a company which doubled its profits last year and, despite the strike, could very well double them again.

When will the management learn that workers are not machines to be picked up and discarded at their whim but human beings with a right to decent wages and working conditions?

The current wage agreement runs for one year from 24th November, 1978, to the same date in 1979. Just taking a few of the requirements Ford are extracting from us in return for their marvellous offer, such as no increase in labour costs in the period of the agreement, and no blacking of work or equipment, etc., then the year ahead will be a stormy one for both sides.

I wonder, too, whether it is a coincidence that the next agreement terminates just before Christmas. I doubt it very much.

The strike was one of the most solid in the history of the company, despite the feeble attempts of a few misguided individuals to break the magnificent shop floor solidarity.

BOOTHS -

"The spark to light the fire"

photo: J McKittrick (Militant)

The strike by 250 T&GWU members at the Booths Gin factory, Brentford, for London Weighting payment is now in its seventh week.

The strikers' resolve is as hard as ever. Last week at a meeting with management they were made an offer. However this never mentioned London Weighting payment, but was to discuss "local anomalies", and the chance of a pitiful 5% pay rise next May!

So far as the shop stewards were concerned the meeting was closed. As shop steward Roy Briggs explained, "this company are dealing with the T&GWU not a bunch of children."

Paul Hayes, the shop stewards' chairman explained, "we have now been out just one week less than the Ford workers and are prepared for a long strike if necessary, even through Christmas."

However, it need not be a long dispute and the lessons of the strike have been drawn by the stewards.

A tremendous amount of work has been done by the stewards and the strike committee to draw other plants in the same company (Distillers Co. Ltd.) in London to take strike action. They have attempted to contact other DCL factories throughout the country to get blacking of DCL products, especially in transport.

The response to requests for blacking has been excellent. However, nationally, the T&GWU could bring this giant company to heel. They should be using their influence to draw other DCL workers into action, and



Booths pickets—prepared for a long strike

spread the blacking, to bring the Company to a standstill.

As Paul Hayes explained, "The stewards have done all they can, but we are still waiting for a response from the national leadership. With their strength and influence how could we lose?"

Senior steward, Steve Fisher pointed out "the lesson of this strike is that you can't take on a monopoly company plant by plant these days. You have only to look at the power of Ford workers."

"The T&GWU need to fight now for a national

minimum wage agreement to link together all the factories in the DCL.

"This is the first major strike that DCL have had, but we believe that it could be the spark to light the fire."

Finance is important, and help with blacking, absolutely crucial. Please rush both to:

Branch Secretary, 31 Wesley Road, Hounslow, Middlesex.

By Martin Elvin

(ASLEF)

TIGHE'S SCUNTHORPE - COLD BLOODED ATTACK

JD&S Tighe, possibly the largest industrial painting company in the country, made twenty men in Scunthorpe redundant on the 17 November, claiming that bonuses demanded would have made contracts in Scunthorpe uneconomical.

But the history of Tighe's proves that the move is an attempt to destroy the union organisation, which over the last three years has prevented this company's attacks on wage levels and working conditions.

In June, attempts were made to reduce bonus targets by 28% and not to honour an anticipated 19% increase in wages as a result of the UCATT national award. Mass action by Yorkshire UCATT members defeated Jack Tighe on this question.

But he made it known that he would resolve his problems in Scunthorpe one way or another. Hence his latest

moves. The situation is a cold-blooded attempt by Tighe to get rid of the convenors and stewards in the Scunthorpe area and to break the power of the union within the firm.

At the time of the redundancies though, Tighe was awarded a substantial contract at Nypro's new plant at Flixborough and he also has options worth over £100,000 for work with BSC in Scunthorpe.

Every known job of Tighe's in Yorkshire has been halted, but support from Teeside and Isle of Grain (Kent) painters is now needed to prevent Tighe smashing the union within the company. Support for the strike, which is now official, is vital.

A defeat in Scunthorpe will give Tighe a free hand to reduce bonuses and wages at other sites. We must oppose all redundancies. If Tighe claims he cannot afford to

keep men on—then open the books—let us see what the real situation is.

Already the Labour Group on Scunthorpe borough council is investigating a request to remove JD&S Tighe from the authority's list of approved tenderers.

Messages of support and donations to: Strike HQ Kinsley Labour Club, Cole Street, Scunthorpe, South Humberside.

Stop press: The Scunthorpe 'Evening Telegraph' of 24th November states, "Mr Tighe explained that the work they would normally have done with local labour was now being done by workers from outside the Scunthorpe area, and mainly Yorkshire."

If this is the case then UCATT must act nationally to prevent scabbing.

By Miles Todd

(Scunthorpe LPYS)

WINTHROPS - WORKERS LOCKED OUT

Not only the Ford workers are rebelling against wage restraint. Here in Newcastle, besides the bakery workers, Winthrops factory in Kenton is in dispute.

Winthrops contracts mainly to the government. Just over two months ago, a claim of more than 5% was put in, which was rejected by management. A work-to-rule star-

ted which crippled production.

The management told the workers to get back to normal otherwise men would be laid off. The work-to-rule continued, and the workforce was locked out. Nobody is working at all—the fire safety team is locked out as well.

The attitude to the management, and the government

is bitter. The government with its 5% and its threats of sanctions, and the bosses, who are quite willing to pay rises of 5% which will help their profits, are both symptoms of a decaying system which puts profit first at the expense of living standards.

By Keith Allen

(Newcastle LPYS)

Militant

16 MILITANT 1 December 1978

Print workers assemble outside the 'Sunday Times' for march to Westminster on Tuesday

IRAN: RATS LEAVE SINKING SHIP

That's the picture in Teheran as the wealthy, corrupt Iranian elite scramble desperately to stash their ill-gotten millions safely away into the vaults of Swiss banks.

By Brent Kennedy

"Since the crisis began, many of the 60 members of the royal family have, in the words of one diplomat, 'packed up and left the country, lock, stock, and barrel,'" reports the 'Financial Times' [28 November].

In fact, every member except the Shah, his wife and three young children have fled the country with their loot. The very backbone of this decadent ruling class has been chilled to the marrow and sees no way forward.

Bloody repression by the military regime may hold off the workers a little longer, but now the army itself can no longer be relied upon to guard the privileges of the Shah and his camarilla of parasites.

In the eight weeks before the imposition of crisis exchange controls in November, no less than £1 billion was rushed out of the country by 177 millionaires including "close relatives of the Shah, senior generals, former Min-

isters and top officials still at their posts."

The sums range from £1.1 million in the case of a former Labour Minister to £35.5m in the case of a man still holding one of Iran's top economic posts" [FT].

No prizes for guessing his economic predictions!

The Iranian ruling class have good cause to worry about their future ability to amass great fortunes at the expense of 30 million poverty stricken workers and peasants: The secret details of these hardly patriotic money movements were let out of the bag by the bank workers!

In publishing these details the central bank officials' syndicate says: "By reading these pages [you will] know some of the amounts that these traitors of the country possess."

This recalls the action of the Portuguese bank workers

in 1975 when they exposed the behind-the-scenes deals of the powerful owners of Portugal's big monopolies and the banks themselves. The elements of workers' control which existed in revolutionary Portugal then are now being established by the young Iranian working class today.

The Portuguese bank workers, and the industrial workers and the peasants insisted that it was not sufficient to overthrow the dictator Caetano or the reactionary general Spínola without ending the corrupt capitalist system which spawned them.

Their mass mobilisation forced through the nationalisation of the banks, and 60% of industry, in a step which, but for the timid policies of their leaders, would have opened the way to the socialist transformation of society.

Today, the Iranian workers must take the lead, not only in the fight to topple the hated Shah—who might merely be replaced by another defender of exploitation—but to put an end to the misery - poverty of capitalism itself.

The workers and peasants must fight to take over the banks and industry and to give land to the peasants, laying the foundations for a socialist Iran.

BACK BAKERY WORKERS

continued from page one

up for the bakery workers' rights! Because it fights for decent wages! Because the Union is the bakery workers' only guarantee of decent working conditions!

Ranks and ABF are giant monopolies. Usually they control 70% of bread sales. They virtually have a total monopoly of flour milling, which is much more profitable than baking. Yet they "can't afford" to pay a living wage.

But the strike is hitting them hard! Their share of bread sales is down to 30%. (Independent bakers have increased their share from 30% to 50% leaving about a 20% bread shortage.) They have lost 40% of their sales! That's why they are screaming about the strike.

This week, the BFAWU has received encouraging promises of support from other

unions.

Moss Evans of the Transport Workers' Union and Bobby Smith of the General and Municipal Workers have informed the Bakers Union that they have now sent out instructions that all their drivers must strictly observe BFAWU pickets.

They have also promised to take tough action against any managers trying to drive lorries through pickets.

These steps could have a decisive effect in stopping the flour, yeast and bread that is unfortunately still passing through the gates in some areas.

The International Food Workers have also told the BFAWU that steps are being taken in seven countries, including Canada, to black grain and flour being shipped to British bakers.

Bakery workers are determined to stand up to the Federation moguls! But the strike must be made even more effective!

Already BF&AWU pickets have received very welcome assistance from Labour Party Young Socialist members and other trade unionists (see reports, pages 8 & 9).

But they need even more help. All Labour Party and LPYS members and fellow trade unionists should make every effort to give regular assistance to pickets at their local bakery.

Their fight is our fight! The whole labour and trade union movement has a duty to ensure that the Bakery workers get all the practical, financial, and political support they need to win their fight for a living wage and decent working conditions.

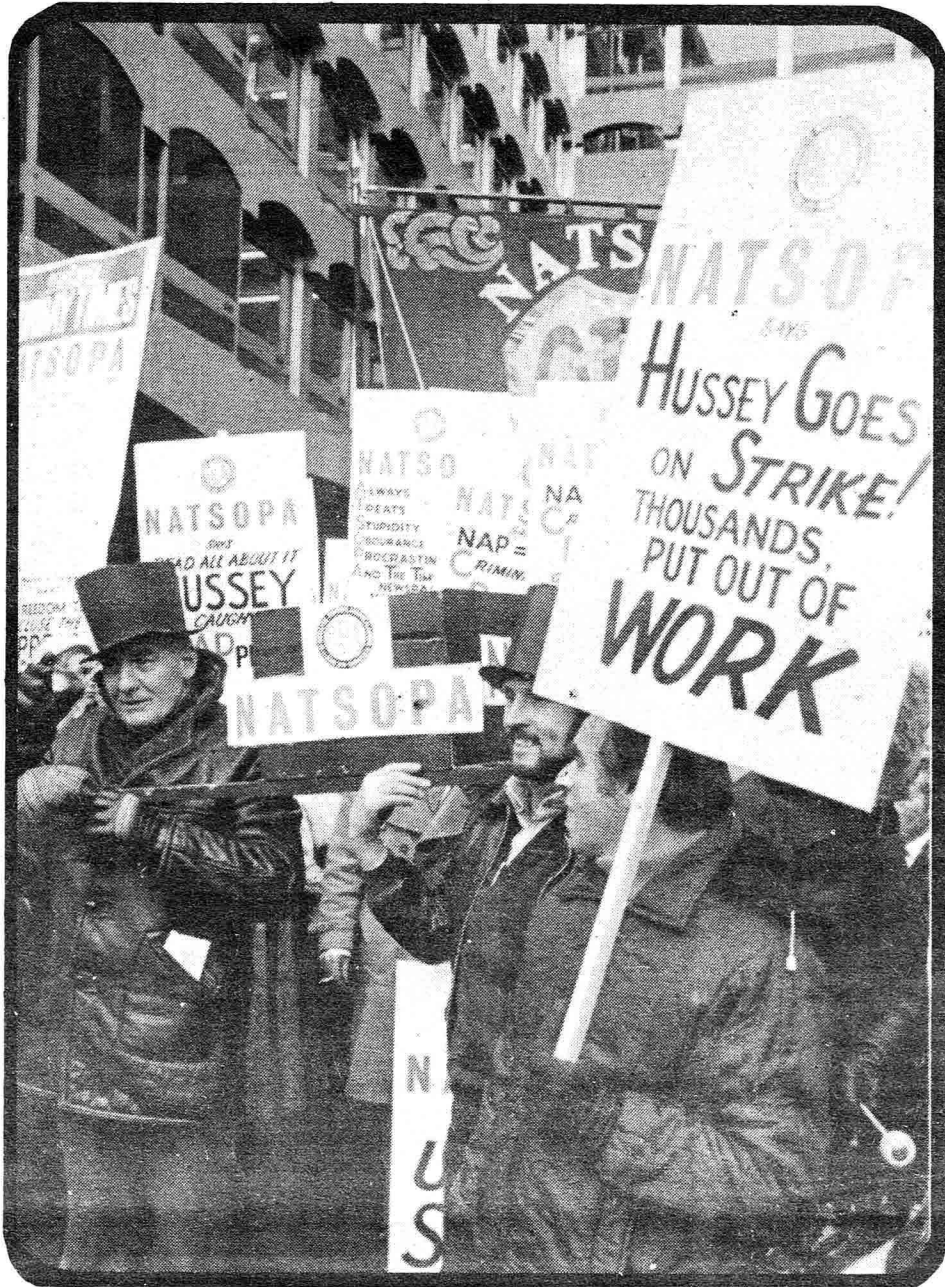


photo: J McKittrick (Militant)

TIMES LOCK OUT

continued from page one

in mind is only one thing: bigger profits!

Despite renewed union offers to negotiate, provided the ultimatum is withdrawn, TNL seem determined to shut down 'The Times', the 'Sunday Times', and their weekly supplements from midnight

on Thursday.

This is an issue for the whole labour and trade union movement. We cannot tolerate an assault of this kind on any group of trade unionists.

Above all, the print unions must not allow themselves to be divided by management.

The time has come for a common plan of campaign and united, joint action by all the 'Fleet Street unions to resist this planned, co-ordinated attempt by the press barons to break the union and shed thousands and thousands of jobs.

The Time's Running Out, see page 14

FORD SANCTIONS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

government might well impose no sanctions."

A Treasury letter to Ford, hedged with qualifications, said that the government and nationalised industries would not be buying Ford vehicles "unless alternative supplies cannot be obtained."

Industry Act grants and Export Credit would also be withheld "unless overriding national interests intervenes."

As the government has also threatened sanctions against Vauxhall and Leyland should their settlements exceed 5%, ministers and top civil servants may soon have to resort to public transport!

At any rate, the government is receiving no thanks from big business for trying to hold down wages in the interests to boost profits. What else could Ford do? They were forced to pay up!

How futile it is for a Labour government to try to manage the bosses' system better than the bosses themselves!

Militant

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