

# FIGHT FOR A LIVING WAGE IN 1979

All over the country the lowest paid workers are demanding a better deal.

Following the bakers come the manual workers in local government, health and other public services.

The anger felt by these trade unionists will only be increased by the details of the insulting offer the employers have made.

Health service workers were offered a £2.10 non-enhanceable supplement (not countable for overtime etc.), plus the promise of a 100% increase in dirty linen allowance. Unfortunately this is only 7½p a day! To no one's surprise our unions have turned down this offer, which was miles removed from the £60 for a 35-hour week we are seeking.

There has been some attempt to suggest comparability with the private sector as the way out of the problem. But as

By a NUPE  
member

was pointed out at recent meetings they were only prepared to compare 'like with like' i.e. a comparison with private sector catering and cleaning staff. Given the dreadful exploitation of these workers we could be giving money to the government!

The employers claim a total offer of 11½%. In reality both offers are

within the 5% guideline. Only about 50,000 workers are in line for 11½%. The lowest paid would get under 1½%! Part time workers like school meals helpers will suffer most.

The basic here only rises from £37.40 plus £5 supplement to £38 plus £5 supplement. Part timers will boost their pay packets by about 20p on a 20-hour week. Big deal!

No wonder women workers, so often written off as unlikely to strike are getting militant. At one meeting in the North East, of Education Service NUPE members, mostly part time, only 10 opposed action.

The proposals hypocritically talk of a minimum

Continued on  
page three



# Enter A Different World Harrods

## If you've got the money

"You are entering a different world," claim the adverts urging shoppers into Harrods. And for once, the ads are right!

If you've ever wondered what the rich do with all their money, just go to Harrods and find out.

Bedecked with fairy lights and the royal coat

of arms, Harrods stands in the heart of fashionable Knightsbridge as a monument to the conspicuous consumption of London's rich. Not the sort of place you and I would do our weekly shopping, but what about at Christmas?

No problem choosing Christmas presents there, they've got everything

you need—if you've got everything they need. Like £490 for a jewellery box (the jewels, of course, are extra!)

How about buying Nim a shirt for only £58? Or a blouse for her at a round £100, to go with a dress and jacket at £299? Accessories come at £90

Continued on page 3



'MILITANT' needs your goodwill— see back page

**EDITORIAL****THE DRAFT  
MANIFESTO**

Labour's draft Manifesto for the next election has already provoked howls of outrage from the capitalist press.

Pretending to speak for the "national interest"—or even feigning to advise the Labour Party how to win elections!—

the representatives of big business fear the response the radical measures proposed in the draft will get from the working class.

The labour movement will certainly welcome a renewed commitment to "a programme of new public ownership", taking over sections of the pharmaceutical, building materials and construction industries.

It will also welcome proposals for the nationalisation of development land and of oil and gas reserves; and for the transformation of British Petroleum into a public corporation.

Also important, are the proposals for long over-due measures to introduce an annual wealth tax of those with net personal wealth of over £150,000 and to abolish that bastion of privilege and reaction, the House of Lords.

The Labour Parties must fight to ensure that the next Manifesto is decided by the elected bodies of the Party in line with conference decisions and is not watered-down out of all recognition by the right-wing leadership.

The draft proposals for the Manifesto, which have been prepared by the Home Policy Committee, will be discussed by the full National Executive Committee next week.

Many of the proposals of the draft, if explained and campaigned for in an active way, would win enormous support for Labour at the next general election.

Nevertheless, there are serious gaps. The demand for a 35-hour week without loss of pay, overwhelmingly adopted by the TUC and LP Conferences, is not included.

Nor is the call for the nationalisation of the banks—passed by a 6 to 1 majority at Labour Party Conference—which is vital to any real control over the economy.

On wages policy, the draft contains ambiguous statements which really evade the crucial issues.

The draft says "we shall seek an understanding with the trade unions on pay." It talks vaguely about ensuring that the growth of incomes is consistent with the targets on inflation.

It draws attention to the recent [slight] improvements in incomes, but makes no acknowledgement that this was because of many sections of workers opposing—and breaking—the Labour government's pay limits.

In other words, there is no clear repudiation of pay

restraint. But rejection of further incomes policy and commitment to a minimum wage of at least £60 a week—both policies adopted by the TUC and the LP Conference—are absolutely vital if Labour is to mobilise support among broad layers of workers.

The draft's weakness on wages and inflation alone reveals the fundamental weakness of its approach. While including a few bold measures, which will fire the wrath of big business and which Labour's right wing will undoubtedly attempt to repudiate, the programme outlined still amounts to "tinkering with the system".

After all, were not most of this draft's radical elements included in Labour's 1973 Programme, which also included the clear demand for the nationalisation of 25 top companies? Why were the elements of this programme included in the 1974 Manifesto subsequently abandoned by the Labour government?

Whether or not socialist measures and reforms in the interests of the working class are carried through is not just a question of political will.

Any government, whatever its initial intentions, if it tries to operate within the framework of a diseased capitalism will have its policies dictated to it by big business. The logic of the system, dominated by privately-owned monopolies, and based on the market and on the need of the capitalists to make profit, will determine the policies of the government.

Partial nationalisation of a few sectors, while it will certainly provoke resistance and sabotage by big business, will not give decisive control of the economy.

Without such control, and the real ability to plan production, the draft's talk of compulsory planning agreements and cast iron controls are utopian—as experience has already shown.

The only way to sustain a Labour government and carry out bold changes in the interests of the workers is to break out of the capitalist framework.

Only decisive control of the economy, through the nationalisation of the banks and major monopolies, with compensation only on the basis of proven need, could allow Labour to eradicate inflation and unemployment, and to implement all the reforms repeatedly promised in the past but mostly abandoned in office.

Armed with this programme, and campaigning for the immediate introduction of a 35-hour week without loss of pay, a minimum wage of £70 a week, and the rapid expansion of education, health, and welfare services, Labour would be assured of electoral victory and the mass support necessary to carry through a socialist change in society.

**PROFIT MAKES  
HUMANITY  
'IMPRACTICAL'**

**Peace on earth. Goodwill to all men. But is the spirit of Christmas powerful enough to seep into City board-rooms?**

You might think it is just "exaggeration" for a socialist paper to accuse the directors of big business of being heartless scrooges. After all, many wealthy figures give away thousands of pounds to charities to help the poor and needy.

But how do they make their millions of pounds in dividends which, by comparison, make those ostentatious donations look like small change?

Only last week, as the Christmas lights were being switched on and kids began to venture out carol singing, the directors of one of Britain's most celebrated companies were waging a no-holds-barred fight against an attempt to raise their workers' wages above starvation level.

The firm was none other than Brooke Bond, Britain's biggest tea company and a household name.

A resolution was down for the shareholders' annual general meeting to improve the wages and conditions of their Indian tea plantation workers whose work provides the firm's profits. Mr John Tanner told the shocking truth:

"Brooke Bond's neglect of its plantation workers has led to malnutrition, especially among children, and has allowed hookworm to remain, unnecessarily, an endemic disease...Brooke Bond had failed to comply with the Indian government's requirement for the elimination of insanitary sub-standard housing," reported the 'Guardian'.

Fantastic profits had been made out of the wretchedness of these plantation workers—and out of consumers in this country. "The company's

**"Brooke Bond's neglect of its plantation workers had led to malnutrition especially among children..."**

**"Profits remained as high as £44.7 million in 1978...a 50% pay rise for the 22,000 Indian employers would absorb about £1.8 million".**

profits had increased by 80% in 1975-76 and by a further 90% in the following year as a result of spiralling tea prices.

"And even after prices had fallen sharply, profits had remained almost as high as £44.7 million in 1978, easily enough to finance a big rise of the basic 60p a day tea

pluckers pay and still leave a lot over for shareholders. A 50% pay rise for the 22,000 Indian employees would absorb about £1.8m."

But the millionaires would not be moved by sentiment. Showing their true colours, these stony hearted capitalists counter-attacked. They had already organised proxy votes of shares wighted 51m to 2.6m against the proposal—so much for their indignant outcry against block votes at Labour Party conference!

**"Raise hopes"**

"We love India on this board and we love the Indians," declared the up-standing leading citizen, Sir Humphrey Prideaux; "and it shall always be our policy to what is practical to improve their lot."

But this nauseating cant was soon overtaken when other shareholders dropped the board's liberal, Christian mask and bared their teeth. Major Edwin Marley was not ashamed to make his views about money felt. He attacked "the purely socialist dogma of which most of us are heartily sick."

And this was not the isolated army opinion of an army officer. 'The Guardian' reports: "He seemed to catch the mood of well attended 500-strong meeting. The resolution had only a handful of supporters."

'Scrooge' is too mild a word for these creatures, lavishing themselves in style while their workers' children starve, perhaps giving to charities to save their consciences.

Our readers will turn their thoughts to the plight of the plantation workers, but our solution is not in the form of charity, of ameliorating their lot for a short time.

Our solution must be what Major Marley sneeringly calls "purely socialist political dogma"—international trade union solidarity to force higher wages immediately and a campaign to nationalise the assets of these soulless money grabbers for the benefit of Brooke Bond workers in India and Britain!

**By Julian McKittrick**

**BEHIND THE  
LAW'S DELAY**

**By Eileen Short**

This week, the West German government's legal representative, Mr Rudolph Gaupner, was yet again granted a remand in custody for Astrid Proll, who is accused of terrorist crimes in Germany.

He promised that extradition proceedings would begin this week, but admitted they would almost certainly be adjourned until January.

Even the magistrate at Bow Street Court was moved to say that he was "very concerned for the young lady who has been

in custody for some time now"—in the normally all-male Brixton prison, he might have added

But the delay has more sinister implications than the West German government's surprising inability to produce its evidence more promptly or the British court's indifference to a remanded prisoner's rights.

Developments in the Proll case fully justify our warning (Militant 6 October) that the labour movement cannot afford to be indifferent to arbitrary administrative measures against isolated suspects, however much we may oppose the violent tactics of which they are accused.

Since then, the government has resorted to an underhand legal manoeuvre—retrospectively, something the legal

pundits usually claim is completely unacceptable.

When Astrid Proll was arrested on 15 September on suspicion of crimes alleged to have been committed in Germany, the rules about extradition to that country were quite clear. The 1960 extradition treaty between Britain and Germany said: 'No British subject shall be delivered up to the Federal Republic of Germany'. Astrid is married to a British subject and so has an automatic right to British citizenship.

**Royal decree**

On 25 September the German government wrote anxiously about this to the British government. On 29 September the treaty was

amended by royal decree at Balmoral Castle to read: 'The government of UK shall not be obliged to extradite a citizen of the United Kingdom.' But it can if it wants to.

The order was "laid before Parliament" when Parliament wasn't sitting on 2 October and came into effect the next day.

This "technical hitch" no doubt explains why the West German government has so far failed to produce its evidence in court on the numerous occasions Astrid Proll has come up for remand.

It is a scandal that a Labour Home Secretary should resort to such a measure. The state is being given extra powers which will undoubtedly be used against labour activists in the future.



# Enter A Different World Harrods

**CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE**

**But you don't arrive by bus...**

for a scarf and £120 for a handbag. A lot of men dread getting those same old V-neck jumpers again, but not one of Harrods'—they cost £69.

Of course, you could lash out and buy her a coyote fur jacket for £2,700 or a coat for £5,950. (But what would you be doing reading the 'Militant'?)

More orthodox gifts available are slippers at £29 or handkerchiefs at £6. Toiletries are the usual easy present for your mother, and Harrods' perfume gift set costs only £245.

You could while away the hours of your holidays next week with a game of dominoes for £18 or a whole games box for £135. Then you can always sneak a go with the kids' train set at £98.35, a model boat at £375.50 or a 'Fun Machine' organ at £699—or even an all-time favourite, a painting set, at a mere £2,995. (Couldn't you hire an artist for some time on that?)

Well if these are a bit steep for ordinary presents what about something solid for the house? Harrods have some beautiful leather-topped wooden desks for £1,105 or £2,376, with desk chairs to go with them at £361 apiece and leather desk sets at £282, or if you can't afford that just buy a pen for £32. A fancy, old-fashioned telephone at only £275 would complete the Victorian look to your study.

You could deck out the same room with a wall system

(that means shelves) costing £1,228, a settee—£924, and a coffee table—£1,250.

Crockery is a handy gift for occasions all the year round, and it might take you a year to save up for the following little lot. Harrods offers dinner sets at such typical prices as 'Jasmine' £305, 'Royal Antoinette' £405 (and we know what happened to

35. After this comes a shock in the window outside—a 12 piece dinner set for no less than £3,950! With that you'd just have to buy silverware to serve up the vegetables (veg dish £125) and, of course, the lobster thermidor (lobster dish £550).

It's a marvellous place, Harrods. They've even got a

judging by the way I was closely watched over as I browsed around. This really is the place where they get rid of the bundles of brown ones. Fill out your mansion with an 1830s Japanese bureau at £5,400 or a pair of 19th Century French cabinets for £6,600.

If it looks well in your palace, add a marble bust of George V to your collection for only £1,700, or if you're more democratically inclined, how about a stone figure taken from the Palace of Westminster (Houses of Parliament) at the bargain offer of £1,800—adding a small corner to your house that would be forever England.

Up market comes a pair of lead statues £2,500, a pair of bronze lions that Nelson would envy at £6,900, a marble bust at £3,450 and an 1860 French clock to stand behind your box of 'After Eights' for £2,450.

But if you really want to impress your friends and turn your neighbours green with envy, it's got to be the '17th Century-style venetian glass wall mirror, rectangular with canted corners and overlaid frosted glass flowers and leaves, with gilt-metal borders'. And its only £8,500—now there is something to blow your redundancy money on!

Staggering outside, my mouth open aghast and my eyes popping out in amazement, I notices the final inevitable touches in the window. If I'd had £71 on me I could have bought a wallet. But then, I wouldn't have had had anything to put in it.

Or even a money clip costing £26.50. The last thing I distinguished through the haze of bright lights and price-tags was a holdall for £500—very useful for shop-

ping at Harrods, not for carrying goods in, for carrying your money there in.

Crossing the road without

traders began to pack up an old aged pensioner was sorting through half-rotted fruit and vegetables lying in the



**...and don't forget to tip the commissionaire**

being hit by a single Rolls Royce, I made it back home through my local Church Street market and returned abruptly to the real world.

There were mothers struggling with laden shopping baskets, trying to keep the kids away from the toy shop and haggling over the price of vegetables. As the street

road, discarded by the barrow boys.

Ted Heath was right, there are two nations and they do live in different worlds.

**Report by Brent Kennedy  
Photos by Julian McKittrick**



**Your chihuahua will be well looked after...**

her!), 'Buckingham' £467.50 (are they next?), 'Imperial' £665 and 'Golden Aves' a cool £1,062. If your appetite isn't up to that, just settle for a cup and saucer from each set at £7.35, £10.35, £11.25, £15.55 and £24.85 respectively, not forgetting the teapot at £99-

department store for what most of us would call antiques, but with a sense of modesty they call it 'Second hand 19th Century furniture'.

But there is one department on the third floor which must be reserved for fully paid-up members of the ruling class,



NUPE members on anti-cuts lobby

Photo: Chris Davies (Report)

## FIGHT FOR A LIVING WAGE IN 1979

**continued from front page**

earnings guarantee of £47.40 per week. This bottom wage, low enough in itself, only applies to those in full time work. It also disqualifies those earning a bonus or shift allowance. As most full time workers are on some bonus scheme or shift allowance, the bosses have got us.

Heads they win Tails we lose. Add to this provisions against the minimum being applied for bad attenders' or people who clock on late (as

defined by the employers of course) and precious few will benefit.

The government are plainly worried about the effect we could have. There have been threats of using troops as scab labour, particularly against the sewerage workers.

### Support

This could be the thin end of the wedge for their use elsewhere, and all trade unionists will oppose such actions from a Labour government.

NUPE, T&GWU and G&MWU plan to organise a one day strike on January 22nd with a mass lobby potentially of at least a quarter of a million people. They are looking to the support of farmworkers and civil servants unions.

This will probably be followed up by nationwide overtime bans and the selective withdrawal of key sections of workers.

What is certain is that our members will no longer be prepared to tolerate low wages. The fight is now on.

# LETTING THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG

The workers at International Dishwashers Ltd had long ceased to be amused by the annual farce perpetrated upon them every Christmas Eve by the management and shareholders.

This consisted of a General Meeting in the Works canteen. The workers were 'invited' to listen to the managing director outline the company's objectives for the coming year. Naturally, the directors and shareholders were seated upon a specially erected dais, whilst the workers sat below gazing up at "their lords and masters".

The idea of a 'talk-in'—or 'talk-down' as the workers termed it—had been conceived by Sir Richard Snodgrass, the managing director, after returning from a business trip to the USA, his head spinning with such incomprehensible notions as 'goal orientation' and 'workforce motivation'. The workers had defined such jargon as meaning "You-more work:—Us—more profit".

Consequently, they had not one iota of interest in the meaningless phrases which Snodgrass would be firing at them with machine-gun rapidity.

Except, this year would be different!

Sir Charles Fothergay, the leading shareholder, finished making his usual introductory speech—a collection of rambling reminiscences and banal jokes—and sat down.

Snodgrass stomped boldly up to the microphone. He paused, glanced at his notes, and then paused again.

Although his fellow directors were aware of it, neither the shareholders nor the workers knew that Snodgrass had been drinking heavily for several months. As a result his mind, once incisive if somewhat philistine (he believed for instance, that Keats, Shelley and Byron were a firm of merchant bankers) had become a little befuddled. He had also adopted a tendency towards belligerency.

## Bleatings

"It's high time you workers were told a few facts of life. You think that this company owes you a living. Well it doesn't. If you think that International Dishwashers is going to continuously wash your dirty financial dishes for you for ever and a day you've got another think coming, my lads.

"This company exists to make a profit for its shareholders. What you want is neither here nor there. The directors and shareholders are sick to death of your perpetual bleatings about better pay, and the whinings about holidays, sick benefits, facilities and all the rest of the anti-management devices which the bloody trade union movement sits on its arse and dreams up to hinder us.

"As for all this rubbish about 35-hour weeks and improved safety conditions,

forget it! We are not going to be dictated to by a bunch of bolshies. You're quite safe enough. Any accidents are your own stupid faults.

"Like the rest of the workers in this country you all move about in a bloody daydream thinking that business owes you a living. 35-hours! You don't work hard enough as it is. Create jobs for workshy social security scroungers? It's time we cut the dole and created more profits for the shareholders. Then its up to them whether they invest it and where they invest it.

"Business means making a profit. You expect us to invest in more jobs and new machinery. Well, we can't afford it. If that means a drop in living standards, then that's tough! If it means unemployment, then hard luck!

"It's high time you realised that you've got to make sacrifices if you want to go on living in a democracy. The alternative is communism. The reds are only waiting for the opportunity to take over. That means that freedom goes by the board. There's a lot of fine talk put about by the commies about freedom and democracy.

## Freedom

"Well, what is freedom? Freedom means the shareholders deciding how the nation's wealth is best invested. Only those with the money are best able to decide how to spend it. What the hell would you lot know about running things? As it is, the country's in a mess and it's all your fault.

"Democracy is about free enterprise and market forces deciding how we live. If the market is in a bad way then it's your fault again for demanding too much of the cake. You only work here and produce the goods.

"What right do you have to interfere with profits and management's right to manage in the best interests of the shareholders? I've heard this hoary old cry about 5% of the people owning 95% of the wealth. So what? The commercial world is a struggle for the survival of the fittest. The strong survive: the weak go to the wall. So it's the strong who have the wealth and you can't expect them to give it away.

"It's high time that the unions stopped ruining the country with their insatiable demands. If they don't like the way we do things then they should emigrate to bloody Russia. And the sooner the better.

"Management must manage and the shareholders must be allowed to make profits. If some of you have to go to the wall then that's too bad. We can't have it both ways.

"And let me tell you this: if sales don't buck up then some of you will be coming face to face with the wall early in the new year. There's a world slump and we can't afford to

provide your upkeep if there's no profit in it for us. You get what we can afford—no more, no less."

Snodgrass wiped a bead of perspiration from his brow and sat down. It was the speech he had wanted to make for years.

## Kid gloves

Blow all this kid gloves stuff. Workers were too bloody-minded by half and he was sick of having to dress things up in polite diplomatic phrases. Rather than belt tightening they needed a damn good kick. It was high time other managers had the guts to say what they really thought.

On either side of Snodgrass the shareholders sat bolt upright in their seats, staring fixedly into space, their faces rigid, waxen deathmasks.

Fothergay's mind spun wildly with jumbled thoughts. Eventually, they evened out and formed themselves into a cohesive chain of action. Dinner with the other major shareholders tonight; a surreptitious lunch with the deputy managing director Clive Stilgo on Boxing Day, and then a meeting with Snodgrass the following day.

The day after, Snodgrass's resignation on the grounds of ill-health would be announced; they would be pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Clive Stilgo as his successor.

Fothergay braced himself for the anticipated shock and then looked down at the workers seated below. His worst fears were realised. There they sat, row upon endless row, seemingly stretched out into endless infinity. Muscles stretched as though waiting to commence some great fray, faces set like 'stone' as though suddenly turned towards some great purpose.

Not a man spoke, but each had his arms folded tightly across his chest; studies in quiet contemplation of a task.

Fothergay had the frightening feeling that their very number, as they sat there, shoulder to shoulder, was fusing them into a strength of infinitely unbreakable magnitude.

"Oh my god," he muttered under his breath.

He rose to his feet, the signal for the other shareholders and directors to follow suit. As they turned to leave one of his fellow shareholders touched his elbow.

"I think it time that Snodgrass left the stage", he whispered meaningfully.

Without looking at him, Fothergay said softly:

"Perhaps we shall all be leaving the stage shortly."

**Bill Alfred**  
(Dagenham CLP)

# Trotsky Centenary Quiz

Next year will be the 100th anniversary of the birth of Leon Trotsky, and all the questions in our Christmas quiz relate to his life and activity. A copy of Trotsky's autobiography, 'My Life', [or a book of equivalent value] will be sent to whoever sends in the first correct entry opened [editor's decision final]. Answers must be received by 5 January 1979. Correct answers and winner will be printed in our issue of 12 January.

1. Date of Trotsky's birth?
2. What other significant event happened on the same day in a later year?
3. Who was the Trotsky from whom Leon Davidovich took his famous pseudonym?
4. What important position did Trotsky take in the 1905 revolution?
5. What was the title of the book, written in 1906, in which Trotsky elaborated the theory of the "permanent revolution"?
6. Name of Trotsky's wife and life-long companion from 1906?
7. Where and by whom was Trotsky imprisoned en route back to Russia in 1917?
8. What was the organisation to which Trotsky belonged in 1917 and which fused with the Bolshevik Party known as?
9. Name Trotsky's brother-in-law, also on the Bolshevik central committee in 1917.
10. What important Bolshevik committee did Trotsky head in September/October 1917?
11. Name the Kronstadt sailor or who in 1917 made himself "special assistant" to Trotsky—and his sons.
12. Where did the 1918 peace negotiations between the Soviet and the German governments take place?
13. From where did Trotsky command the Red Army during the civil war 1918-1920?
14. What important international publication did Trotsky and his followers start publishing in 1929?
15. Name the island in Turkey to which Trotsky was exiled.
16. Who was the minister of justice [later United Nations secretary general] who expelled Trotsky from another country of exile?
17. What was the name of the Commission set up in Mexico to answer the accusations levelled against Trotsky at the Moscow trials?
18. Name the painter who gave Trotsky refuge.
19. Name the painter who led an assassination attempt on Trotsky.
20. Date of Trotsky's death?

# WANTED - CAPTIONS!



Fit a caption [not an obscene or libellous one!] to these photos. The best entry opened by 5th January 1979 will win a £2 voucher for books from World Books. The winning captions and winner will be printed in our 12th January issue.

Photos by Julian McKittrick (Militant)



# There's a lot of it about 3.



# LEFT & RIGHT

## Some helpful suggestions

Christmas is upon us. Readers who can't manage to get down to shop at Harrods will be relieved to know that many high class establishments have catalogues to enable you to decide at home. Asprey & Co. in Bond Street will send you a catalogue for £2 which could solve your Christmas present problems. Don't you find cutting the end off eggs a frightful chore? Aspreys can send you a 'chicken egg decapitator' for a very reasonable £11.50. And if you find squeezing out your toothpaste a bit arduous [and who doesn't?] you can purchase a toothpaste squeezer for a modest £32.50.

Well, that's the distant relatives catered for. For someone really special, how about buying the lady in your life a little diamond necklace [with a detachable brooch] for £225,000. This is a real money-saver as the necklace is easily converted into a tiara. Two presents in one!

So if you've got your 5% or a little bit of redundancy money, you can splash out on this bauble which our fashion correspondent believes will be the 'in' thing on next year's picket lines.

## Ding dong merrily on high

The festive spirit means good tidings of great joy [and profit] for Avon, the door-to-door cosmetics makers. Not that they need much of a boost. Their sales are up 23% this year on last year's \$1½ billion. Readers who buy their products or who make a few bob selling to their friends will be interested to know that they have branched out into the jewellery business and have now taken over the swank New York jewellers Tiffany's [sales last year \$60 million].

In case the thought of all that money makes you feel weak, don't worry, they have an answer for this too. From next year they will be marketing for the first time, door-to-door vitamins.

## The return of Tricky Dicky

The season of goodwill started early in Oxford this year when on November 30th, the disgraced ex-President Richard Nixon spoke at the Oxford Union. This of course isn't a union in the sense of the TGWU or even an average Student Union, but more of a training course in political trickery for aspiring ruling class politicians. So who better to address them than Tricky Dicky? Forgiving his past 'errors', students reportedly reading the 'Beano' and the 'Telegraph' queued to hear this political corpse defend the bombing of Cambodia ["I wish I'd done it sooner"] and the tapping of radical opponents' phones in the USA to "halt the spread of Communism."

Unlike the students outside protesting at this visit, the rapturous applause greeting these statements showed that one very upper crust section of students feel that any tactics are justified to defend capitalist society.

## The value of culture

Getting a book at Christmas? Some of our upper-class "betters" may be. According to an article in the 'Financial Times' many "top people" will be buying books, but what for is a different matter. They recommend books as an investment, and the "value" of them depends not on their artistic value but marketability.

Don't buy books by authors who have written a lot, however good they may be. For a good investment, look for writers who are beginning to climb the popularity table and search out first editions of their work. If they have been sparing in their output you'll get a better price. And you thought books were just for reading?

# CHRISTMAS REVIEWS

## MUTINY!

'Mutiny' by A Killick. Price 10p (+ 5p post and packing). Order from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terr., London E8 3PN

The period of 1917-1919 was one of the most stormy in the history of capitalism. Following the carnage of the First World War, and with the example of the Russian Revolution to follow, workers and soldiers all over Europe rose up against their oppressors.

This pamphlet covers an event usually suppressed in history books—a mutiny in the British army. It captures superbly the revolutionary mood amongst the troops and shows as well what life was like for ordinary workers before the first world war.

One of the most important points is how the soldiers organised against the officers. The author writes: "In the

matter of organisation we were greatly influenced by the Soviet method. It was strictly democratic: each hut or group of tents to the same number, elected a delegate to the camp committee, and these committees then likewise elected delegates to the central area committee."

For socialists, the lessons are clear. Once the capitalist class can't control the army, their very grip on society is threatened.

In a time of class struggle, the labour movement must aim to win over the rank and file soldiers to its side. This pamphlet shows the possibilities that will exist in the future.

Peter Lush

## The Capitalists Arrive

The French Revolution 1789 Price 40p + 10p p& p. From World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

"Revolutions are never going to work, look at the French Revolution. You only change one oppressor for another." This pessimistic comment is aptly answered in this excellent pamphlet.

It clearly outlines the class forces involved in the French Revolution. It shows how the masses, particularly those in the cities, were moved into action by their conditions, and the vital role they played in the overthrow of the reactionary feudal rulers.

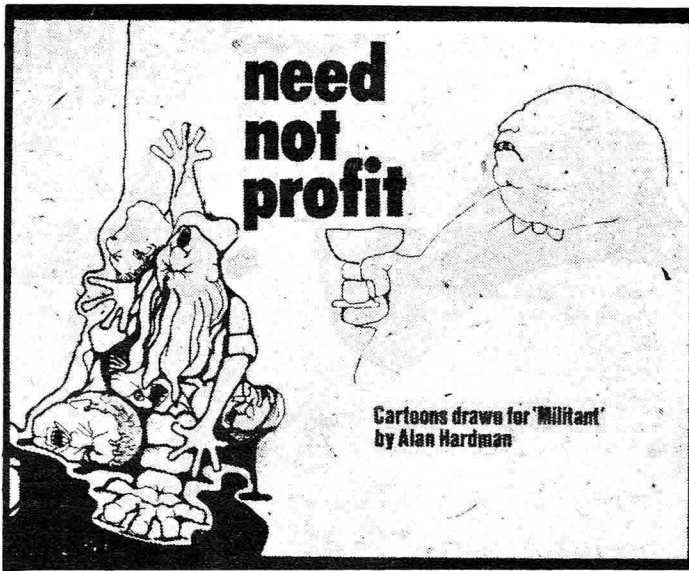
It also graphically shows how it was possible for the capitalist class to put themselves at the head of this mass movement, use its energy to

crush the feudal powers, and establish their own class rule.

Now, through the workings of capitalism itself, a massive and powerful working class has developed. This class, unlike the fragmented individuals of the masses in 1789, will have the power to ensure that exploitation and oppression ends permanently.

A very useful pamphlet and highly recommended.

## Drawing the conclusions



For many readers, the first best political contribution I item they will turn to in 'Militant' is the cartoon by Alan Hardman. And an excellent contribution they are too.

Now over forty of the best and hardest hitting cartoons published between 1971 and 1978 have been reproduced in a book which would make an ideal Christmas present for friends in the movement.

Alan's cartoons have been a regular feature of this paper since 1971. From a Barnsley mining family and a printer by trade, he was inspired to start doing political drawings by the socialist ideas expressed in the paper.

"I feel my drawings are the

Need Not Profit. Price £1 [+ 10p p&p] Order from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## A GUIDE TO ACTION

This pamphlet was written in 1938, when the ideas of Marxism had lost their mass support in the working class movement, and after the strangulation of workers' democracy in the USSR.

Genuine Marxism was thrown back in all its aspects except one. That was the rich experience of the working class, summarised mainly in the writings of Trotsky.

He explained that the Transitional Programme was not one man's invention but "comes from long collective experience."

The relevance of those lessons today is drawn out in the new introduction. Using the method of Trotsky—in contrast to the myriad 'Trotskyist' sects who repeat by rote his every word—it explains why events turned out

differently to his expectations.

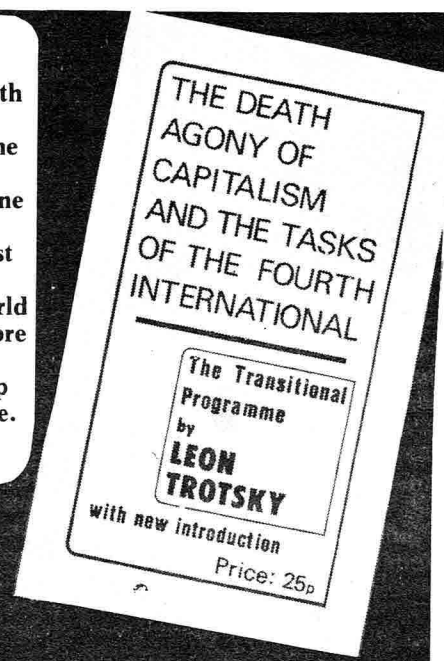
The perspective held out by Trotsky for the immediate post-war period is now actually coming to fruition. The objective conditions of capitalist crisis—of mass unemployment and steeply rising prices; of boom and slump in quick succession—are beginning to re-emerge.

Today the workers and their organisations are a thousand times stronger, yet their problem is still to find a leadership which can end the profit system and establish a planned democratically run society.

This pamphlet remains an invaluable guide to action for workers searching for a way forward.

Andy Beadle

Trotsky's 'Transitional Programme: Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the 4th International'. One of the most important Marxist pamphlets ever. Published by World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Send 25p + 10p for postage.



# What are YOU doing for Christmas?

**Not all workers can put their feet up and enjoy Christmas. Some are working, and some are exhausted after the Christmas rush. Others just can't afford too much luxury...**

## A MIDLANDS POSTMAN WRITES:

When you receive your Christmas cards from Auntie Vera or a distant comrade this year please remember how they get there. Two weeks or so before the 25th we say goodbye to our families and mates and start the 12-hour shifts, 7 days each week that are worked by all of us on the postal side.

The blokes' eyes boggle and roll at the amount they'll be paid for all this extra work. On our low pay we need something special to allow us to meet the financial demands that Christmas makes.

But it's not all rosy. Last Christmas I worked 7 days, 84 hours and took home a massive £68 for all my trouble. I didn't think it

worth working those hours but we have no choice, it's compulsory.

My wife and I have 16 people to buy presents for just from our families. This is hell, when you work 7 am to 7 pm. How can you buy presents let alone put any thought into it? The glow and glamour of Christmas is soon lost in grinding work, either hard or boring, in being shattered for two weeks, and in arguments because of the pressures we're under.

Christmas is supposed to be a time of peace and goodwill, but for me it's a 2-day recovery. Last year I didn't finish work until 2.00 on Christmas Eve, and three days later, at 5 in the

morning, I was back to the grindstone but with hardly any mail to deliver.

Thoroughly worn out, friends and family just a vague blurred memory—you don't really get time to visit friends locally never mind from a distance.

Is it all worth it? I like a good 'feet up', a chance to get out when everyone I know is on holiday too. But many of them work over Christmas, we're chased and goaded into spending all our time eating, drinking and watching TV. It seems very pleasant, but it's not really a celebration, just more rat racing. And we all know who's getting the real benefits of "goodwill".

Glenn Jackman, a BFAWU picket at Broomfields Bakery, Greenwich. If we stay out on strike over Christmas, we will be able to make do. I have relatives, so I won't starve. We've got used to the difficulties after all these weeks. Our wages before were very poor, so things won't be that much different.

Even if we do get a settlement now, we'll only get at the most one full week's wages—we're paid a week behind.

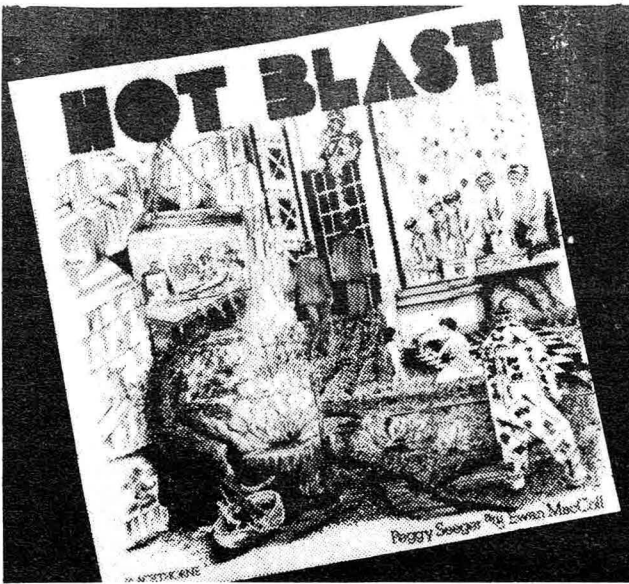
Outside a South London Unemployment Exchange—Gary, aged 18 and unemployed. They haven't found me a job in there yet, even a temporary one, so I don't think my luck will change. I won't be having any treats this Christmas.

The worst thing is presents. My Mum's buying a present to give my old man, and he's buying one for me to give her. They both know what the score is. It's just for show really.

It makes you feel rotten when you know you're old enough to work and get money in. It's like being a kid again.

Chris Ougham, a railwayman and member of Deptford NUR: On Christmas Eve and Boxing Day I'll be standing on platforms 5 and 6 at London Bridge Station, shouting at passengers to shut the doors and getting myself hoarse. It'll probably rain or snow. We get Christmas Day off though!

# A BLAST AGAINST THE BOSSES



Review by Alexandra Smith [Hackney Central LPYS] of 'Hot Blast' by Peggy Seeger and Ewan McColl

(see advert, page 13, for details)

"Ten new songs by Ewan and Peggy on burning contemporary issues" is how this album is billed in their advertising material. Burning issues they certainly are.

Particularly good is 'Blast Against Blackguards', on Tory "freedom", which points out what their "freedom" would mean. Another song, 'Emily', deals with the plight of battered wives in a very realistic way—many women in refuges would probably identify with this very clearly.

One song that 'Militant's' fighting fund organiser would clearly identify with is the 'Pay-up Song!' This was written specifically to be aimed at an audience of those committed to a cause. Perhaps we should try it at the next Militant Readers' Meeting!

'Cut-price Hero' is distinctly aimed against that infamous enemy of workers, Enoch Powell. 'Legal Illegal' is a satirical poke at the British judicial system. 'The Tenant Farmer' may strike a chord in many agricultural

areas. 'White Wind' was written about Southern Africa specially for Anti-Apartheid Year.

All of the songs on the album are written by Seeger and McColl, they not only show an enormous wealth of talent, but a strong feeling against the injustices that prevail in this society.

At only £2.75 from Blackthorne Records, it's well worth lending an ear to, and makes an excellent Christmas present, even if you don't believe in Christmas!

# PENSIONERS

For the sixth year running, pensioners will receive a £10 bonus at Christmas. In a period of inflation, this token gesture of goodwill becomes yet more irrelevant. Realistic updating of this bonus to the 1973 level would put it up to £20.

Despite some recent welcome increases, pensioners still receive considerably below the supplementary benefit long term householder scale rates. In order to remove pensioners from the burden of means tested benefits would still cost an extra £1,656 million a year.

Undoubtedly our readers can think of ways this money can be raised. Perhaps Lora Cromer could help [see below].



Photo: Julian McKittrick (Militant)

# A VERY SUBSTANTIAL MAN

Lord Cromer, merchant banker, former governor of the Bank of England, and Heath's appointee as ambassador to the USA will spend Christmas contemplating his new comfortable and tax free life in Jersey (tax 20p in the £).

Tax avoidance is not an unpopular hobby with the affluent, so Jersey puts a minimum property level for any would be exiles. They are expected to purchase a "sub-

stantial" property. The price is flexible but as a rule is at least £75,000 and often more than £100,000.

Lord Cromer was governor of the Bank of England in 1964. During a run on sterling, he ordered the Labour government, in the words of Harold Wilson "almost at pistol point to cut back expenditure, even to the point of stopping the road building programme or schools which were only half

constructed."

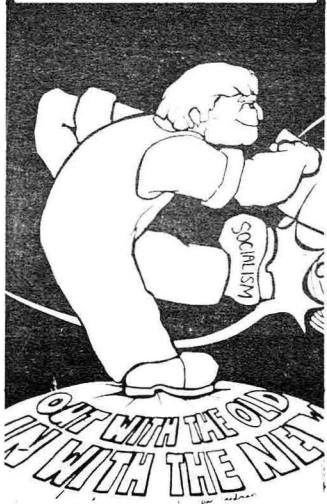
His lordship, whose family are rarely in need of such "wasteful" things as state schools or the NHS claims that his reason for going to Jersey is because he likes golf and the sea. A likely story.

**Les Smith**

(Hackney Central CLP)

## SEND MILITANT NEW YEAR CARDS

Only 10p each plus 10p post and packing from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



# Toytown... Doletown

At a time when many children are thinking of what toys they will be getting for Christmas, one of the best known firms of toymakers in the country, Triang Pedigree, are planning to close their plant in Merthyr Tydfil.

Seven years after the original owners went bankrupt and several owners later, the government is now withdrawing its support for the firm, refusing to put up the £2.2 million needed to make the plant viable.

An area of high unemployment, with many recent closures, and an industry of already very low pay for

skilled workers, faces another bitter Christmas.

So, the capitalist system manages to make the producers of Christmas toys for generations, redundant at Christmas. If anything can rekindle the determination of our readers to put an end to the whole crazy system, this should be it.

**Steve Amor**

(Stevenage LPYS)

# NOLS CONFERENCE 1978

**The Annual Conference of the National Organisation of Labour Students [NOLS] assembles this week at a time of crisis for students. The postponement of the grants for 16-18 year olds, the cuts in education and widespread unemployment all show the inability of capitalism to solve the problems students face. As the student wing of the Labour Party, NOLS must take up a programme that can involve students in the labour movement and to support for socialism.**

The resolutions on education illustrate the political differences within NOLS. Bristol University Labour Club's resolution proposes "positive discrimination" to broaden entry to education "within.. the present system".

The labour movement has a proud record of struggling for a decent education system; but every reform which has been won is threatened because of the crisis in the profit system. No reforms or improvements can be guaranteed under capitalism.

Sheffield University Labour Club outlines a programme that can open education to the working class, calling for a comprehensive higher education system, and links this to the need for education to be under the control of the labour movement, as the only alternative to domination by big business.

Racialism is a vitally important question for the labour movement. The fascist organisations aim to use racialism to divide the working class. If they ever came to power, they would destroy all the organisations of the labour and student movements.

Conference can either support the NUS approach of 'broad based' campaigns including Liberals and Tories, or the policy outlined by South Bank Poly LC, calling for the mobilisation of the labour

and trade union movement against fascism and opposition to all immigration controls. This resolution also supports the 'No platform for fascists' policy. Conference should reject any attempts to water down or abandon this.

Unemployment has hit students hard. No student today is guaranteed a job when they leave college.

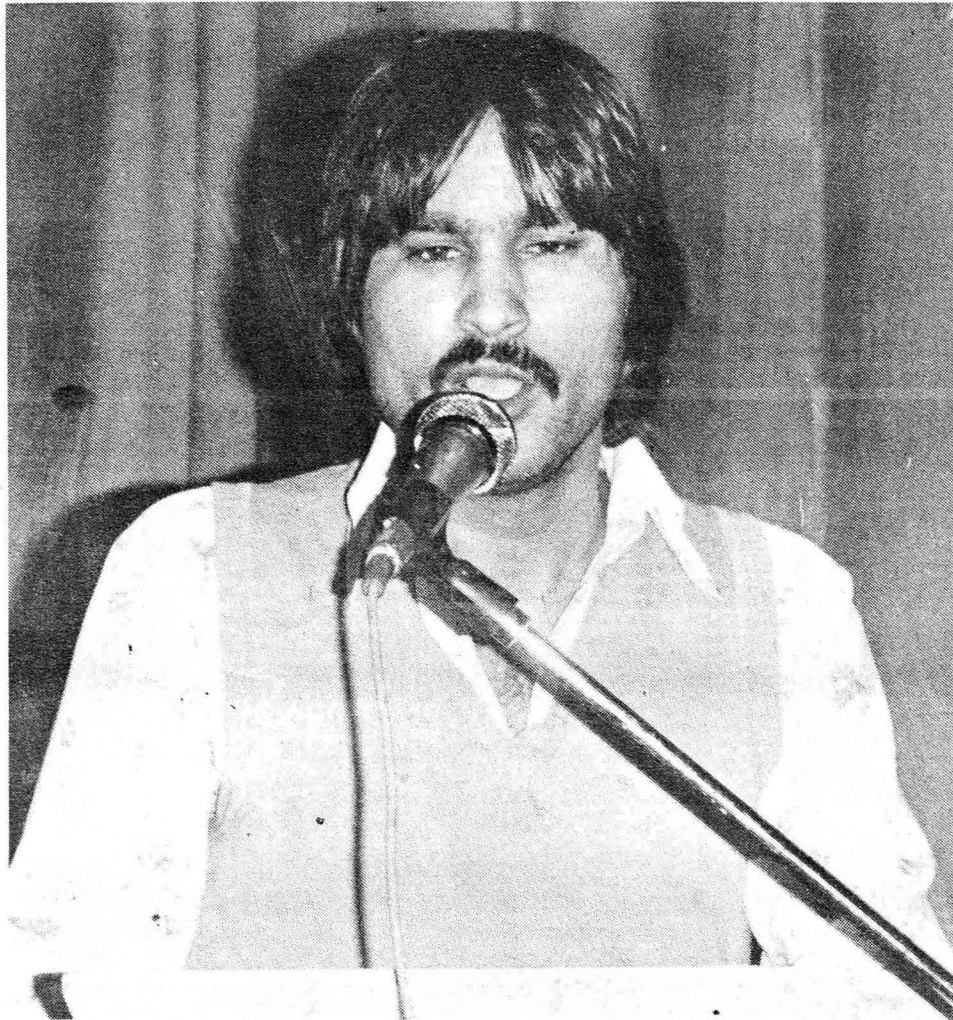
The cuts in public expenditure have affected students, with courses cut back, and college facilities closed. But any opposition has to be linked to the battles being fought by the trade unions in opposition to Hospital closures, for example and for better wages and a 35-hour week.

In the debate on the economy, Bradford ULC point out that 13 million people live below the poverty line. The 'economists' of big business are predicting five million unemployed by the 1990s.

NOLS must fight on a programme that can break big business's control of society. 200 monopolies control over 80% of production. The banks and finance houses control most of the investment in industry.

A decent standard of living can be guaranteed for students and the whole working class by nationalising these

## TIME OF CRISIS FOR STUDENTS



A striker from Grunwick speaks at LPYS Conference. NOLS too must build links with the labour movement  
Photo: Julian McKittrick (Militant)

companies, under workers' control and management with compensation only on the basis of proven need. This could allow a socialist plan of production to be drawn up, bringing the wealth of society under the control of the working class.

The policies of 'import controls', and a strengthened National Enterprise Board, and 'planning agreements' do nothing to break the power of big business. A policy of reforms and 'gradual' changes has been turned to one of counter-attacks on workers' living standards under the

present Labour government, not out of malice, but because they are dictated to by big business. The NHS, education, and other past gains are now paying the price of capitalism's crisis.

The capitalists will not give up their position voluntarily; the strength of the 12 million organised workers behind a clear programme is the only way society can be changed. Conference should also support the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment, which is winning wide support in the labour movement in the fight against unemployment.

NOLS claim to be the biggest group on the left in NUS. This must be used to launch an independent campaign by Labour students for socialist policies.

In the past year, NOLS has fallen far below its potential. On the question of NUS affiliation to the TUC and the Labour Party, which is NOLS policy, the leadership have done effectively nothing.

This Conference marks a watershed for NOLS. The support for Marxist ideas expressed in Conference resolutions, the number of new Labour Clubs set up by 'Militant' supporters (11 out of 17) all show the growing support for 'Militant' amongst students.

A Marxist leadership for NOLS could build a campaigning movement of students, fighting alongside the Labour Party Young Socialists to transform the Labour Party and create a socialist society.

**Mark Morton**  
(NOLS NC)

## WHAT ROLE FOR NOLS IN FUTURE ?

**The National Organisation of Labour Students, as part of the organised labour movement, has a unique role in student politics. Against a background of deepening economic crisis, this country's 3 million full and part-time students are increasingly suffering inadequate housing, insufficient grants, cut facilities and no jobs at the end of their courses.**

NOLS affiliated to the Labour Party, has the potential to link up with the organised working class, and focus the struggles of leftward-moving students, looking for a socialist solution to their plight.

Lacking economic power itself, the student movement must take its place in the labour movement, the only force in society with the industrial muscle and social cohesion to take on capitalism and achieve socialism.

NOLS' potential is enormous, particularly among the students in the Techs and FE Colleges. Many Labour Clubs are growing throughout the country.

Unfortunately, the lack of a clear perspective and programme for NOLS and a failure to orientate properly towards the labour movement has seriously handicapped the

growth and influence of the Labour students' organisation. The 'Clause Four' 'Tribunite' leadership have failed to lead on the important issues facing workers and student today, spending more time attempting to hold on to the leadership of NOLS than in encouraging NOLS activities.

Particularly unfortunate was the attack last year on the London region of NOLS which, under a Marxist leadership, launched campaigns on Overseas Students and on Further Education. NOLS must be a campaigning organisation.

Proposals from the present leadership to abolish NOLS regions will mean a lessening of local initiative and activity in NOLS, with the aim of stifling political ideas opposed to those of the national

leadership. These proposals are a conscious turn away from the Labour Party and towards NUS. If accepted by Conference, they would mark a new stage in the degeneration of NOLS.

Rather than the bureaucratic obstacle course which now exists for Clubs wishing to send delegates to NOLS National Conference, active representation should be encouraged for genuine Clubs—not made harder! NOLS must turn outwards—to wider layers of students, particularly working class students, and towards the labour movement itself.

A national campaign aimed at the Further Education sector is vital if this aim is to be achieved. In the FE's are the greatest number of working class students, suffering some of the worst facilities and conditions bearing the brunt of the public spending cutbacks.

Within the NUS, NOLS must campaign for the problems of this sector to be taken up, tackling the question of

discretionary awards, bad facilities, cuts student union autonomy etc.

Students cannot take for granted sympathy from workers who are often suspicious of student 'revolutionaries' who can prove 'fly-by-nights' or 'know-it-alls'. But this suspicion can be overcome by Labour students through serious and consistent hard work in the movement. At Bristol University, after inviting the local Rolls Royce Convenor to speak at the Labour Club. Labour students were invited to attend the RR Shop Stewards' meeting on a regular basis, so impressed was the Convenor with their ideas and attitude.

Students, with time in the day, have the opportunity to help out on picket lines and in other ways assist strikers. Members of the City of London Polytechnic Labour Club were among the first regular contingents of pickets helping on the Grunwicks picket line back in 1976. In the Firemen's dispute, Militant supporters in Labour Clubs organised collections in

the colleges, and support for the picket lines.

In local Student Unions, Labour Clubs must be ready to take up the issues affecting the students in their colleges. And in NUS the fight must be carried on to a national level. However, in the past few years, NOLS has again failed to exercise the influence in NUS that the student wing of the Labour Party should. Instead of burying itself in the 'Broad Left'—a loose, woolly, Communist Party-dominated alliance (neither broad nor left in point of fact), NOLS should take an independent stand.

Labour students, with their own programme and policies, wedded to the working class movement, could have increasing successes (as NOLS did in 1973-4 when it grew by 97% under a Marxist leadership). Only socialist ideas can provide a solution to problems facing students. The Broad Left approach of watered-down policies and deals with the Tories, aimed at winning the 'apathetic' students can only lead to further demor-

alisation.

A campaign for affiliation to the TUC and the Labour Party and the commitment to production of election leaflets and material could be a decisive boost to NOLS.

**When the next election is called the perspective for the growth of NOLS is an optimistic one. Much of its success will depend on the outcome of this Christmas's NOLS National Conference. With a fighting Marxist leadership, NOLS would develop into a mass socialist student organisation which can play a crucial role in the coming class battles.**

**Cathy Sandler**  
(Birmingham University Labour Club)

# DEATH, DIRT AND PO IN THE WORLD'S RICHEST LAND



## Life in the Appalachian coalfields



**MINERS FIGHT BACK!**  
Left: Sit down protest to demand better health and safety conditions  
Above: This year's UMWA strike. Members of the militant Harlan County area



# OVERTY

**"The recent coal strike didn't settle everything. Miners feel that a generation of social progress has passed them by; they feel betrayed by everyone from the White House to their own union. If the nation is truly to depend on coal, it must listen more closely to the men in the mines."**

This is the conclusion of 'American Serfdom: The backward coal industry' by Harry Caudill, which paints a graphic picture of life in the Appalachian coalfields of America.

Labour relations in the Appalachian hills have been bloody and brutal since the first coal was "lifted" from the ground in Pennsylvania. The early owners of the mines were generally Scots or Welshmen who tried to apply in America the autocratic methods they had applied with the noose and the bayonet in Great Britain.

But in the New World the miners fought back, sometimes with arson and assassination. Twenty men of the secret society, the "Molly Maguires", went to the scaffold in Pennsylvania in 1877 in their secret war against ruthless mine owners.

The trouble in the coalfields is perpetual. Coal operators simply will not treat their mine workers as human beings. The federal government will not compel them to do so, and the workmen are not willing to accept the status of industrial serfs.

## Servitude

When, during the recent strike, the Bituminous Coal Operators Association demanded increased production by way of seven days' work per week, they were acting as the spiritual heir of the old-time Scottish mine-masters who sometimes required their minions to wear iron collars as a badge of lifelong servitude to the pit. This is why miners rebel often. And when they do, that part of the nation which is not organised in labour unions is alarmed and indignant.

The industry has an appalling lack of safety in its operations, resulting in carnage. In 1971 the death rate in deep mines here was six times as high as in Holland.

In 1976 the number of man-days lost owing to accidents in all major US industries per million man-hours worked amounted to 10.9. In the coal industry the rate was 33.8. Since 1906 more than 92,000 men have died and at least 1,660,000 have been disabled.

At Oven Fork, Kentucky, in 1976 two methane gas explosions took place only two days apart. Evidence points to an electric mine locomotive manufactured in 1916 whose

brake compressor produced sparks. J B Holbrook who died in the second explosion, was a machine repairman with absolutely no experience as an underground miner.

Notwithstanding his ignorance of mining, the Blue Diamond Coal Company sent him and twelve others (three of them federal safety officials of the Mine Enforcement and Safety Administration) to shore up the sagging roof in an area devastated by an unexplained blast forty-eight hours earlier. All but two of this party of "proof bolters" were promptly cremated by a second gigantic detonation of accumulated gas.

At Buffalo Creek, West Virginia, in 1972, a vast lake formed on top of a mountain-high slag heap. It rained, the slag heap collapsed, and the water swept through a dozen tiny coal towns killing 125 people.

Pittston Coal Company explained that this calamity was actually an act of God. With this knowledge of God's will, Pittston's management assured stockholders that the incident would not have any serious adverse effect on the corporation's earnings.

The Appalachian Coalfields are immense, embracing western Pennsylvania, western Maryland, western Virginia, about 80 per cent of West Virginia, a broad slice of Tennessee, northern Alabama, and a dozen counties in eastern Kentucky. The region has simmered with repressed frustration for a long time, but in the last few years the pressures have built up.

The turbulence of the 1960s with its social ideals produced an impact on America: white people stopped lynching black people, segregation was supposedly legislated away, equal employment opportunities grew, and expectations rose of higher income, vacations, good health and more freedom. This movement had its impact on the miners too.

In a vague way, often uncomprehending, these miners and their wives have been groping towards participation in the "new freedoms" unloosed by the 'Sixties. Increasingly they realise they are straitjacketed, betrayed by Congress, the White House, the statehouse, the courthouse, the companies, and their own union. They live and work in an environment which is not paralleled anywhere else in the nation, so there is growing outrage among them against the "Appalachian paradox".

That paradox was sharply brought to the fore by federal studies and the news media in

the mid-sixties when poverty was a "cause" in Washington. Those studies showed a region the size of Great Britain shockingly poor in social terms.

There were glaring deficiencies in education, public transportation, housing, jobs, income, life expectancy, water quality. The quality of life was low. Unemployment was high. Tens of thousands of men suffered from coal workers' pneumoconiosis. Psychological depression was commonplace.

Strip-mining of coal on the hillsides had devastated the forests and choked the streams with silt. Streams were also befouled with trash of all kinds and garbage, they reeked of raw sewage. Nearly a fifth of the people were illiterate.

The place was a gigantic sprawling slum from which the rest of the country expected to derive most of its coal. This paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty has not undergone significant improvement in the intervening years since the report was made in the 'Sixties.

## Profitable

**In the midst of poverty, disorder and disease, the studies revealed an entirely different Appalachia of wealth, swagger, and well-being. Two of the region's corporations, the Penn-Virginia Company and Kentucky River Coal Corporation, are the nation's most profitable, clearing about 61 per cent of gross receipts as net profit after taxes. Immense steel, oil and utility companies rack up tremendous profits from their coal and timber operations.**

Hand in hand with mammoth profits go trifling taxes. Levies on coal lands amounted to about 23 cents (about 12 pence) per acre per year ten years ago, and are scarcely more than double that today. As a result, local governments are beggared, subsisting on state funds for their schools, federal revenue-sharing grants of money and other handouts.

Despite its local millionaires, Pike County, Kentucky—the state's largest producer—pays only 18 per cent of the cost of operating its schools. State laws are weak and poorly enforced. Leadership in public office is almost nil.

In the 1950s there was a depression in coal which caused four million people—the more alert, bright and ambitious—to flee the region in a stupendous emigration. But coal has made a comeback and thrived, its new prosperity based on demand of numerous new power plants for steam coal, and by the demand of US and Japanese steel companies for metallurgical coal.

In 1970 there was a new turn. The Vietnam War was winding down and veterans began coming home. Most of them left the hills for jobs in the cities, but jobs there were declining.

Those with high school diplomas could seek a college degree with the aid of the government GI Bill (government aid for higher education for veterans), and many did so. When they had got their degree in education or the arts and sciences they went

job-seeking again—only to find the market for their skills surfeited.

Disillusioned and troubled, they began turning to the mines and to the hated work of their fathers and grandfathers. Despite their efforts and years of studies, they wound up tied to the machines miles underground or on the bulldozers scraping the tops of mountains for coal. Meade Arble has written 'The Long Tunnel', a superb account of the adjustments that hundreds of the new breed of miners have had to make to the dismal work that circumstances and a deteriorating economic system have thrust upon them.

In 1964 the median age of miners was 48 years; in 1978 it is 31 years. The educational levels of miners have risen sharply, there are bachelor's degrees in the mines.

The old breed of miners were of native hill stock or immigrants from Italy and the Balkans. They were labourers by upbringing and had little hope of rising beyond that status.

The newcomers, by contrast, are in the mines by necessity, and expect that someday they may be able to live by other means. They have seen other parts of the country, have sat in classrooms listening to lectures on history, the sciences, and arts, and may have been in the jungles of South East Asia for a year or more.

They have not yet steeped themselves in the fatalism which is common to their work. They have absolutely no illusions, and they have broadened their views through experiences.

It is to the new breed of miners that the union locals (branches) are turning for leadership. They are more vocal, indignant, and persuasive, carrying much more weight in union discussions than the old leaders they are displacing. They most assuredly do not stand in awe of the "boss man" or of the bediamonded mine owners in their vicuna overcoats.

While the industry has been busily hiring new men (and a few dozen women), it has ignored the simple fact that these new workers must have a place to live. Thousands of the shacks that characterised the region thirty years ago have fallen down or burned, and few new homes have been built except the elaborate homes of newly-rich mine owners, merchants, bankers, lawyers, and doctors.

## Mobile homes

The miners are therefore driven to buy mobile homes. These flimsy, ill-constructed rectangles are set up wherever tiny plots of land are available, generally along the banks of the smelly and silt-choked creeks. The usual monthly "land rent" for such dwellings is thirty-five or forty dollars.

A landlord may have fifteen or twenty mobile homes clustered on a stretch of bottom land no larger than a couple of lots in a suburban development. The sewage disposal system invariably relies on grossly overloaded septic tanks, and the filth winds up in the nearest stream.

The coal companies own almost all the unoccupied land in such counties as Logan and Mingo in West Virginia and in neighbouring territories in eastern Kentucky. In the central Appalachians, Ford Motor Company owns 50,000 acres and Norfolk and Western Company owns 448,871 acres, while Chessie Systems owns 271,000 acres. Kentucky River Coal Company owns 80,000 acres in fee simple, and Penn-Virginia another 110,000 acres.

## "Ace in the Hole"

The steel companies hold hundreds of thousands of acres. The combined holdings of the corporations in the Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia coalfields exceeds four million acres, most of which are vacant and unused. Yet none of the corporate real estate is available for miners and their families.

The companies own about 85 per cent of the land in the coal counties and they simply will not sell at any price or for any purpose. The industry proclaims that "Coal is our Ace in the Hole", while it consigns its workmen to shacks and house trailers.

What is it like to live in a mobile home? It is crowded living. A man, his wife and a couple of children and sometimes an elderly dependent, are jammed together in an area only slightly larger than a spacious living room. There is scant privacy, and every sound is magnified.

Hours spent there are stupefyingly dull. Television and the six-pack cans of beer help a little but cannot obliterate the nagging boredom. Outside the small window are more boxes like one's own, plus cars, pickup trucks, broken toys, and trash cans.

Working days in the cramped cab of a coal truck, in the narrow tunnel of a coal mine, or on a deafening bulldozer, and spending nights and weekends in crowded boxlike houses, is a nerve-shattering routine. It makes for poor morale and much resentment. But the coal operators and politicians deem it perfectly satisfactory for coal miners.

The wives are often frustrated by this confinement. Family brawls are frequent, the divorce rate appalling. School homework is poorly done because of the distractions of the television and radio, and it is not uncommon to find a 6th grader who has not yet learned the letters of the alphabet.

The clusters of mobile homes are the new "coal camps", successors of the earlier company houses. The \$9,000 mobile home will cost \$18,000 after payment of interest and carrying charges. It is little more than a portable slum dwelling that will wear out in one decade.

Shopping is another bad experience for miners. Independents and chain-stores alike take advantage of the region's isolation and price-gouge remorselessly, routinely raising prices on the last day of the month when Social Security and pension cheques arrive for pensioners and others.

Schools in the hills fail to

educate, causing more distress for parents who want their children to escape working in the mines they so much resent.

The litter and general trashiness of the coalfields is another demoralising influence. **Although Pike County, Kentucky, boasts over a hundred millionaires who love "cushy" cars including Rolls Royces, it wastes no money on trash collection and landfills.** The same holds true for scores of similar coal counties in Appalachia.

In addition, these new mobile home communities of coal miners are lashed by recurrent deluges that roar down from hillsides which have been denuded by strip-mining. Hundreds of houses and mobile homes have been destroyed by floods in the last three years and every rain is cause for great apprehension.

The coal industry ignores the sensibilities of its miners and their families. It is almost unheard of for an employer to take notice of a death of an employee in his mine.

Is it any wonder, then, that in this social, economic, political, and industrial muddle, tens of thousands of people have surrendered to the disorder called "the eastern Kentucky syndrome", characterised by psychiatrists as chronic dependency, passivity, withdrawal, and regression. Welfare recipients are disabled by this syndrome and its almost perpetual mental depression.

## Heroic

But the new miners tend to believe that surrender is unnecessary. They showed it when they said "Nuts!" to President Carter and the anti-union Taft-Hartley Act. The old remedies against recalcitrant miners were fashioned at a time when popular respect for the federal government was high. Not so today.

"The slave days are over," says Virginia miner Roger Baker, "Nobody can force us!" Therein lies their sanity.

To US labour these rank and file miners appear heroic. In the recent strike they refused to be awed, frightened, impressed or fooled by big business, big government, or public opinion, defying them all in a 110-day strike.

The stakes were high and they won at least some small measure of justice for themselves. Eventually they must win much more from governments and an industry that has treated them like mangy alley cats for over five generations.

Energy Secretary James Schlesinger has called coal America's "black hope". To a nation with a trade deficit approaching \$3 billion a month owing to its colossal oil imports, the expression is apt.

**But it will remain nothing more than a bureaucratic dream unless the need for decent living conditions for the miners is met. The American miner will never be a serf.**

**Betty Traun  
(New York)**

## SPAIN/ITALY

# SPANISH WORKERS

**With only weeks to go before the Moncloa Pact runs out at the end of the year, the Spanish government is making increasingly desperate attempts to negotiate a sequel to the Pact—Spain's version of the 'Social Contract'.**

The first Pact of Moncloa was agreed in October last year between the government and the main political parties. It imposed a 22% limit on wage increases (while inflation was 28%), introduced income tax for most Spanish workers and allowed bosses to sack up to 5% of their

**By Bob Labi**

workers, something which had been illegal until then.

While the workers' leaders agreed to the Pact, it provoked enormous opposition inside the workers' organisations, particularly in the Socialist Party—led

trade union, the UGT. In Vitoria, Alava, a 30,000 strong protest march was held against the deal.

It was only after a fight by the leaders of both the Socialist Party trade unions (UGT) and the Communist-led Workers' Commissions (CCOO) that the Pact was accepted by these organisations. Even then at this year's UGT Congress a majority of delegates voted down the Pact, a decision which was only reversed when a card vote was taken.

Workers' experiences in the past year, which has seen inflation accelerating since the summer and unemployment mounting to an official figure of one million (the UGT says it is 1,200,000) out of a working population of 13,300,000, have strengthened opposition to any extension of the Pact. While the government believes that it will be "difficult to hold inflation below 18% it wants



Gonzalez and Suarez

the new Pact to hold wage rises to between 10%-12%—an open threat to real wages.

This has only increased the pressure on the leaders to

reject a new Pact. The UGT leaders now say they will only accept a wage ceiling of at least 18%.

It is highly significant that

the Workers' Commission in Catalonia, the most important industrial area of Spain, has come out against any social contract—this in open

# ITALIAN ARMY USED TO BREAK STRIKES

**Troops have been used to break strikes by low-paid workers in Italy.**



Workers show their power

Italian workers are moving into action against the latest onslaught by big business on their living standards. There is a general feeling of unrest developing, both in the cities of the north and in the rural areas of the south, as workers brace themselves for the coming clash.

## Living wage

The Italian government is drawing up plans to "revive" the depressed economy, through drastic deflationary measures, and already the hospital workers have moved into industrial action.

These workers, unable to accept very low wages and terrible working conditions any longer, are demanding a living wage. But the government is resisting, and, in an attempt to break the strike have sent in the army to maintain services. A bitter struggle is now unfolding between workers and the government.

The Italian economy has been in a state of stagnation for years, but 1978 has seen a marked deterioration in the situation with unemployment rising to over 1.6 million and inflation continuing at over 12%.

The government, like all the other European states, has tried constantly to develop economic growth by

manufacturing an export-led boom. Having introduced credit facilities for industry to buy raw materials and equipment, the immediate effect has been an enormous sucking in of imports due to the chronic inability of Italian capitalism to compete with foreign competition.

This has led to a massive balance of payments deficit, and the re-introduction of credit restrictions which in turn have led back to a stagnant economy and inflation. It is this policy of 'stop-go' by the government which has paved the way to the present economic instability.

To remedy the latest crisis, the government has drawn up the now infamous "Pandolfi Plan", named after the Italian Treasury minister who devised it. This package, like many before it, will attempt to cut public spending on the one hand and further reduce workers' living standards through rigid wage restraint on the other.

## Salvaging

These measures, they hope, will salvage big business from their crisis within three years. But the working class are already demonstrating that they are not prepared to accept any more cuts and are now getting ready for a major confrontation.

The workers, faced with this situation, are now looking to their leaders to show

the way forward. The Communist Party and trade union leaders have given no indication of their intention to do so. They are in fact in support of the government's measures.

## 'Do-nothing'

When the proposals were debated in Parliament, the CP leaders, to their disgrace, let them through with hardly a whimper. The trade unions have for their part adopted a virtual 'do-nothing' policy, with no lead being given to the rank and file in their daily struggle against the bosses.

Repercussions from these tactics are beginning to be felt down among the grass roots of the CP and the unions. The membership of the CP, for example, has now developed a certain turnover, with some members disillusioned with the leadership dropping out.

Support for the Communist Party in general has fallen, with, recent local elections in the north, for example, showing a drop in CP support from previously 13% to only 10% of the votes cast. In the unions, a small number of militants have taken the drastic step of breaking with the three main affiliated confederations, and have formed "Autonomous Unions".

It is becoming clear to the Italian ruling class that even with the present government sustained in office by the abstention of the CP, the same old problems still exist.

The CP have not been able to hold back the movement of the workers as the bosses had hoped. As the economy declines, the situation will get worse, despite the attempts of witch doctor Pandolfi to rescue it.

The Communist Party still holds the allegiance of the bulk of the working class, but it is ironic that at a time when the working class has never been more able to, ready and capable of ridding itself of the capitalist system in Italy, the CP leadership are trying to march their followers down the road to ruin. But as future struggles develop the workers will constantly transform their organisations, pushing them forward to defend their interests.

As the state of the economy deteriorates and the bosses are forced to make more ruthless, open attacks on the workers' living standards those workers will increase the pressure for militant action by the trade unions, forcing their leaders to act. It is out of these struggles that the workers will draw the inevitable conclusion that only an end to Italian capitalism can bring an end to the interminable economic problems.

**By  
George Williamson**

## INDIA

## REJECT WAGE CUTS

defiance of the Communist Party to which the local trade union leaders belong!

## Sacrifice

The leaders of the Socialist and Communist Parties have resorted to the same arguments as the right wing leaders of the British Labour Party used to justify the Social Contract—that by sacrificing wage increases, inflation and unemployment would be brought down. As the British working class has now completely rejected these utterly false capitalist notions—recently forcing the TUC and the Labour Party itself to reject them—it is hardly surprising that the Spanish workers also oppose them, particularly under a Tory government!

After struggling heroically for years against state-imposed wage restraint implemented by Franco's armed

police, the workers will not submit passively to attacks on their living standards by an open bosses' government. Hundreds of young workers did not spill their blood in fighting for free trade unions just to see the leaders of those unions throw away the right of free collective bargaining.

Shop floor militants are now reminding their officials that the trade unions and the mass workers' parties were built not as an end in itself but as a means to struggle for better living standards and conditions for the workers and their families. As a result of this intransigence of the workers' leaders and the militant mood of the rank and file, turmoil now rages in these organisations.

## Consensus

The 'Financial Times' recently commented that the "political leaderships of the CCOO and UGT have had

the burden of restraining their members...and of getting their unions to underwrite the consensus which has been the dominant characteristic of Spanish politics since the general elections of June 1977. For this they have to pay a price...tensions inside the Socialist Party (PSOE) and UGT have been far more virulent. The wave of expulsions inside the Socialist camp is eloquent testimony of this." (30.11.78)

Certainly in recent weeks the UGT leaders have continued to strike at any area where they think that opposition, particularly that influenced by the Spanish Marxist paper 'Nuevo Claridad' has support.

Last October the entire Provincial Committee of the UGT in Badajoz, which included the National Organisational Secretary of the UGT Federation of Toilers of the Land (farmworkers) was expelled following similar measures in Navarra Province

earlier in the year.

But while the UGT leaders can arbitrarily remove workers' leaders from their formal positions they cannot destroy their real support so simply.

In Badajoz the farmers refused to sign a wage agreement with the new UGT leaders, unless the ex-National Organisational Secretary signed as well, a sure sign that they recognised his support among the farmworkers.

By coming to an agreement with the representatives of big business to hold back the workers' economic demands in the hope of receiving political concessions in return, the leaders of the two workers' parties are vainly trying to reconcile the irreconcilable opposing interests of the classes.

But the mood of the working class is instinctively against any form of class collaboration. As long as industry rests in the hands of the capitalists such collabor-

ation can only benefit the bosses at the workers' expense.

Unable to convince the advanced workers of their ideas through reasoned argument, the party leaders have lashed out desperately with expulsions and bureaucratic methods of stifling opposition. But these panicky measures cannot succeed. On the contrary, they simply draw attention to the ideas of the victims and further alienate members who previously placed their faith in their leaders.

## Rank and file

When Felipe Gonzalez tried to remove the PSOE's commitment to 'Marxism' earlier this year all hell broke loose among the rank and file. The wave of protest resolutions which spontaneously flooded it was reminiscent of the anger of the British Labour Party's rank and file when the right wing interlopers tried to sell its socialist birthright by removing Clause Four.

The PSOE leaders were firmly told that they couldn't push out Marxism from the party—now they are trying to push out the Marxists!

But this is impossible. These King Canutes cannot hold back the tide of history.

They will not be able to hold back the mass industrial movements of the workers who are pushed into struggle with the bosses by powerful economic forces. Neither can they banish, nor defeat in argument, the Marxist ideas which are a reflection of this class movement.

However, the main damage to the labour movement has not been done by the expulsions, though for example they certainly helped to wreck Young Socialists (JJSS), but by the deep disappointment which the leaders' policies have produced. In 1976 and 1977 the masses poured into the newly legalised traditional workers' organisations and voted for the PSOE and PCE in the hope of achieving a dramatic improvement in their conditions. Instead they saw their leaders indulge in Parliamentary play-acting and give support to the ex-fascist Suarez and the Franco-appointed King.

This has led not only to opposition but also to a dramatic fall in the PSOE membership. The 'Financial Times' reported that the PSOE membership has fallen by three-quarters from 230,000 last year to 62,000 this year, while the JJSS paid-up membership fell from 16,000 last year to 4,000 now.

Similar developments are taking place inside the Communist Party (PCE). The PCE has already lost most of its leadership in Santander. In the Asturias many leading PCE members, including the former regional secretary, have been expelled for 'factional activity', but have used their position in the CCOO to fight back against the leadership.

In Catalonia the PSUC (Catalan branch of PCE) leadership has challenged those members who use their CCOO position to attack the PCE leadership's policies. Already these measures have provoked protests inside the PCE. A letter signed by 72 leading members accused the party leadership of using "arbitrary and bureaucratic methods". The Catalan party leaders are coming under strong pressure from an opposition calling itself the 'Leninists' who oppose the Eurocommunist leadership nationally for having dropped the party's allegiance to the ideas of Lenin as the PSOE tried to drop Marxism.

The steady development of opposition to the workers' leaders' politics of compromise with both the capitalists and their government, once again shows that administrative measures can never stop the spread of Marxist ideas. The turmoil inside the Spanish workers' organisations illustrates the searching which is taking place for an answer to problems the class faces. In this situation there can be no doubt that the programme of Marxism will be taken up by the working class as the means to end the worsening problems they face in jobs, wages, housing and health through the nationalisation of the land, banks and industrial monopolies under democratic workers' control and management.



Karmann engineering/steelworkers walk out of the Osnabrück works at the start of the German steelworkers' strike for a 5% wage rise and a 35-hour week to save jobs. With unemployment now nearing 1 million in Germany the demand for 35 hours is sure to become the main one in wage claims by unions in other industries in the next few months.

The Social Democrats have drafted a manifesto for next

year's election campaign for the European Parliament which calls for the adoption of a 35-hour week plus longer holidays throughout Europe. The draft even calls for the shorter working week to be won through union activity—as IG Metall, the steelworkers' union, is now doing. German labour is moving left!

Photo: Julian McKittrick (Militant)

## INDIA:

## ATROCITIES IN TAMIL NADU

People in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu are undergoing severe trials and tribulations.

Their lives under the "All-India Anna Dravida Munnera Kazhagam" is becoming intolerable day by day and the people who put the party in power are regretting it and demonstrating their discontent with all the command available to them.

The workers-peasants demonstrations organised by the main opposition political parties on 23rd October 1978 in Tamil Nadu and the arrest of 15,000 demonstrators, is another proof against Mr M G Ramachandran's government.

Since AIADMK came to

power hundreds of people have been killed by the police. Hundreds of people have died because of party clashes.

Caste war has accelerated in an unprecedented scale; the incident at Villipuram, near the city of Madras, where hundreds of Harijans ('untouchables') were killed by high caste Hindus was led by a member of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, an AIADMK man.

Mr MG Ramachandran, the matinee idol (still a part-time film actor who obtained permission from Prime Minister Desai to continue acting) achieved his position in a unique way. The position of chief minister of Tamil Nadu has been held by persons of great prominence like the former Governor-

General of India C Rajagopalachari, K Kamaraj, Dr Annadurai and Dr Karunanithy.

Mr MGR, while a film actor, joined Dravida Munnera Kazhagam, a reformist party founded by Dr CN Annadurai. His membership benefitted him both ways; socially and politically and in the film industry. After Dr Annadurai's death he was expelled from DMK for flouting party policy. After his expulsion he formed AIADMK.

## Film-goers

The main element which contributed to AIADMK's electoral victory in the last general election is neither

MGR's service nor his intellect; most of his vote was from film-goers. The power which put him in office obviously is not helping him to execute the job of chief minister.

To be precise Mr MGR is a token chief minister. He has left all his business to his henchmen. MGR's ministers are dissidents of DMK, the opposition in the Tamil Nadu legislative Assembly. So what we find in AIADMK is a party without leadership, without programme, with reaction as its ideology.

Workers and peasants in Tamil Nadu must act now. AIADMK's extremely right-wing policies should be challenged. The hartal (mass demonstration) on 23rd October 1978 has shaken the

foundations of MGR's government. The workers and peasants should press on with further activities to free their jailed brothers and leaders.

Indian and non-Indian socialists living abroad have done well in condemning MGR's reactionary regime. The demonstration of the Tamil Nadu Progressive Association in London on 4th November against MGR when he came to London has

encouraged the people of Tamil Nadu. Not only the demonstration was welcomed in Tamil Nadu but also from the Far East, especially from Malaysia and Singapore.

When MGR went to Singapore on his way home after an unsuccessful foreign tour, he was met with a hostile demonstration at the Singapore International Airport and at Serangoon Road where he attended a reception.

By S Suppiah

Read: 'The Coming Revolution in India' by Roger Silverman

10p (+ 10p postage and packing) from: Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

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

## LETTERS

Insurance giants:  
the hidden power

Comrades

This newspaper has always sought to point out where the real power in society rests: not with the elected government, but with the massive companies which can easily undermine the plans of Parliament.

This is obviously going to happen if a Labour government tries to slowly chip away at the foundations of these companies. The bosses must never be underestimated in the lengths to which they will go to defend their privileges.

The *Economist*, 4 November, for its own reasons, illustrated the power in the hands of the insurance companies and the pension funds. It pointed out that between them, they "control over £50 billion-worth of funds and on some estimates will have another £20 billion a year to invest by 1985." This is the equivalent of 2½ times what the government has spent during the whole of 1978.

This means that the traditional "risk-taker" or private

"entrepreneur" has been overtaken. As the *Economist* says, "Today the chief source... of venture and equity capital are these financial institutions."

Finally, the report points out that these giants have actually reversed Labour government policy more than once over the past few years.

For instance: "In 1974, when they [the companies] believed that inflation, price controls and taxation were pushing industry towards bankruptcy, the men in charge of the country's biggest insurance companies and pension funds sat on their hands and allowed the stock market to plunge to its lowest level for 20 years." This forced the government to slash tax on companies, but there were no headlines about "holding the country to ransom."

This is why the *Militant* has as one of its main slogans the taking over of the massive corporations which dominate the economy and the lives of everybody.

Fraternally  
Steve Appleton  
Leeds

## Not always so purist

Dear Comrades

I was disturbed to read in 'Militant' (November 24th) of the NOLS National Committee's suspension of Sheffield University Labour Club and the banning of their delegates to NOLS Conference.

The 'Clause Four' supporters on the NOLS National Committee seem to have an extremely purist attitude towards the constituent members of NOLS. I wonder if this attitude would apply towards Southampton University Labour Club, one of the leading Clause Four Labour Clubs?

On Monday November 20th Southampton University Labour Club elected five delegates to NOLS Conference, the fifth being provisionally elected since the club's membership had not reached the required number by that stage. Fifteen new members were necessary before the end of the week.

There followed several days of panic among leading Labour Club members, culminating in the students' union bar on the Thursday night where they attempted to recruit anyone who might be vaguely sympathetic to the ideas of the Labour Club.

GRANTS  
JUSTICE  
NOW

Build NOLS

People approached in this way were often told that their membership was necessary 'to stop Militant winning'.

To me, this incident shows the poverty of the NOLS majority's ideas. Failing to inspire students with socialist demands, they resort to bureaucratic methods to prevent full democratic debate at NOLS Conference.

While Southampton University Labour Club did not break any rules, their methods appear to me as an extremely dubious way of building a Labour Club. A large, passive "paper membership" is no alternative to an active, campaigning Labour Club, putting forward socialist ideas and winning students on a committed basis.

Yours fraternally  
Jan Turnbull  
Southampton University  
Labour Club  
(personal capacity!)

EEC  
elections:  
Campaign  
or boycott?

Dear Comrades

At the last meeting of our GMC (Coventry SW) the question of the EEC elections came up. Should we take part in or boycott them?

The 'Tribunite' left said: "We are against the EEC. We are against the elections. We refuse to take part in them or select candidates."

Whilst their anger and disillusionment is understandable, this policy is basically wrong. We are against the EEC, but we must not let the pro-EEC right-wing have it their own way.

We must use the campaign to put over our views and expose the EEC. We must try to select anti-EEC Labour candidates who will use their position to blow open the bankruptcy of the bosses' European club.

Even if a pro-market Labour candidate is selected we should fight for him against the Tories.

The Tribuniters' tactics will hand the campaign to the right-wing Labour leaders and the bosses' press.

We must use the campaign to explode the myths of uniting Europe on a capitalist basis and fight for a socialist United States of Europe. That must be our slogan in the coming fight!

Fraternally  
Tim Lewis  
Coventry SW LPYS

AT LEAST,  
SANTA GETS  
THE YEAR OFF

Dear Comrades

Christmas is coming and the bosses are getting fat... The Post Office management seem to think that the Post Office is populated by Santa Clauses! The management have recently offered us a productivity deal which means that they receive 3.7% of their earnings—about £500, and postmen 1.4%—about £60. Fortunately the UPW have rejected it out of hand.

Whilst on the topic of Christmas, we in parcel post start on the 11th December what is laughingly called "Christmas pressure" when, in the space of 13 days we work nearly 150 hours without a day off. We then receive our Christmas holidays—two days [Christmas Day and Boxing Day]! At least Santa gets the year off.

As Marx [Chico] used to say, "Everyone needs a sanity clause." Forward to socialism, Christmas all the year round.

Yours fraternally  
Manchester UPW member

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.

## SPAIN: SOMBRE ECHOES OF HISTORY

Dear Comrades

There are startling echoes of history in Bob Labi's excellent article on the situation in Spain following the exposure of the plot amongst sections of the Spanish military to institute a coup d'etat.

Comrade Labi points out that the response of the Spanish Communist Party was to praise the "patriotic attitude of the Minister of Defence and the officers of the Armed Forces." In addition Sam Russell, the Foreign Editor of the 'Morning Star' suggested that constitutional reform in Spain "demolishes the whole apparatus of the Franco dictatorship."

The September 1973 edition of 'World Marxist Review' contains a statement by two leading members of the Chilean Communist Party following the first attempt of a coup d'etat in Chile on 29th June 1973 which failed.

"The people and the army won an important victory... Patriotism and courage triumphed... Comrade Luis Corvalan has emphasised and we have always maintained... that in Chilean conditions the anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchical revolution can be carried out by peaceful means; that socialism can be achieved without civil war... If the reactionaries do unleash an armed struggle they will be defeated."

In the 'World Marxist Review' of December 1970 Corvalan, the General Secretary of the Chilean Communist Party in one of his many statements in supporting the armed forces praised their "spirit of professionalism, their respect for the Constitution and the law."

Sam Russell, after the attempted coup in Chile of June 29th, reported in the 'Morning Star' of 10th July

1973 that "Chile's Popular Unity government has emerged strengthened and toughened after the defeat of the latest and most dangerous attempt to overthrow it."

It is obvious from the statements quoted by Bob Labi that the Spanish Communist Party and the British Communist Party, if Russell's statements can be taken to represent their political position, have learned absolutely nothing from the events in Chile. There is not a single shred of Marxist analysis in the patriotic statements of the Spanish CP praising the patriotism of the armed forces and consequently spreading dangerous illusions in the minds of the Spanish workers concerning the role that the military may play in Spain in the future.

Similarly Russell, with his misguided faith in paper constitutions as a bulwark

against counter-revolution, would do well to study the writings of Lenin.

Lenin stated: "In every profound revolution, the prolonged stubborn and desperate resistance of the exploiters... is the rule. Never, except in the sentimental fantasies of the sentimental fool Kautsky, will the exploiters submit to the decisions of the exploited majority without trying to make use of their advantage in a last desperate battle or series of battles." [The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky]

The 'sentimental fantasies' of the Spanish and British Communist Parties are an indication of just how far these parties have departed from the road of Marxism. We will ignore their mistakes at our peril.

Fraternally  
Bob Wylie  
East Kilbride Labour Party

WINNING THE  
YOUTH VOTE

Dear Comrades

As the delegate and ex-officio delegate to the 1978 Labour Party Conference, we made sure that in our report back to the IOW CLP and LP branches that the real issues of that conference were reported. We made particular reference to the fringe meetings, most especially that of the Labour Party Young Socialists, mainly because the Island LPYS is the main area of recruitment and its very great importance to the youth vote locally and nationally.

As a party, we have, over the last few months, made clear our attitude to the National Youth Officer, Andy Bevan, by way of resolutions to the NEC. On the basis of what we heard, unbelievable though it may be, we hope you will publish the following resolution, passed overwhelmingly at this month's GMC meeting.

"This IOW CLP wishes to reaffirm its confidence in the National Youth Officer, Andy Bevan, and views with alarm any proposal not to allow him to publicly lead the fight on behalf of Labour's youth in the event of a general election.

"The Mori Report of 1974 indicated that 60% of young people are inclined to vote Labour. The difficulty is to get them to vote and the National Youth Officer has a key role to play in mobilising this support through a programme of public meetings, particularly in marginal seats.

"The return of a Labour government can only be achieved with socialist policies and an enthusiastic campaign by officials and the rank and file."

We very much hope that the party rank and file will let the NEC know, as quickly as possible, that we will not stand for the virtual close-down of the youth section during the next general election campaign. The youth have a bitter future under capitalism, the programme of the LPYS offers the only way forward.

We must demand that the National Youth Officer is encouraged and supported in the fight to win youth to socialism.

Fraternally  
Tony Beere  
and Cathy Wilson (PPC)  
Isle of Wight CLP

# GET ON TARGET!

We need another £12,000 for the Militant Fighting Fund! £1,830.44 came in this week making a grand total of £57,932.35 so we need just £12,067.65 to reach this year's £70,000 target. But there are only two more "real" weeks to make sure we do it! [See front page]

**Eastern.** We received another £93.45, leaving £1,513.14 to go! Particular thanks to Odd Anensen, Secretary of Stavanger Labour Party (the town with which Harlow is twinned), for £8, Hertford and Ware LPYS £1, and to comrades on the YCAU mini-bus for £4.

**Hampshire** have already passed their target, but haven't stopped: their £28.50 this week included £22.50 from Andover reader, K Bryan's day at the races!

An excellent £81.10 came from a Militant Readers' meeting in Hull and this accounted for the £83.55 from **Humberside**, which leaves the comrades only £363.90 short of the target.

Nothing came from **Lancashire** this week, but although the £843.72 may appear daunting, we are sure our supporters will rise to the occasion and raise as much of this as possible.

**N London** area's £262.99 included £190 raised at a Bazaar in Porchester Hall, and a £5 donation from Dagenham EETPU Auto Branch. Other contributions were £20 from P Egan and the first 'festive fivers' from J Franklin and J&H Wobey. £21.74 was collected by Hammersmith and Kensington supporters. N London has another £1,113.18 to go this year.

**S London** supporters are £170.03 further on with just £312.22 before they go over the target. £101.82 came from their bazaar, £11.50 from catering at YCAU conference, £3 from a discussion group in Croydon, and £5.80 from one in Lambeth. Thanks to T Willocks (£2), J Ostrowski (£1) and A Campbell in Lewisham for another excellent £20.

In the **Manchester** area, £10 from 'Oldham darts', and £5 from M Prendiville (Moss Side) helped towards £30.50, leaving another £975.29 to

This week's "score" was as follows, and many thanks to all contributors: **£1,830.44**

£187.56. Still to raise £1,115.58.

Only £6.78 came from **E Scotland** (including £1 from Neil Lindsay, PPC, and Cdes E&H McLauchlan (£2) leaving £756.61 to raise!

Cardiff left us £80 better off and other donations of £15 included 35 Deutschmarks, which harden with age, £3 from G Evans (Bedwelty CLP) and £1 from K Jones (Newbridge). Another £295.31

FIGHTING FUND - TARGET £70,000		
Area	Target	Proportion of target received
Eastern	4,400	2,886.55
Hants & IOW	2,100	2,416.43
Humberside	2,200	1,836.10
Lancashire	1,500	665.28
London: North	7,700	6,586.82
London: South	3,800	3,487.78
Manchester & Dist	2,900	1,924.71
Merseyside & Dist	4,500	2,898.92
Midlands East	4,400	2,900.44
Midlands West	7,400	5,770.25
Northern	4,900	3,784.42
Scotland East	2,500	1,743.36
Scotland West	2,900	1,838.66
South East	2,300	2,489.91
South West	2,300	2,262.75
Thames Valley	1,700	1,539.89
Wales East	2,000	1,704.69
Wales West	2,300	2,343.40
Yorkshire	5,200	3,181.98
Others	3,000	5,670.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>70,000</b>	<b>57,932.35</b>

meet the year's target.

**Merseyside** NGA supporters collected £7 and M Smith, Chairman Wavertree CLP, sent a fiver towards the total of £60.44; another £1,601.08 needed here!

From **Midlands East** we received £35.84, including £20 from Leicester and £8.16 from a Regional LPYS weekend school collection. This area needs £1,499.56, but we are sure our supporters will get as close as they can to the target.

sent us £142.67 and need to raise another £1,629.75 to get the target. Thanks to M Hyde (T&GWU Birmingham) for tote sales raising £11.57, sellers of '6 shot bandit tickets' (£45.35) jumble sellers in Stafford (£53.20), and £30.10 from a 'social with a difference' in Birmingham.

**Northern** supporters sent us a £160 boost from a bazaar in Wallsend: our thanks also to two Blyth LPYS members—V Coils and M Dolan who gave £1 each. Total this week:

**West Scotland's** £12.85 includes fivers from J Legg and M Mearns. Another £1,061.34 is needed, but we are sure the canny lads and lasses north of the border have plans to meet both of these targets!

**South East** are over the target, thanks to £184.56 from a bazaar in Brighton and other welcome small donations including £2.24 collected on an appeal sheet. Don't stop comrades!

£63 came from **South West** this week, including a £3 tax rebate, £5 haircutting (D Walsh Bristol), £3 from I Armitage (Plymouth) and £1 from D Moss (Brixham). Only £37.25 to reach the target—see how far over you can go to practice for next year!

**Thames Valley** comrades sent us £36.60, including a £10 tax rebate. They are bound to get another £160.11 for the target, and can get still more to help with the final total.

**East Wales'** bazaar in

should be easy, with the plans we've already been told about.

**West Wales** comrades managed to send us £166.13 this week, of which an excellent £155 came in Christmas fivers and tenners and tax rebates. See how far over the target you can go, comrades!

**Yorkshire** supporters have a hard job, but we have no doubt will approach it with particular grit. A very creditable £71.77 came from supporters in Wakefield, and altogether £101.65 came from the area. With efforts like this, £2,018.02 more will seem less imposing.

The 'Others' figure is well over the target, and creeping up by another £3.88 this week, it could end up **double** the original £3,000.

Pull out all the stops on the 'fiver', the New Year Draw, the calendars, cartoon books and the social events and we'll make it to the £70,000 yet!

These are our best wishes for the festive season!

## 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

**SOUTHEND Militant Readers' Meeting.** 'Support the Bakers' Speakers: Douglas Hall (Acting Secretary, BFAWU Southend), Bob Edwards (Harlow Labour Party). Friday December 15th, 8 pm, Labour Hall, Cambridge Road, Southend.

### 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: 'Parliamentary Democracy, Reform or Revolution'. Wednesday December 20th, 8 pm. For full details contact Diane English, Sunderland 44364.

### CLASSIFIED

**CAERPHILLY Militant jumble sale.** Saturday December 16th, 2.00 pm, Pensioners Hall, Park Lane

**GRAND Christmas dance.** Roots, reggae, funk and soul. "Black Youth for Socialism Disco" organised by West London PNP Youth. Saturday December 16th, 8.30 pm until very late. 92B Ladbroke Grove, London W.11. (Ladbroke Grove tube, buses 15, 52)

**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 a book, now, c/o Lenin Draw, 14 Howard Road, Walthamstow, London E.17. Proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund.

**DON'T FORGET: Bumper Children's Party,** Saturday December 30th in London. All ages welcome. Details from C Doyle, c/o Militant

**WEST MIDLANDS Militant Supporters Association/500 Club Draw Winners.** 1st prize: £200-J Pratt (Keele) ticket 375; 2nd prize: £20-Anne Carolan (Birmingham) ticket 63; 3rd prize: £10-Maureen Canton (Birmingham) ticket 193; 4th prize: £5 each-J Bennet (Coventry) ticket 438; R Owens (Birmingham) ticket 37; F O'Gorman (Birmingham) ticket 206; R Zaluska (Birmingham) ticket 137. Draw held Saturday 9th December

The Institute of Education Labour Club is presenting in aid of 'Militant'

# BIG NIGHT OUT



## Saturday January 6th Grand Militant Twelfth Night Disco / Club Night

at the Institute of Education Union Building, Bedford Way, London WC1 [Nr Russell Square]

Non-stop music and entertainment from 8 pm to 1 am

FREE FOOD! LICENSED BAR!

Request spots, competitions, lucky draws [including the American Holiday Militant Raffle]

All for £2 Special half price offer if you live outside London [also for unemployed and school students]

Send for your tickets today from R Faulkes, 375 Cambridge Heath Road, E2 9RA [cheques and POs to 'Militant'] [The number on your ticket and counterfoil could win you £10, even if by some misfortune you're not present at the draw!]

Just another £1 secures you a seat on the coach picking up in your area and dropping you home after the "Do".

# MAKE A DATE

### Time's nearly up for the New Year raffle.

To be drawn 6th January 1979

If you haven't bought a book of raffle tickets yet, get one today and take some more to sell! Make sure every friend, workmate, relative or comrade in the movement has the chance to win

#### The holiday of a lifetime!

1st prize is a ticket for two to fly to New York and back, staying for 12 nights in a hotel just off Times Square.

Consolation for those who don't get there? — any of these "timers": Alarm/radio, carriage clock, picture clock, digital clock, travel alarm, kitchen clock, wrist watch, pendant or pocket watch, oven timer, or an egg timer.

Don't forget! We are giving away raffle tickets to the value of any cigarette coupons, Co-op and other trading stamps you send us. So...put yours in the post without delay!!!

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

## HOT BLAST REVIEW: SEE PAGE 6

### BLACKTHORNE RECORDS

## HOT BLAST

[BR 1059]

a new album of songs

PEGGY SEEGER & EWAN MacCOLL

dealing with

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

LAW AND ORDER PROPERTY AS THEFT

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

# BAKERY WORKERS NEW STRENGTH

Bakery workers are no longer prepared to put up with poverty wages, inhuman shifts and appalling conditions. Their union, once one of the most 'moderate' and badly organised, is now in the forefront of the battle to end low pay.

In many areas where the union was weak, such as the South, the experience of this strike, the vicious attacks by the employers, Tories, the media and the police have hardened the bakers' resolve to strengthen their union in order to defend their interests.

Dave Clapham and Tony McKenna, Secretary and Chairman of the Brighton branch of the Bakery Workers' Union, write: Our branch voted unanimously to reject the employers' offer.

The members' view was that the conditions attached to the 14.4% would turn the clock back as far as our union is concerned.

If the vote is to reject the employers' offer then we have plans to step up the action in particular at the mills and the docks. If the vote is to go back we will face many difficulties and there will be much bitterness at having to work alongside blacklegs.

Our feelings once were we would never support those URTU delivery drivers who broke our picket lines.

But we have learned so much during the course of the dispute, not least the ability of employers and governments to play off one section of workers against another, and we are determined not to assist them in doing this.

Rather, we will strive might and main to forge unity in the coming struggles. To this end, if the drivers are in dispute over their wage claim, as they may well be after Christmas, there will be no blacklegging by us.

We have joined the NUJ on their picket lines and we will be offering our support to the local authority workers in their coming struggle.

Yes we have learned a lot during this struggle, we may be bloodied but we are not bowed. We will grit our teeth, face up to our problems and rebuild our union in this area. The scars will soon heal.

Then with new strength and re-armed with the lessons we have learned, our day will come.

The wife of a bakery worker sent the following letter to Southern Television.

*"As a wife of one of the many bakery workers on strike for more money, I am writing on their behalf to send you a copy of an article that was published in the 'Militant' magazine this week.*

*This has been the only magazine to publish the truth about the men's wages and conditions since they have been on strike. Why is it that only a Marxist paper can print the truth?*

*The bakers badly need more publicity to let the general public know exactly about the wages they earn and the conditions that they work under. The best medium that I know of is television, and would very much welcome Southern Television interviewing a representative of the union to bring the truth out into the open. This must be the best possible way.*

*Please do not ignore what is to 27,000 union bakery workers a very crucial plight. Their union is literally fighting for its very existence and the workers are fully prepared to stay and fight as long as necessary.*

*Please help them. "*



Bakery workers on strike in Liverpool donated £5 to the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment

Photo: Julian McKittrick (Militant)

## END POSTAL BALLOT!

### Militant supporters on Britain's biggest Trades Council fight for real union democracy

Birmingham Trades Council, the largest in Britain, met last week with the sound of battle ringing in the ears of the delegates.

Bakers, journalists and ambulancemen were involved in disputes and further struggles loomed on the horizon.

The major debate was on a resolution from TGWU 5/909 branch calling for an amendment to Trades Council rules. If successful this would have abolished the use of postal votes in elections for the officers and executive committee.

Bro. Bill Mullins, moving the resolution, pointed to the influence of the local press, particularly the arch-Tory 'Evening Mail' in campaigning for "moderate" candidates and scare-mongering about left-wingers.

He clearly showed the need for a living democracy based on active participation and through debate as against the formal 'democracy' of the postal vote. On the basis of

postal voting the Trades Council may as well dispense with meetings and conduct all business by mail, he argued.

Seconding the resolution, Bro. Bob Ashworth showed the role of the press in attacking well-organised sections of workers as "greedy" and genuine workers' leaders as "wreckers" etc. The press concentrated on car workers now but the spotlight would turn to other sections of workers as they moved into action.

In the debate which followed a number of disagreements were raised: branches shouldn't be deprived of their right to vote because their delegate didn't attend; some delegates may miss the voting through illness; they may be at another, more important, meeting etc. The secretary of the Trades Council warned that if this year this resolution were passed, what would be proposed next?

Many of these arguments were taken up in an excellent contribution from car worker

Don Webb. He pointed out that the future struggles would demand that the leadership of the trade union movement be answerable to the ranks and urged the delegates to look to the future when "we will need the Town Hall for Trades Council meetings."

Objections to the resolution were expected, but imagine the surprise, even horror, with which 'Militant' supporters listened when Bro. Phil Beyer, UCATT, and a leading member of the Communist Party locally, rose to speak against the resolution. Dismissing the campaigns waged in various unions against the postal vote as "different", he went on to argue that the more people who voted the better, whether they voted from their armchair or at the meeting itself.

Even though this resolution was defeated, the Trades Council rules already contain a partial recognition of the need for decisions to be based on active participation rather

than formal membership. If a delegate misses three meetings without apology, he or she is taken off the mailing list and does not receive an agenda or notice of meeting.

But they'll still get a postal vote if they never attend a single meeting.

**By Pete McNally**

(Trades Council delegate, NALGO WMPTE branch, personal capacity)

#### MILITANT TRADE UNION PAMPHLETS

A fighting programme for printworkers ..... 15p  
 Socialist policies for the UPW ..... 10p  
 GMWU Review 1975 .15p  
 plus 10p postage  
 Order from World Books,  
 1 Mentmore Terrace,  
 London E8 3PN

## UPW BACK 24% CLAIM

Last week's special conference of the Union of Post Office Workers [UPW] on wages and productivity ratified the recommendations of the Executive Committee for an increase on the basic rate of 8%.

Amendments attempting to lower and raise the claim were defeated. The full claim of 24.4% on the wages bill, however, represents a target the membership could really be mobilised in support of.

The claim which will be immediately presented to the Post Office includes consolidation, reduction of three hours in the working week, and other minor points taking the full claim to 24.4%. In addition there is an escalator clause of a 1% rise for every 1% rise in prices over 8%.

The claim is in reality very modest. Even at a time of mass unemployment, the Post Office are desperately understaffed, because of the low

pay, long hours and shift working.

The situation was highlighted by an unprecedented move, in which the Chairman of the Post Office and Tom Jackson, General Secretary, had written a joint letter to Eric Varley, urging that UPW members are a "special case" for government wages policy and that consolidation should be carried out on top of the 5%. This only shows the low pay that workers in the Post Office have to exist on.

However, the claim is five times the government limit, and it won't be joint appeals to Varley that will win the claim, but the struggle of the UPW membership.

Unfortunately amendment 54, calling for the EC to consider industrial action, with strong support from many delegates, was not taken due to a procedural motion, and conference never had an opportunity to discuss this. This raises the very real problem of how the claim of

24.4% can be achieved.

The struggle needed should be linked with the other public sector claims of NUPE, G&MWU and T&GWU members.

This alliance would really begin to have muscle, in their defence of public sector workers' living standards.

The conference accepted productivity deals linked to wages, which undoubtedly could be used to sell jobs out. But an important amendment against the executive, was carried demanding that in any productivity agreement, the membership should receive 100% of the gains.

At the present time the membership receives no more than 50% or even 40% of money gained from productivity increases. And as one of the delegates pointed out, this money is ours since it's our work that produces it. That was quite an important victory for the membership.

The second five-day conference this year indicates

that UPW members are moving to regain the losses in living standards they have had forced on them. The question facing the membership is undoubtedly how to mobilise the membership back in the areas for the action necessary to win the claim.

At this conference over seventy 'Militants' were sold and £40 collected for the Fighting Fund. The UPW is changing, as indicated by an increasing number of younger delegates.

If the membership is mobilised around the claim we could see industrial action next year. This makes it even more necessary for a determined national leadership to be forged within the UPW to ensure success in the years ahead.

**Report from Bryan Beckingham in Bournemouth**

## METAL BOX

## JOBS THREAT

Workers throughout the Metal Box combine were told on Monday December 11th that, despite profits of £32m in the first six months of this financial year [an increase of £12m on the previous half year figures], there would be widespread closures and redundancies.

The Acton plant in West London would be completely closed by 1982 and 163 workers would be on the stones by April 1979. Glasgow would also lose 165 jobs and the Neath plant 67.

They also threatened further closures unless a total reorganisation of work took place at certain plants. Four-shift working and seven-day continuous production in DWI plants (making two

piece cans) must be introduced, they claim, or the factory at West Orton will also be a casualty.

This huge firm claim these measures are necessary to beat competition from American companies, and because of a shortfall in orders due to the poor summer.

The workforce at Metal Box are not prepared to be put on the stones because of the unpredictable climate or any other excuse management make. The trade unions in the Metal Box plants must come together to thrash out a united plan of action to prevent the loss of any jobs.

**By Trevor Spooner**  
 (GMWU Chairman, Metal Box, Leicester)

# JOURNALISTS REJECT PAY LIMITS

Wage restraint only helps the bosses, says NUJ organiser

In the first national strike in the 71 years of the NUJ's history, 9,000 provincial journalists are on strike for higher wages and shorter hours. MIKE BOWER, North of England organiser, spoke to Rob Jones about the disputes involved.

The claim is for an all-round increase of £20-a-week and a cut in hours from 40 to 35. The employers offered 5% which we turned down. They then improved the offer to 8.9%, subject to Department of Employment approval. We turned this down: we would not go to the D of E as we do not recognise arbitrary pay limits set by governments, but instead base ourselves on the employers' ability to pay.

The fallacy of pay policy is apparent to our members. While they have been held back, the profits of provincial newspapers have been shooting up. For example, Westminster Press has recorded profits of £6.2 million—a 38% increase, while United Newspapers have had a 40% increase in the last 12 months.

These are typical examples of profits well in excess of wage increases, so the members are able to see that



NUJ picket outside the Press Association offices, London

money denied to them by pay policy has not gone to help pensioners and the disabled, but merely the profits of the people they work for.

The present situation is that the basic pay for trained journalists who have had between two-and-a-half and four years of apprenticeship is

£60 a week for weekly papers, and some £4 a week more for a daily. This is the base on which all else is built.

You can get only an extra £2 a week for being a "wizard" or for long experience—but little else. So a provincial journalist is on average more than £20 a week

worse off than the average for non-manual workers.

Discontent has bubbled for years. This year even the employers agreed that we were underpaid, but we are not, as they argued, to be trapped into going with them to the D of E to argue that we are a "special case".

Over the years, pressure has built up inside the union for effective collective bargaining and this year the lid has blown. For a traditionally moderate section of workers, this action is unique.

So far, the strike has been very effective. Ninety-eight per cent of our members are

on strike, though the 2% pocket of resistance has received big publicity. These are not representative, however, as we are receiving support all over the place. Unions outside the printing industry have been respecting our picket lines—with the TGWU being particularly good.

However, some papers are appearing with scab labour, and we regret that some print workers are still working with them, although others have stopped. Unfortunately, print workers still take the position towards editors that they are entitled to work during disputes—that is the trouble.

So here in Sheffield the morning 'Telegraph' has just published one day this week, full of little but adverts—which is worth their while. However, despite the fact that some papers are still appearing, they do not contain local news, which is what people buy local papers for. So this has been effective.

We are prepared for a long struggle if necessary. Our members do not receive strike pay, so we depend on donations from the rest of the movement, and also expect the movement to respect our picket lines.

With such support, we can win this struggle.

## UNION SUPPORT CRUCIAL

### CAMBRIDGE

Journalists at the **Cambridge Evening News** are out on strike in support of the national pay claim.

The paper was produced but contained nothing more than national news from the press agencies, a few full page adverts, the letters page and the usual classified adverts.

The mood on the picket line was enthusiastic and a yell of delight was let out when the news came through that journalists in Norwich had come out in support.

There are 74 members in the chapel and 83 had come out in Norwich which was feared to be a moderate chapel.

The strikers are producing their own newspaper and are asking as many people as possible not to buy the Evening News, or send in any classified adverts, but to treat the strikers' paper as their usual daily.

They are at the moment starting the round of the trade

unions, trades council and Labour Party to try and get support from as many people as possible. They are also appealing to other trade unions to stop their members crossing the picket line with deliveries.

Chatting with the pickets they talked of how often in their work the truth was distorted as certain aspects or angles were left out of articles, often because of pressing deadlines.

I could glimpse talking to them how reporting could be if the controls of 'company policy' i.e. financial interest were removed.

Daily papers under the control of the TU movement would certainly be a step forward. Perhaps this strike will show what could be possible.

### PORTSMOUTH

In **Portsmouth** all the journalists on the 'The News' the local evening paper—part of the Portsmouth and Sunderland Newspaper Group—are out and picketing the main building and area offices.

The paper is still being produced, although due to its contents the price is 3p as oppose to 7p and only one edition a day is produced instead of six.

Most of the articles are features that have been brought forward and there is only a limited stock of these. Picketing has had some success with T&GWU drivers turning away with newsprint and ink.

Management have appealed for 'amateur reporters and photographers' to send in items. This has had a response from Tory councillors, but other reports, management suspect are being sent in by NUJ members to overload the Editor and his three assistants with work in

checking the stories out!

Some copy is taken from the radio news broadcasts by non-union copy typists. As soon as they return to work the journalists will attempt to get these girls to join a union.

On Saturday the football Mail could not be published for lack of copy. To the irritation of management, the journalists produced their own paper for distribution outside the ground in return for donations to the strike fund.

By Ian Jenkinson

### NOTTINGHAM

The nine journalists on the **Nottingham Evening Post** who supported the strike have been sacked by the reactionary management, who have a long anti-union tradition.

Dennis McShane, NUJ President, has said that if the nine are not taken back, this should become a focus for all Midlands trade unionists.

have seen the other side—on picket duty in all weathers, the viciousness of management and police—the coverage of other industrial disputes in provincial papers should be different in the future.

By Bob Wade  
(Group FOC, NUJ)

## NATSOPA BACK

### TIMES WORKERS

**"We are not asking for a levy for the wrapping on a Christmas cracker, but to support our fellow branch members locked out by management."**

With these words a Branch Committee member of the NATSOPA London Clerical Branch summed up the grave situation facing Fleet Street workers.

The biggest branch meeting members can remember voted by a large majority to levy all members £1 a week to support the 900 clerical workers at Times Newspapers—one tenth of the London branch membership—who face dismissal.

Some right wing members played on the prejudices whipped up by the Press barons against Fleet Street workers and tried to block the levy. But they were swamped when the fundamental issues involved were explained and debated.

The determination expressed can be moulded and built on. However, the leadership, at branch and national level, have still to reveal just how they intend fighting Times management. Phrases from the platform such as "an air of compromise should be achieved" and "We must accept the harsh realities of life" (in reference to new technology) bode ill for the future.

To create animosity towards the NGA (National Graphical Association) for failing to sign the misnamed 'New Disputes Procedure', to blame other unions for the

difficulties of the industry, as was suggested by one platform speaker, plays directly into the hands of management.

Maximum unity throughout Fleet Street must be achieved and a common, fighting strategy adopted to defeat Thomson and other Press barons who wait with baited breath in his wake.

The unions have, correctly, accepted the new technology in the spirit of scientific advance. The question is, are the benefits accrued to be shared throughout the workforce or is it to mean mass redundancies and a fattening of employers' profits?

There must be no loss of jobs, whether compulsory or voluntary. The demand must go up for work sharing and a shortening of the working week. The whole question of public ownership and therefore democratisation of the press must be debated throughout the labour movement.

The whole existence of trade unionism in the printing industry is under threat. A long and bitter fight it is sure to be.

Livelihoods are at stake. All stand to suffer unless joint action is worked out to ensure that no jobs or other hard-won gains are taken from us.

By  
Marcus Hosgood

(Committee member  
NATSOPA Evening Standard clerical Chapel, personal capacity)

### ROCHFORD

With the strike of the provincial journalists now in its second week, the battle against 5% is hotting up.

In our company, 75% of the copies of the **East London Advertiser** failed to appear, thanks to the solidarity shown by the London central branch of SOGAT. Now the NGA, the main print union, has said they will only handle news produced by the Editor.

As the dispute hots up and the NUJ feel their strength, various managements are

turning nasty. Pickets have been injured by 'cowboy' van drivers and more than 100 journalists sacked.

At **Swindon**, management have covered vans in newspaper ink before driving through picket lines. At **Chelmsford** van drivers are being told that they will not be held responsible for damage or injury to any person involved in the strike—open incitement to reckless driving. The NUJ deputy FOC (shop steward) of the **Brentwood**

**Gazette** was dragged along the ground by one van.

The journalists attitude to other unions in dispute is being changed by the strike. As usual, the media has blackened the dispute, playing up reports of people still working, with heart-rending stories of poor editors battling on alone.

This has come as a shock to many provincial journalists, as they realise they have been used to do the same to other unions in the past. Now they

# Militant

16 MILITANT 15 December 1978



Photo: Julian McKittrick (Militant)

Last Thursday several hundred farmworkers met in London to lobby the agricultural wages board. They were angered by the pathetic offer of £1.65 which would put their wages up to £44.50, just

fifteen pence more than the government's official bread-line!

For years this group of workers have been appallingly low paid, with conditions most workers would consider

pre-Victorian. It is only recently that tied-cottages were abolished.

As one worker who bought a copy of 'Militant' said, "why shouldn't we fight, everybody else is, why should-

n't we get a bit for a change!"

The mood developing in the agricultural workers union is a foretaste of the battles that lie ahead for all sections of workers—especially the formerly dormant sections.

## GIVE US A CHRISTMAS BONUS

There are now only two "real" weeks before we close the books on the 1978 fighting fund.

For most workers and their families this will be a week or so of much-needed relaxation. For 'Militant' supporters everywhere there is still a lot of hard work to be done to get every penny in donations to go over the £70,000 target.

As we go to press, another £700 has reached us including a magnificent £165 collected at a Readers' Meeting in Cardiff, £110 from just two readers in South London, £40 from K Stettaway [Newcastle], £45 from a party in Rochdale, £6.48 as part of a collection at an Industrial Forum with bakery workers in Birmingham and £1 from the Queen's University Labour and TU Group, Belfast, "in appreciation of the 'Militant's' coverage of Irish events.

If you want to see 'Militant's' coverage stepped up on issues vital to every worker, give us a Christmas bonus.

The capitalists sometimes part with just that little extra during the festive season but their every action is geared to getting more production out of their work force. For them, time is money.

For the 'Militant', money

means more time. In the urgent task of building a fighting paper of the labour movement there is no time to lose.

We have to build up the vital resources—the press, the editorial and print staff and the ability to get the 'Militant' to every worker who needs it.

YOU need the 'Militant' to back up your fight against the bosses and for a socialist society. WE need YOUR backing—never more so than in these vital weeks over Christmas.

Send us a "festive fiver". Sell as many raffle tickets, cartoon books and calendars as you can. Ask everyone you know for a donation. Come to our socials for a good night out [see adverts and leaflets].

Make all cheques payable to 'Militant' and get them to our offices before January 6th.

With £70,000 in the fund, next year will see enormous steps forward, to match the mountainous events that impend.

Without the money time will be lost and opportunities missed.

Give and collect as much as you can!

Socialist Greetings,  
Clare Doyle

## IRAN: Peacock Throne crumbling

Last weekend the whole of Iran was paralysed by massive demonstrations as millions and millions of people took to the streets demanding an end to the Shah's dictatorship.

On Sunday, a million people flooded the streets of Tehran. Next day, even more came out. The army, incapable of damming the flood, withdrew to the side streets.

"Death to the Shah!" "Shah, you have killed your people!" There were the slogans as what were formally major days of religious mourning were transformed into massive demonstrations of political protest.

Throughout the country, marchers tore down statues and portraits of the Shah and the Empress.

In Esfahan on Monday, five people were shot dead by the army as demonstrators attacked the local headquarters of the Shah's dreaded secret police, SAVAK.

In Britain, the capitalist press has at last got the message—the overwhelming majority of Iranians want the Shah out!—and have begun to convey the scale of the mass movement and reveal the darkness behind the "Pea-

cock Throne" they obsequiously praised for so long.

Western business interests are terrified that they will lose their stake in Iran. There is over £6,000 million of western investment and banking loans there.

British interests have about £10 million invested in Iran, and currently have £750 million of trade in the pipeline.

### Strategists

Scandalously, it is pressure from big business that has determined the Labour government's shameful declarations of support for the Shah's dictatorship.

But even the serious strategists of big business are rapidly being driven to the conclusion that the Shah's days are numbered. How could they avoid it, when millions of Iranians have so clearly voted with their feet?

"The scale of the protest," comments the 'Financial Times' (11 December), "and

its unity, bringing in all social classes, clearly illustrates the growing dilemma for General Azhari of how to work for a political solution while remaining loyal to the Shah as head of State.

"Many public sector workers remain on strike and little work is being done in the private sector because of the general disruption."

If the Shah has outlived his usefulness, he will be unceremoniously discarded by the capitalist powers who helped him seize power, supported him with a flow of arms and painted his dictatorship in glowing colours.

Their main concern will be to look for substitutes, whether among the military or the Shah's middle-class political opponents, through whom they can continue to dominate and exploit the country.

But because the Shah repressed every form of democratic expression, an enormous anger and discontent built up under the surface of his dictatorship.

Now the facade has crack-

ed, it has welled up with uncontrollable force.

In the absence of a lead from elsewhere, the mood is expressed through support of the Shi'ite Moslem religious leaders, who preserved some autonomy under the Shah's regime.

Ayatollah Khomeini, the exiled leader of the Shi'ite Muslim community, who have repeatedly and unequivocally called for the Shah's removal, has for the time being become the main focus of opposition.

But when the Shah falls, what then?

Now, the great mass of the population is united against the regime. But to make sure that there is not merely a change at the top, and to ensure that there is fundamental change in the interests of the oppressed and exploited, the present spontaneous revolutionary movement must be given definite socialist aims.

The workers and peasants must be united around a programme capable of achieving a socialist transformation in Iran.

By Lynn Walsh

## Police victimise bakery pickets


A report by a member of Bedworth Plant Lodge NUM

On Tuesday afternoon (12 December), police boarded a bus full of pickets in Tewkesbury and arrested Gloria Martin, the South Wales BFAWU official on the grounds that there had been damage a local mill, which was nothing to do with us. The bus had not even left the car park!

We were taken to Cheltenham police station. We were all told what we had been

arrested for hours later following individual questioning by the CID. We were badly treated, one elderly member slumping through exhaustion and being denied help.

Five BFAWU members were charged with incitement to public disorder and suspicion of criminal damage. The rest of us were warned we might be similarly charged later.



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